

To the Members of The British Columbia Hospital Association.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Last year I had the honor of reading a paper before your Convention on "The Duty of the State to the Individual." This year I will endeavor to show the Duty of the State towards the Hospitals.

The work which was formerly left to philanthropy is coming to be accepted as an integral part of social politics. At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century all hospitals were private. This century notes a great change, and now over two-thirds are either maintained or assisted out of public funds. The state is slowly recognizing that the individual is a most valuable asset, for without the individual the natural resources of the country would lay dormant and, without the individual is kept one hundred per cent. efficient, best returns are not obtained. To be worthy of our Province is to be efficient, and to be efficient is to be healthy. The wealth of the Province is subordinate to the health of the Province and dependent upon it.

I appreciate the financial demands made on the Government and Municipalities for hospital purposes, and while the amounts are large, yet they are not sufficient to meet the requirements. The present system of per capita grant is wrong in principle, being upon a sliding scale; as applied to The Vancouver General Hospital, forty-five cents per diem, and with a maximum of \$1.00 per diem. The large hospitals offering equipment and service are penalized for doing good work and as a consequence are losing money on every patient, the large amount of non-pay work produces every month the usual deficit. During the last session numerous delegations approached the Government asking for a broadening of taxation. I would suggest that the Provincial Government take over the total expenditure of our Hospitals and Schools and make them Provincial Institutions. This would give the necessary relief required by the Municipalities and, by the levy of a special tax for Hospitals and Schools, no extra burden would be placed on the Government. Some individuals might object to further taxation, but, in the case of our Hospitals, about \$6.00 a year levied on all persons over eighteen and under fifty would meet our requirements. The Province had last year 730,757 days treatment at an estimated cost of \$2.00 per day, \$1,461,514.00. Estimating our population at the present time as when the census was taken in 1911, we then had between the ages of eighteen and fifty, 247,586; of Orientals, Chinese and Japanese, 23,028, giving a taxable population of 270,614 at \$6.00 a year, \$1,623,684.00 or \$161,170.00 surplus. This extra amount would meet the cost of operating the department.