

duced to the lowest minimum of absolute necessity. To maintain the present existing services in a fair degree of effectiveness, let alone make any new improvement, requires all our available funds. It will be four or five years probably, and then only should we have an honest Council during the intervening period, before we may hope to arrive at the point where we shall again have sufficient revenue to provide for ordinary needs.

Again the low estimate of civic duty entertained by many aldermen and by those who elect them, and the apparent unwillingness to engage in serious purification of the staff of civic employes presents many difficulties. A civic employé may be incompetent; you cannot remove him, however, without the approval of the committee. The moment you criticize him, you incur the personal enmity and bitter opposition of some alderman. To touch the employé is regarded as a personal insult to his protector, in return for which the reformer must be prepared to suffer the consequences.

A third difficulty arises whenever we attempt to economize. Where additional appropriation is impossible, we sometimes endeavour to obtain the means for new work by reducing the cost of existing services and here we are met at every turn with obstacles. On my advent to the chairmanship of this Committee, I desired to purchase goods for the department from wholesale firms in order to secure the lowest rates. This was opposed by certain members of my Committee, who claimed to be entitled to name the furnisher, from among their electors, who should supply the goods at his own price. Doubtless the city loses thousands of dollars annually in consequence of such claims for "patronage."

The final drawback which I would cite has already been covered when referring to the execution of existing regulations. I believe that the code of hygienic by-laws on our books is fairly comprehensive; the difficulty lies in putting them into force. Aldermen are supposed to pass by-laws for the protection of the public, as a matter of fact they spend a good share of their time in coming between the law and favoured individuals.

When, therefore, you criticize the Board of Health, as I certainly trust you will never cease to do, kindly remember the limitations under which reformers serve and be as charitable with us as you can. Widespread reformation is not accomplished in a day, but much can be done by keeping constantly at it; and I am confident that if the medical men, in season and out of season, spur on the public to demand that improved measures affecting the public health be passed, that the existing laws be unflinchingly enforced and that the requisite financial support be given to the Health Department there is an era of great advance before us.