

trifle. He may be zealous to carry out his duties, but receives no encouragement or support from the board of health or the authorities of the municipality, consequently he soon becomes tired of flying in the face of the public, whose good opinion is necessary to his success or existence. As a result, he floats with the stream and the health regulations become a dead letter.

The Provincial Board of Health has had in the past five or six years a great deal of trouble with some infectious diseases, notably mild epidemics of smallpox here and there. It has been found that in many, perhaps the majority of municipalities, very little attention was paid to the necessary quarantine, and that both the province and the municipality concerned have been put to an unnecessary expense and trouble because the epidemics of infectious disease were not stifled in their infancy by a careful supervision of the early cases.

To overcome this difficulty the plan of having a county or district officer of health has been under consideration and has received a good deal of thought, both by the present Board and their predecessors. It was thought that if a county or group of counties had such an officer, whose salary would be such that he would be independent of public opinion, there might be an improvement, in so far as the question of public health was concerned. In the State of Pennsylvania there is some such a system. The State, whose population is about seven millions, and with an area of forty-five thousand square miles, has a commissioner of health (salary, \$10,000), appointed for six years by the Governor of the State. Under and responsible to the commissioner are ten district health officers, who are also practitioners in active work, who receive \$2,500 per year, and who are each assigned to one of the ten districts into which the State is divided. They are responsible for the oversight of health matters within their districts, and in addition are required to do bacteriological work in the matter of specimens sent to them similar to the work done in the provincial laboratories in Toronto and Kingston, with which you are familiar. This would seem to be a good plan and it is said to work well.

But the conditions in the province are much different. We have an area of 222,000 square miles, with a small population of about 2,192,000. Much of our territory is unorganized and sparsely or not at all settled, except for timber men at certain seasons of the year. To divide this into districts and apportion them to various medical officers would mean a great cost, for which our citizens, who are by no means educated to the neces-