

diseased and too poor to pay for treatment should receive treatment at the hands of the state. There is little good to come from finding a tubercular focus in a lung, unless something is done for the sufferer.

But it will not do to turn all this work over to the medical profession, either at their offices, or at the dispensaries and hospitals for free treatment. This treatment is a benefit to the State and should be paid for by the State. This view is being now held and widely urged by the public and the profession in several countries, especially in Britain.

The time is coming when hospital physicians and surgeons, the medical attendants on refuges, orphanages, and the poor in hospitals, etc., shall receive some public compensation for these valuable services to the public. It may be argued that this would be another burden on the tax payer. This is quite true, but the tax payers as a whole should not unload their burden on the medical profession as a class.

It is quite clear to those who are watching the trend of opinion that State medical treatment of the poor is coming at no distant date. The people of Britain last year spent \$800,000,000 in alcoholic stimulants. They can afford to pay for the medical treatment of the indigent. The medical profession renders a great service to the State, and should be paid for it as the sailor or soldier is now.

THE MEDICAL WITNESS.

This is an old topic, but one that retains its interest. The *Lancet* (London), for 11 March, 1911, deals with this question in a lengthy editorial. The opinions set forth therein are of considerable importance, and justify referring to them at this time.

The article calls attention to the unsatisfactory position which the medical witness is often called upon to fill. The judge, the magistrate, the jury, the legal counsel, they have but little knowledge of the medical points at issue, or of the medical evidence tendered to clear them up. In this way the giving of expert evidence is frequently far from a pleasing task to the doctor. To aid the court the suggestion has been made of appointing some one to assist the court.

The article agrees with the views recently expressed by Mr. Justice W. R. Riddell at the Academy of Medicine, Toronto, that it would not do to appoint crown experts and exclude the defendants from having their own independent experts. Even if the crown did appoint experts to report to the court the facts of the case, it must still be left open for the defence to put in such evidence as it deems best in its own interests. It must be that other than official experts may be called. With regard