

done by the one centre, all the provinces would get the good of all the information obtained; if done by each separate province, each would only get that relating to itself—a vast and most vital difference. There appears to be a good deal of misapprehension amongst members of the profession relative to this question of Federal and provincial public health legislation and action, arising apparently from want of time amongst the busy practitioners to consider thoroughly the whole question in all its bearings. Coercive legislation, enactments, by-laws, etc., and the carrying out of the same, must remain as now under provincial and municipal control. But any one who will give the subject due thought and consideration will surely see that the collection of the proposed statistics and reports and utilization of these for the public instruction and benefit, as above indicated, can be much more thoroughly, economically and profitably done by one centre than by many—with vastly better results in every way. In agriculture, the one Central Experimental Farm can be utilized for the education of the farmers of the whole Dominion much better than for each province to sustain such a farm and attempt the instruction separately. Somewhat similar it is in relation to the analysis of food, etc., in the Dominion; and to the quarantines and diseases of animals. Moreover, it may be well to note here that, if we desire to make Canada as soon as we can the great country she is surely destined to become, while defending in a large measure provincial rights and privileges, we must as far as possible encourage a spirit of Canadianism, a unity and oneness, in all possible questions and subjects and not manifest too much "provincialism." As already in several of the provinces there is in a large measure provision for obtaining a record of births, marriages and deaths, it has been well suggested that, at least for some time to come, each province may as well in its own way collect such statistics and then allow them on some terms, to be utilized by the Central Department and dealt with for the public benefit in all the provinces; those provinces which have not now a system for this purpose being induced in some way to provide such. It appears that it is now proposed to endeavor to obtain for the statistical department in Ottawa the information above indicated, from physicians in all parts of the Dominion, relating to the prevailing condition of the public health—i. e., reports of any epidemic and cases of the most important diseases, by providing the physicians with blanks for this purpose. Doubtless the Government, any liberal government, would be quite willing to pay fairly for such reports, if the people through their representatives in parliament were willing to vote the money for the purpose. Are the people willing? Many members of parliament, including at least one physician say, decidedly no: that if they were to vote for a sum requisite for such purpose they would be censured by their constituents. Then we can only, or must, first of all, educate the people up to a right appreciation of the importance and necessity for such information. They will then doubtless be willing to pay fairly for it.

Now this is largely, almost wholly, in the hands of the medical practitioners of Canada: what will they do in its behalf? It has been repeatedly said by a few of them that physicians now do too much without remuneration, more than their share, etc., and that the government, i. e., the people, of course, should pay for all such information. This is very true; the people should pay; but as it is now, they will not pay, at present. Shall we not then endeavor not only to teach them the value of having it done for their own sakes, but also to be willing in course of time to pay for the same?—teach them without pay, for a time? What else can be done? Medicine, it may be observed, is not a business, but a liberal profession, perhaps the most liberal of all the professions, once chiefly practiced free by the priesthood. Is not the profession now, are not the members of it as a class, worthy and

desirous that it shall ever remain thus liberal, free, noble, bounteous? The physician gives what cannot be weighed or measured, and hence well estimated as to its money value. He must, however, get a livelihood for his family and in this business age a certain amount of business energy is necessary. As the *New York Medical Record*, of Jan. 16th, 1892, says the physician's sympathy for the suffering, and his absorbing interest in the scientific aspects of his cases, raise his mind above financial considerations, and cause him to forget that he is working for the support of himself and family, as well as for the good of humanity. The physician has furthermore, as a rule, an inborn repugnance, or incapacity, for money-making pure and simple. He dislikes the financial relations and would gladly treat patients without a thought of fee, if he could be guaranteed an income to supply the needs of his family. Owing to this shrinking from even the appearance of being mercenary he often hesitates to prosecute his just claims. No one knows better than the writer how much has already been done by the medical profession in Canada in promoting and advancing the public health interests in the Dominion. It has always been foremost in this work and indeed all sanitary progress is due to its efforts. Will physicians not now "one and all," continue thus liberal, and not allow the question of "pay" to influence them to the neglect of any public benefit or scientific proceeding? Colton it appears long ago said "Physicians are becoming too mercenary." But he wickedly added,—"Parsons too lazy and lawyers too powerful." Notwithstanding the influence which wealth now gives, there is that which wealth cannot purchase or procure. If the profession desires to retain its high position, or to push itself up to its proper place in society, as the first of all professions, the members of it must not approach the "mercenary," although they may properly and should place a high value on their services with all those who are able and especially not unwilling, to make full return for the same. When an effort is made, as it may be, to obtain a fair recorded return from the medical practitioners of Canada as the general condition of public health, especially as relating to infections or malarial diseases in their respective localities, hundreds will doubtless cheerfully respond to the calls of science and the public weal. Will they not all do so? When the work has been done for a time and the value of it has been manifested, proper representation of it to the Government and the people will doubtless bring the reward.

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ON THE RELATION OF EPILEPSY TO INJURIES OF THE HEAD.

In concluding a paper on the above subject J. J. Putnam, M.D., says (*Boston Med. and Surg. Jour.*) (1) The causes of epilepsy are numerous; and we cannot hope in most cases remove them all by early trephining and care to the wound, though these measures, and especially the removal of fragments, are probably very important.

(2) The local and the general injury of the brain are probably of prime importance, as causes of epilepsy, and are to some extent independent of fracture. The former may perhaps sometimes be treated as suggested by Keen, but the latter can only be reached by general treatment.