

and to mitigate epidemics. In other words it is essential that one man in each district accomplishes the work both for the Federal authorities and for the local authorities. The main question now is what conditions can be laid down for the Federal and the State authorities respectively regarding the qualifications for such officers, and the jurisdiction of the same.

When we come to enquire into these matters we find that the difficulties are not so great as on the surface they would seem to be. Regarding the jurisdiction and the duties the matter is relatively simple. The Medical Officer of Health of any district must first and foremost be servant of the State. He must be appointed by the Health Department of the State and the power of appointment and dismissal must be in the hands of that department. As regards the duties, the main work in the way of inspection and the abatement of nuisances, etc., is a State matter. As regards infectious disease and its prevention or arrest, the State and the Federal authorities are equally interested, and the work done for one authority would be that accomplished for the other. As regards mortality and other statistics those also are matters that equally concern the Federal Government and the State. The report of the Officer of Health made for the one body has but to be duplicated for the other, and all that can be asked of the Medical Officer of Health is that the annual report of the general health of the district be so drawn up as to fulfil the requirements both of the State and of Washington. The Federal Government requires certain information from him, and this it must have; and further it must be assured that the information published be from an authoritative source.

The only practical way by which, short of possessing the power of appointment, the Federal authorities can assure themselves that the medical officers throughout the State are trained and competent is by their demanding that those appointed as medical officers shall have had the full special training requisite for the performance of their particular duties. And the only practical way by which they can assure themselves is by their laying down regulations as to what shall constitute a proper training. What is more the routine information required from one end of the country to the other being identical, the standard and the qualifications for all the States in the Union must be identical. In other words the matter of prescribing what shall be the training and what shall be the examination standard of future Medical Officers of Health is pre-eminently a Federal concern. It by no means follows that the central government should itself afford that training, or that there be one portal of entrance through an examination held at Washington.