

CONVENTION OF B. C. MUNICIPALITIES—

(Continued)

dispensary nurse should be the accredited agent of the health department and her duty would be to actively search for cases of tuberculosis. She would keep under supervision all known open cases. When an advanced case was discovered she would arrange for the examination of all contacts, particularly children. She would arrange for the proper institutional care of all diagnosed as requiring that care. Her duties would be multifarious, but in short she would be the adviser and friend of all those afflicted with tuberculosis. The dispensary would be the clearing house and while part of the activities of the health department, it would be necessary to have the medical part of the work under the supervision of a physician having special knowledge of tuberculosis. This means that supervising the various dispensaries in the Province there would be a tuberculosis officer. It may be objected that dispensaries are all right for larger cities, but how about the rural communities? There is to my mind no reason why there should not be dispensaries in the rural communities, but in the rural communities the work would be widened to embrace all health matters.

As a result of a report by Dr. Biggs of New York legislation has been recently passed in the New York State making its compulsory for every County having a population of 35,000 to provide hospitals or sanatorium beds for the treatment of tuberculosis. It is the imperative duty of this Province to adopt such well tried measures as have proved effective in England and other countries. Let us cease trifling with this problem and let not future generations reproach us that we knew but did not act. With our splendid climate our uncrowded cities, and our young prosperous people, there is no reason why we should allow the matter to drift until we have the enormous problem upon us that they have in some of the older countries of the world. The duty of the municipality is to provide for the care of those suffering from communicable diseases, who may be discovered within their boundaries. They are not called upon to bear the entire expense of this and what proportion of that expense they should bear in connection with tuberculosis patients, is hardly within the limits of this discussion. There should though be no quibbling when it is a matter of public health and the care of the sick within our gates. The way some patients are passed from one municipality to another in order that the expense of their care may be placed somewhere else is not only cruel and in-

humane to the unfortunate individual, but a menace to the health of the whole community.

The present arrangements are very suitable and the great difficulty is the lack of accommodation. It is for the municipalities to get together with the provincial government and arrange accommodation to provide for those people who are ill, and as I have pointed out the advanced and dying cases could quite as well be taken care of, and more humanely, near their own home.

It means the municipalities or combinations of municipalities should get wards for these advanced cases of pulmonary tuberculosis. The wandering and indigent case should not be passed from one municipality to another but should be taken care of immediately by the municipality where he is discovered but the responsibility for his maintenance in case of a dispute should be decided by some Provincial referee and his decision should be final.

In the old forests of England and France there are now being destroyed for the purposes of the war, many old and noble trees. The head forester passing through the forests marks with a broad arrow of white paint or a blaze with an axe, the trees that are to be felled. If you could but see it there is marked on the forehead of 10% of our children the broad arrow which means destruction by the tubercle bacillus. The average age at which they shall die is 35. Just when half the span of life is run and just the period of life when their work is most valuable to the world.

Then is it not worth our best efforts to do what we can to rid this Province as far as possible from this terrible scourge. Nor is the struggle a hopeless one. If I had time to quote you statistics I could show you how the great work done during the past 20 years by the various Anti-Tuberculosis Societies has saved many thousands of lives, and even in British Columbia the work of the Anti-Tuberculosis Society has resulted in the saving of hundreds of lives, and prolongation of the lives of others for many years. "After all", says Sir William Osler, "it is a wonderful campaign in which we are engaged. We have tracked the enemy and know his every stronghold—and we know his three allies, poverty, and housing and drink. Though the ravages have been reduced, tuberculosis remains the most powerful among man's innumerable enemies. Before us is a long, slow hundred years' war, — or even longer — in which co-ordination and enterprise will win out just as surely as they have done in typhus and typhoid fever. Meanwhile who dare say the struggles naught availeth, when month by month and year by year thousands are saved who would otherwise have perished in a miserable, lingering and untimely death.

SOCIAL DISEASES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

ADDRESS OF HON. DR. MCLEAN, PROVINCIAL
SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF
EDUCATION.

"I am sure that it affords me a great deal of pleasure to be present here this morning. At the outset I wish to thank the Convention for the honour they have done me in asking me to deliver an address at this important meeting.

As municipal representatives, you have probably as much important work to do as any body of legislators can have before them. The work of the Provincial Legislature is important, but it seems to me that the work of the municipalities is one that comes nearest to the lives of the people of the Province, and you are doing, as municipal legislators, a work that counts for much.

Now, taking all the work that municipal legislators have to perform, I think the problems that come under the purview of my department, viz., public health and education, are probably the most important.

Someone once, asked the question: When should you begin the education of the child? The suggestive reply was, One hundred years before its birth. I quote this simply because if it is true of the education of the child, then it is doubly true of its health; it is as true today as it was two thousand years ago, that "the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children." Therefore it is very necessary that a great deal of attention should be paid to health matters. Attention such as I am referring to might imply that prior to the marriage ceremony it should be required that the contracting parties should have a clean bill of health and that they should have a certificate to that effect. This proce-

dure has been tried in various parts of the world but not with any degree of success; in fact it has not succeeded at all, so that it can be seen that it is absolutely necessary that a campaign of education should be carried on to overcome and rid the world of these social diseases that are such a great menace to the health of the Dominion, and to the natural increase of our population.

Social diseases are responsible for forty per cent. of the deaths of infants under one year. This means a very serious problem for our health departments, at a time when our Province is crying for more population. Such a drain as that on our population is very serious for the government and people of a new and growing country, such as we have here. It is a question of very great importance, and one which the Government of every community of the world is beginning to consider seriously. In 1913 a commission was appointed in Great Britain to make an investigation into the matter and they gave their report to Parliament in 1916. Sir William Osler, the dean of the medical profession throughout the world, at an important medical meeting in Great Britain, said that he considered this question was important enough to make an investigation into it from a national as well as from a medical point of view.

The United States Government has also been considering the question of national morality; it seems to me, therefore, that before a body, such as we have here, of men representative of the best from our various municipalities, a mat-