

our Medical Associations, and if they do not, we ourselves only are to blame. And we are blameworthy, to our reproach be it said ; for, are we not, as the belligerents of disease, the natural guardians of the public health ? And should we not be a unit, not of apathy, but of earnest activity, in all matters of sanitary legislation ? Can anyone for a moment imagine that if each medical practitioner would exert himself in favor of some one movement, which has for its sole objects the prevention of disease, the protection of the people and the prolongation of life, that that object would not soon be attained ! Gentlemen, it is our duty to exert ourselves. It is our duty not only to support measures affecting the public health, but, as medical associations, to bring them before the notice of the different governments, and, as individuals, to gain the personal attention of our representatives in parliament, for surely we should be familiar with the necessities of sanitary reforms long before a body of legislators composed chiefly of lawyers, men of commerce and agriculturists. Let us then be up and doing, and while others go before the electors preaching national wealth, let our watchword always and for ever be—*national health*.

This brings me, rather sooner than I expected, to a subject which has often occupied my thoughts, and which has already, on several occasions, been alluded to from this chair—more particularly by the gentleman who occupied it in 1880. The great desirability, indeed the necessity, of establishing a Central or National Board of Health has long been felt by the profession, but until within the past year the question was never raised on the floor of the House of Commons. It has now been freely talked over by the medical members of Parliament, and a notice of the following resolution was given by Dr. Roome on the 11th of last March : “ That, in the opinion of this House, the time has come when the Federal Government should establish a Central Board of Health, with a responsible head, for the purpose of educating the people in health matters, preventing the spread of disease, and perfecting, as far as possible, the return of vital statistics.” The importance of such a movement as this can hardly be over-estimated. In the early history of this