

Dominion Medical Monthly

And Ontario Medical Journal

Vol. XLVI.

TORONTO, MAY, 1916

No. 5

Original Articles

THE PHYSICIAN IN INDUSTRY

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In the early history of medical work in industry the regular employment of a physician in an industrial establishment was usually considered an evidence of a largely benevolent attitude on the part of the employer. Whether or not this assumption was true, the results showed that the work of the physician in industry proved beneficial to the employer as well as to the employee, by protecting both against undue expense arising out of injury and sickness and by promoting a better mutual relationship. The results also proved that medical supervision of employees increased their efficiency, and that prompt medical and surgical treatment of injured and sick employees prolonged their lives and the period of their industrial usefulness. As these advantages became known among employers, medical supervision of employees was introduced into many plants, particularly into establishments where large numbers of workmen were employed.

The great value of the physician in industry became even more generally realized when workmen's compensation laws went into effect, which compelled the employer to shoulder the expense of injuries to employees regardless of the fault of either party. These laws forced the employer, in self-defence, not only to provide adequate medical and surgical treatment for employees injured in his establishment, but also to exert all reasonable effort for the prevention of future accidental injuries and for the elimination of working conditions that might prove harmful to the health of his employees. Experience, however, had shown that physique, temperament and general physical condition of employees affected to a large extent their liability to sickness or injury. Some men could safely do work that constantly required considerable physical effort, while the same work would cause discomfort and strain to

