

THE SASKATCHEWAN MEDICAL JOURNAL

VOL. 2

AUGUST, 1910

No. 8

Original Memoirs

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC HEALTH FROM A NATIONAL STANDPOINT*

By Chas. A. Hodgetts, M.D., L.R.C.P. (Lond.), Ottawa

Medical Adviser to the Commission of Conservation

Almost "as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean" have drifted on the nations of the earth, heeding little, caring less for the health of mankind. True it is that efforts have been made from time to time to prevent the spread of cholera and smallpox, and with the success achieved in these great health battles the people and governments have, on the whole, been satisfied. It is considered a nation's duty to maintain armaments of the highest degree of efficiency, at enormous cost to the people. For what? For the prevention of war, and when occasion arises for the defeat and the destruction of the invaders. Statesmen are convinced of the wisdom of such a policy; politicians revel in the discussion of the theme; and the people, who pay the piper, in more ways than one are carried away in an ecstasy of national delirium, and vote large sums of money for these very questionable national extravagances.

We flatter ourselves war with all its horrors may be averted in this preventive manner, and as taxpayers quietly foot the bills. How often in the world's history are the dogs

* Read before the Alberta Medical Association, Banff, August 12, 1910