

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 necessity of such a system, might not sanction the necessary expenditure. A medical man competent for such an office could hardly be obtained for less than \$2,000 per annum, so you can figure out what the cost would be.

As an alternative for the present, at least, it is my opinion that the Health Act should be so amended that the various medical health officers would receive a decent salary and be held strictly responsible to the Provincial Board of Health for the enforcement of its regulations. What this salary should be, might be based on population. It should be at least \$500 for the first thousand of population, with, in rural municipalities, a reasonable mileage in addition, and say \$100 for each additional 1,000 of population, up to \$15,000 or \$30,000. If such were the case a health officer would have some incentive and be under obligation to look after his duties. He would feel that if he enforced a proper observance of the laws upon his clientele he had the backing of the authorities, and a loss of patronage would be made up by a fair remuneration for his services.