

nwp
971.61
W21

Notes on Medical Legislation

— IN —

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Herbert Spencer, in his "Data of Ethics," teaches that the greatest good for the greatest number is of more importance than the greatest good for the individual; that before the claims of the unit come those of the nation; if the two work harmoniously, so much the better, but in any case the nation demands the prior consideration.

One of the chief duties and desires of a people is to keep itself in a good condition of health, mental and physical, the same desire also obtains with individuals; the two factors can work harmoniously on this point.

So strong is the desire for health and strength (and man is so abundantly endowed with pity and sympathy), that the necessity for taking care of the sick, relieving their pains, healing their wounds, and averting for a time the hand of death, brought into being at an early period of the world's history, a distinct calling, or profession, now represented by the every-day medical practitioner.

The same desire on the part of the nation has resulted in the various legislative bodies enacting laws for the purpose of improving the hygienic surroundings of the people they govern, as witness in this connection the laws compelling vaccination, the removal of sewage, the isolation of cases of infectious disease, the sanitary arrangements of dwellings, the appointing inspectors of nuisances and officers of health, the establishment of quarantine stations, etc., all having in view the prevention of disease; all practical illustrations of the desire of various peoples to be in a healthy condition. To ensure proper care for the sick and injured, laws have been passed regulating the practice of medicine and surgery.

That the latter laws are absolutely necessary is beyond question, since it must be conceded that a proper degree of training is essential to enable any individual to successfully and intelligently cope with disease, even in its simplest