

## Correspondence.

### THE APPOINTMENT OF A MINISTER OF HEALTH.

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*To the Editor of THE CANADIAN PRACTITIONER AND REVIEW.*

DEAR SIR:

Dr. Hodgetts, at the recent meeting of the Ontario Medical Association, read a paper entitled, "A Plea for a Provincial Minister of Health." I was unable to be present when the paper was read, but when the committee which had been appointed to consider this suggestion brought in its report asking the Association for an endorsement of it, I moved that the report be not received, giving very briefly some objections to it. These objections were endorsed by several speakers and by a vote of the Association.

The question raised by Dr. Hodgetts' paper is a very important one from at least two standpoints. These can be briefly summarized under two heads:

1. Is there any necessity for a Provincial Minister of Health?

2. Is it wise for the Ontario Medical Association to even introduce any question that might divide its members into rival political factions?

In answer to the first question, it can be asserted as an indisputable fact that the present Provincial Secretary is, as all his predecessors have been, quite capable of fully understanding and efficiently dealing with any matters pertaining to the public health. He is, under present conditions, absolutely free to select a Board of Health, or a commission, from the very best men in the whole Province, whereas a Minister of Health would, of necessity, be chosen from one party; and party exigencies would narrow the selection to one of its leaders.

The work of a non-partisan commission or Board would be considered by the Legislature on its merits, whereas the work of a Minister would always incite fierce party criticism. The work of the former would be continuous; the work of a Minister, in so far as he was concerned, would abruptly end with the defeat of the party. No Minister could do more or better work than is being done by Dr. Bryce, Dr. Hodgetts, and the Provincial Board of Health. The cost to the country