

from Montreal that there was no epidemic prevailing and the fact that the Province of Quebec was without a health board that could furnish reliable information.

The epidemic was well developed in Montreal early in July, and in August the health board in New Hampshire, realizing that nothing was being done to restrict the spread of the disease, determined to warn the management of the great through lines of transportation traversing New England and the Canadas of the danger they were in of having a panic that would unnecessarily disturb transportation and might lead to a complete embargo by reason of a shotgun quarantine.

This notice was most kindly received and the managers of international transportation interests asked for information and instructions of what was necessary to protect and maintain their traffic engagements. The result of this information was a conference of railway managers and surgeons with the boards of health of New Hampshire and the Province of Ontario. This took place in the city of Montreal. A delegation from this conference met by appointment a committee of the Montreal city government. This committee, while admitting there were some cases of smallpox in the city, strenuously asserted that it was far from being an epidemic. This statement was utterly and irrefutably answered by Dr. Coverton of the Ontario Board of Health, who brought to their notice duly attested certificates of deaths by smallpox, which showed that 127 had died during the previous week and 39 the day previous. The daily records of deaths were sufficient to show the increase of the epidemic week by week and it is to the credit of the mayor and city government of Montreal that they willingly adopted a course of rigid investigation that brought into existence not only an efficient health board for the Province of Quebec, but also a Dominion board of health that is receiving commendation and support from sanitarians all over the world.

In bringing about these results and municipal reforms a great deal of animosity was engendered among the ignorant and superstitious. The anti-vaccination element in society took it upon themselves to stir up dissensions, riots prevailed and large numbers of the inhabitants boldly proclaimed that they would not submit to such rules and regulations as were deemed necessary to suppress the epidemic. The government was most ably and earnestly supported by the railroads, as a single instance will verify.

The inhabitants of a small suburban station in which was posted the rules and regulations considered necessary to protect its people and the inhabitants of other places, took occasion to send word to the division superintendent of the road running through the town that they would not submit to the rules and tore down the copies that had been posted. No further rules were sent them, but the next day every train passed that station at the rate of thirty miles an hour. The station master closed up the depot and it remained closed until the authorities of that town appointed a local health board and instructed them to support and carry out the rules and regulations that had been adopted by the managers of all railways in Canada.

A single instance of this kind was amply sufficient to bring about a reform and the people of that section were very soon educated in the elementary principles of hygiene. It is but a simple act of justice to these people to report that in a very short period they were

enthusiastic supporters of every rule and regulation that gave assurance of protecting themselves and neighbors from the direful effects of a loathsome epidemic.

In less than sixty days the epidemic was stamped out and the rules and regulations abandoned. It is but fair to the management of those roads to state that with the exception of the importation of rags and paper stock there was no interruption of the running of either passenger or freight trains, neither was there any development of the disease in New England. Sanitary inspectors examined all through passengers while in transit, many were vaccinated, some were quarantined as suspicious cases and a great deal of baggage was thoroughly disinfected at division and international points.

In a paper of this kind designed for an association of medical men it is unnecessary to multiply instances of this work, neither am I disposed to flatter myself that I am imparting any new information to the members. Still it is probably quite true that a great many of the managers of our railroads have never been called on to provide for the stamping out of an epidemic of this nature, therefore if this shall be the means of bringing a work of this kind to their notice it will have served its purpose.

NATIONAL MEDICAL LEGISLATION.

Presented to the Section on State Medicine at the Forty-eighth Annual Meeting of the American Medical Association, held at Philadelphia, Pa., June 1-4, 1897.

BY JAMES T. GREELEY, M.D.

NASHUA, N. H.

I have the honor to address you on this occasion in behalf of action, already initiated, well-advanced and generally approved by you and by the profession of this and of foreign countries, because it is designed and calculated to raise the character of the profession, to exalt the capacity of those on whom the welfare of all mankind rests, to weed out or fitly qualify those empirics who are at once the bane of medicine and the terrible foes of social health and of all prosperity. The intention is necessary, is wise, practical and permanent. Its propriety is demonstrated as well by the notorious evil against which it is leveled as it is by the patent values of the purposes for which it is framed. Wherever attempted it has been crowned and lauded both by popular and professional approval. It appeals to all who desire health for themselves or others; is simple and unequivocal; criticises those only who are notoriously unworthy of tolerance and exalts modest merit as much as it condemns charlatanry, ignorance, impudence and murder. Briefly expressed, this movement approves, tends and works for a higher, a universal law, which shall raise the standard of medical education in all schools, weed out practitioners who, under whatever sounding school title, are evidently unfitted to judge the issues of life and death, and perform the duties for which they are employed, and thereby raise the practice of medicine to a level with that of other arts and sciences upon which mankind depends for its welfare and permanence, for its very being. Fortunately, I address those who are experts in all that pertains to the subject matter, and who have been deterred from action heretofore only by the enormity of the evil and apparent hopelessness of David fighting with Goliath. Their judgment is our own, their sympathies are ours. We labor only to have that

judgment and their sympathy expressed and forced forward in order to place the profession in this country far to the front, and the sound health of the community attained and preserved. To secure this unquestionable benefit I address a select body of scientific men who were thoroughly trained for their duties, who have kept step with all advances, whose merits commend them to the confidence of their patients and their communities, and who are vitally concerned in the maintenance of sound doctrine and in the abrogations of charlatany as the minister in his pulpit or the judge upon the bench.

