

advanced public measures and improve by such emendations as make the law almost inoperative. I am quite sure the several Health Acts do not appear on the Statute Books as originally drafted by my friend, Dr. Bryce, the worthy Secretary of the Provincial Board. I need not quote particulars to exemplify this, as these Acts in all their minutae are familiar to you. I will merely say that the authority given Boards of Health and especially the Medical Officers, is not sufficiently arbitrary, the words "or other medical practitioner" too often dividing the responsibility and the little word "may" qualifying his duties and powers, as well as that of the Board; and I am sorry to say the Act of 1887 is open to similar objections. Throughout all is the one weakness that Local Boards cannot successfully finance, even in the smallest particular. All their accounts go before the municipal fathers and are of course passed with that cheery nonchalance so characteristic of those benevolent christians. Outside and beyond these troubles the live Health Officer will find plenty to engage his attention. It is his first duty to be vigilant and active, to anticipate the advent of epidemic and other diseases, to remove and remedy such unsanitary conditions as provoke disease, study the character of the locality over which he has supervision, strenuously advocate improved and effectual drainage, and insist upon a bountiful supply of pure water for domestic purposes; see to the cleansing of wells, cellars, highways and byways, and have his inspector regularly visit every house and suspected locality, and regularly report. In his hands is placed most sacred interests, which he should properly realize and faithfully serve. He should be prepared for every emergency and should not allow the enemy to gain an entrance before he defends the citadel—he must not awake to find the plague-stricken corpse at his feet.

The Local Health Officer has important, but not very onerous duties to perform. He does not require to devote very largely of his time, not certainly more than any intelligent citizen would willingly contribute, but with the Medical Health Officer it is different. He is required to reflect and mature his views and to direct by wise counsel, and is open to severe comment, sometimes unkind criticism; the correctness of his suggestions questioned, and even his *confreres* in Medicine will not at all times extend that sympathy which is his due. For these reasons I think his position should be permanent, so long as he proves himself a qualified and efficient officer, and his services remunerated by stated salary. The amount need