be hoped that some at least of the community will realise the nature of the channels into which the public money is being diverted in the administration of the Act.

Reference was made last week in these columns to the valuable work of the Special Commissioner of the *Lancet* in connection with Insurance affairs throughout the country, and the excellent reports thereon now appearing in that journal. Some of the reading is of a startling character and deserves publicity. For example, when remembering that the tuberculous insured persons were promised first-class hotel accommodation, one wonders to what sort of hotels the Commissioners and Insurance Committees are accustomed when the *Lancet's* Commissioner can write as follows. He is dealing with the situation as it exists at Newcastle, and in describing the tuberculosis dispensary he says: "It is very accessible, but the street is so noisy that it is difficult to examine the patients. Then the dispensary only consists of two small rooms or compartments. One of these is the clerk's room, the store-room, the writing-room, and the waiting-room, all in one. The other is the consulting-room, the bacteriological laboratory, and the patients' dressing-room, also all in one." (*The Lancet*, October 18, p. 1149.) It is small excuse to say that the present arrangements are but temporary; what one would like to know is how it comes about that premises bearing such a description were selected as being suitable even for a single day. There is gross mismanagement somewhere, and we need something more by way of explanation than that "it appears that when efforts have been made to rent larger and more suitable premises, the people living near have raised objections against so many consumptive patients coming daily into their neighbourhood."

THE PANEL MEDICAL COMMITTEES.

Mention may be made of the Panel Medical Committees shortly to be elected. According to the Commissioners' regulations three-fourths of those elected must be on the panels, there being no rule as to the remaining fourth. It is to be noted that in the election only panel men may vote, and it is, therefore, impossible that a committee so chosen can be regarded as properly representative of the practitioners of the district. This will be especially so in the London area, having regard to the figures given below concerning the panels. The restriction of the voting to panel men goes to emphasise the now obvious cleavage of the profession into panel and non-panel sections. Attention may be directed to the fact that in connection with the coming election of Panel Committees, the Commissioners have adopted a peculiar and unexplained hustling procedure very difficult to understand on the assumption that a fair result is desired. Practically no time is given for nominations to be effected, or for a consideration of the regulations respecting the elections. Reference has been made above to the state of the London panels, and as contradictory versions have appeared at various times, the following figures are quoted

from the authority of a well-known member of the London Insurance Committee. There are, approximately, 1,500 men on the London panels, 200 of these being residents at hospitals and other institutions. The remaining 1,300 are panel doctors engaged in working the Act as general practitioners. There are in all 6,200 medical men in the London area. At a liberal estimate, we may class 2,200 of these as consultants, retired, and institutional men who are thus ineligible for panel work. This leaves 4,000 general practitioners eligible for the panels. As we have already seen, only 1,300 of these, or less than one-third, have undertaken the work.

These facts bear closely on the non-panel movement, for they disclose features in the working of the Act which not only justify that movement, but which make it clear that if the medical profession is to regain prestige, effort will only come from a combination of non-panel men. Such combination, it is encouraging to know, is now being effected, and may be expected to receive a powerful impetus at the Conference convened by the National Medical Union which, it is understood, will be held in London at the end of the present month.

NATIONAL MEDICAL UNION, MANCHESTER.

An important Conference of Non-Panel Medical Associations will be held in London at the end of this month. The National Medical Union, with the assistance of several leading London societies, is responsible for convening this meeting. Invitations are being issued to all known non-panel bodies, and the chief object of the Conference is the promotion of the federation of non-panel organisations throughout the country. The promoters aim at making the meeting representative of all non-service practitioners, and secretaries of all such Associations, and all medical men who are not serving under the National Insurance Act, are earnestly requested to communicate with the Secretary of the Union, Mr. J. Webster Watts, 5 John Dalton Street, Manchester. Notice of the time of the meeting will be sent to the lay and medical press at an early date.

LONDON MEDICAL COMMITTEE.

On Thursday last, November 6, at a meeting of the London Medical Committee (which is entirely non-panel in its constitution) it was decided to send representatives to the Conference of Non-Panel Associations which is to be held in London on Saturday, November 29. This Conference is being called by the National Medical Union, a non-panel body having its centre in Manchester, with the assistance of Non-Panel Associations in London and the provinces. The committee appointed the chairman, Dr. Fred. J. Smith, Dr. Bernard O'Connor, barrister-at-law, and the hon. secretary, Mr. Dorrell (45 Welbeck Street, W.), to be the representatives at the Conference. A report was received that two new Non-Panel Associations had been formed—one for Lambeth, and the other for Islington and St. Pancras. Also reports of meetings and of the strength of membership were received from Wandsworth, Hampstead, and Lewisham Non-Panel Associations. A letter was received from a medical man in the Wandsworth district, who has unrivalled opportunity of observing the working of the Insurance Act in the poorer districts, showing how thoroughly the insured dislike the Act and the panel system with its restricted choice of doctor, and how "hundreds of panel patients come to me" either because they will not go to a panel doctor or do not wish to repeat the experience.

The committee adjourned until Monday, November 17.