

and foreign countries, and an idea of those subjects which are engaging the attention of the most advanced and scientific thought.

It also affords the profession of New Brunswick what they very much need, the means of communicating with each other in matters not only of purely scientific interest, but in others of equal importance affecting them in their public capacity, in their relation with public health matters, and with various duties which a paternal government has so liberally saddled upon them.

During the last session of the Legislature, onerous and unremunerative duties were placed upon the physicians of this Province by the 'Public Health Act,' and the "Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act."

In no country in the world, that we know of, is the public health better looked after than in England, and this object is obtained by enlightened legislation which recognizes the fact that the way to get work done is by paying for it. The "Public Health Act" of New Brunswick, makes it the duty of every physician to report to the Board of Health every case of small-pox, cholera, diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhus fever, typhoid fever, measles or whooping cough that he meets with, the deaths that occur from any of the above diseases, as well as the measures he has taken as to isolation and disinfection. He is also required to give the place of occupation of patient, school attended by children, and report to the principal of the school attended by such children, the fact of their illness, and a great many other things of a similar nature. He is thus asked to do a large amount of special work for the public, which as his patient's medical attendant is not expected of him, and the doing of which properly involves the keeping of a special note book. He is in fact made the sanitary policeman of the Government, and becomes the most important factor in the success of the Act, for without his aid and information the Act becomes largely a dead letter.

One would naturally suppose that a Government requiring such services would be glad to pay for them; but no, our Government finds a cheaper way of being served than by the honest one of paying; instead of pay it offers the alternative of fine or imprisonment for non-performance.

So, too, the Registration Act requires physicians to furnish certificates of death to the Registrar, without any fee for the same. The giving of medical certificates, whether of health, death, or sanity,

is the giving of a professional opinion, the payment for which forms a part of the income of every practising physician. For the Government to step in and demand this service with the alternative of a fine for non-compliance may rightly be considered a form of highway robbery, and it might, with equal justice, compel the provision merchant to supply the poor with food without remuneration.

Is it to be wondered at that complaints are made of non-performance of these duties?

We believe the Profession have themselves to blame very largely for the state of affairs, that would allow a Legislature to even think of confiscating their services, as has been done in the Acts cited. They have always been ready, too ready by far, as the event proves, to grant their services gratuitously to the public, both collectively and individually, and to such an extent has this been done, that the public have at last reached the point of not only calmly accepting without even a thank you, but as in these Acts, actually compelling, with a penalty as the alternative, the professional services of every physician in the country.

If our services are worth having they are worth paying for; if they are not worth paying for, they are not worth our giving.

We believe the feeling of the Profession is entirely opposed to the unjust discrimination which places on them a burden and expense that should be borne by the people as a whole, and we commend this subject to the attention of the Medical Council who are in a position to consult with the Government and frame a remedy; nor, do we believe, for a moment, that the Government will be disinclined to put a stop to the evil when it is brought properly to their notice, more especially as it can be easily and satisfactorily adjusted.

It is a matter for the serious consideration of the medical members of Boards of Health, whether they are justified in retaining seats at the Board and administering a law so palpably unjust to themselves and the professional brethren all over the Province.

In many other respects the Public Health Act is a good one, and in its liberal distribution of penalties, it is satisfactory to notice that health officers themselves are not forgotten; we may thus witness the edifying spectacle of the engineer being hoist with his own petard.

Any suggestions and correspondence on this subject will be welcome, for it has a more important bearing on the welfare of the profession than is apparent at first sight.