

The unprecedented progress in medicine and surgery during the last half a century attests the unwearied industry of patient investigators in every department of medical work. But it is not necessary to go outside of the rank and file of the busy workers in our profession to find proof that the life of the busy practitioner in city and country is one of unceasing toil for the good of others. But if further proof were needed to show the unselfish character of our attitude as a profession, it will be found in the stand we take on the question of preventive medicine.

I think it safe to say that there is more effort put forth—more brain work expended—more privations endured, more heroism manifested by patient workers in this department of medicine than in all the other departments combined. And rightly so, because we can save more lives by prevention than by cure. And why all this patient labor and research? To open up new avenues of wealth for the practising physician? To devise new schemes for getting into the pockets of the people? No! It is a labor of love. It is work undertaken without hope of reward, except the reward that comes to us in common with the other citizens of the commonwealth through the increased security to life and health as the result of sanitary reform.

It will readily be admitted that the more disease there is among the people the greater the source of revenue for the doctors. If then, as some people say, the doctors are concerned only about matters affecting their own pecuniary interests why do they toil and plead for measures to prevent and suppress disease? The present state of sanitary law and quarantine in all civilized countries is a standing testimony to the unselfish character of the medical profession.

I have seen it somewhere stated that altruism is the foundation of all sanitary science and law. To the medical profession is due the credit of initiating and putting into operation all practical measures for the prevention and suppression of preventable disease in every country where sanitary laws are in practical operation.

What would be the condition of our country to-day if these safeguards and restrictions were withdrawn? We enjoy comparative immunity in our homes to-day, because there are faithful watchmen ever on the alert to raise the danger signal whenever and wherever we are threatened with an outbreak of the ordinary contagious and infectious diseases that are always lurking in sporadic form in various parts of the province, as well as the more virulent epidemics that threaten us from abroad.

IV.

MUTUAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

In order that there may be mutual co-operation there must be mutual trust. Do we as a profession merit the confidence of the lay public? Do we discharge in full the responsible duties of our high calling?