We seek a comprehensive law to regulate the practice of medicine; a law which shall render medical quackery as dangerous as highway robbery, or more so; as disreputable as chicken stealing; which shall positively require competent knowledge as a condition *sine qua non* to a degree; and which shall be enforced by competent pains and penalties. Is there one here present who dissents from this object, who will state that it is either unnecessary or insufficient? I hear no such avowal. Were there such, even one, I would refer his opinion to the opinions of the great medical luminaries of France, of Germany, of Great Britain and all Europe, who have for years insisted that the physician's education should be *teres ac rotundus*, round and full; that it should be kept so in the light of later discoveries; that quacks should be prevented from undermining the public health and that every gain in every art should be sifted for its medicinal uses. But really, there is no scientific, no professional nor reasonable objection to our demand. The only antagonism proceeds from those men who wish to secure the honors and rewards of medical skill without learning what medicine is, without mastering anatomy, without acquiring chemistry, without such knowledge of botany even as that which stored the good wives' simples in one century and the pissewa and patented concoctions in another. They are animated by the same spirit which led the Ephesians to worship Diana—that of gain.

But this is not modern medicine. Modern medicine requires its pupils to thoroughly know the anatomy and make-up of man; the nature, stage and history of every disease, and to know as thoroughly the means and agencies to be employed in every event. Coke-Lyttleton said that law should be comprehended in theology, because it treated the way in which God operates. Under that rule, medicine should rate even higher, since it prescribes a cure for the evils which it alone can detect. It is the supreme and constant arbiter of human life and as such derives its knowledge from the most recondite sources, and ascertains its prescriptions from all that is old and all that is new. The most gifted can scarcely hope to compress all that is set before them in this task. What can the ignorant unlearned quack really do with one cure-all and a dozen alternatives?

I have spoken generally, but my speech is not without ample and educated reply. The officers of many boards of health, medical societies, registers of health, etc., replying to letters of inquiry concerning the evil and its remedy, have stated directly, or *inter aliiis*, that "under the act just passed in this State (Massachusetts) the traveling quacks have left the State and we expect still better results." The secretary of the South Carolina Medical Examining Board says: "The State law works well; has raised the standard of the schools and will keep tramp doctors out." The sec-

retary of the California Board of Health says: "There is a restraining influence in the law and I do not know that other States are better situated so far as quacks are concerned." The secretary of the Wisconsin Medical Society says: "The laws relating to medical practice are exceedingly lax, in fact, a dead letter, no registration being required and there being no board of examiners. I am in favor of most any kind of a compromise with the 'sectarians' in order to get a board of some sort that will help us to get a law passed." The Nevada Board of Health remarks that "the recorder is the sole judge of the genuineness of a diploma and the standing of a college, which makes the law an absolute failure."

In South Dakota "the enforcement of the law has compelled unqualified practitioners to leave the State and has compelled some medical societies to raise the standard of medical education." The Missouri Board of Health says: "The law has prevented the location of quacks and charlatans in our State; whenever a man having a diploma from a recognized school has been guilty of unprofessional conduct, we have revoked his license. We have advanced the standard of our medical societies and will soon require changes to elevate the standard of preliminary requirements." The Montana Board of Medical Examiners states: "Our law has operated to the entire satisfaction of all persons except those who have felt its weight. Our ranks are singularly free from impostors and quacks and the stranger can send for a physician assured that he will get a reputable one. The laity are in sympathy with our law and discriminate between educated and uneducated men." The State Board of Minnesota says: "The law has been very effective for nine years and has given the State the best profession of any State in the Union. We trust to improve it by increasing the preliminary education of our candidates." In Delaware "the law has been in operation a year and has given general satisfaction, although the homeopaths opposed it. Our State was a dumping ground for those who could not pass the boards of other States, and we copied the law of Pennsylvania which was very satisfactory." In New York "the general standard has been raised by the enactment of the law." North Carolina: "The law regulating the practice of medicine has been extremely beneficial in raising the standard of the profession. Our law is the oldest in the United States." The Washington (D. C.) Society "is urging Congress to legislate for its protection, and its hopes will soon be fulfilled." The Kansas Board "is making a desperate effort for the enforcement of its law all over the State, and hopes the next legislature will enact a better." In Indiana "the law is no law and the State Medical Society wants a four years' graded course and a rigid examination by a non-partisan board. As it is the State has no law on the subject." In Idaho "the effort of the State Society to establish a State Board of Examiners was defeated by the quacks, but this winter will see such a bill passed."

Such is the law as it stands in so many States. Such are the reasons for the enactment of a general law that will protect the people from malpractice and ignorance and protect competent physicians from the rivalry of quacks and charlatans. There is every reason why such a measure should be perfected, rendered uniform, and nationalized. The end can be won only by united action, and that action can be

secured only by combined and persistent labor. The desired end being approved by reason and testimony, let us formulate the legislation required, and, co-operating with every State in which the *mens sana in sano corpore* is preferred to ill health and dishonest medicine, press it unitedly and persistently. Earnest endeavors will secure universal approval and we shall see our bills of mortality reduced and the just desire of the medical profession endorsed by popular and general approval. The object is National; let the effort be as general.

MORE PHYSICIANS AND LESS LAWYERS IN CONGRESS AND LEGISLATURE.

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The present number of physicians in the United States Congress is ten. Lawyers are 303, or about 70 per cent. (See Appendix A.)

The present is a good time to discuss this, as a department of public health in the President's Cabinet is advocated, and as the Government attends to the biologic needs of plants, cattle, hogs and sheep more than they do to the same needs of human beings.

Public health is worth more than coal, gold, houses, lands, silver or wine, although it is unlisted in the census of National wealth. There is need of physicians awaking to a realizing sense of their National rights and importance as citizens, especially in governmental bodies.

Congress and legislatures are representative bodies of the people.—Professional people alone are not truly represented. The law alone can not represent medicine. There are in the United States some 75,000 lawyers who represent some 49,000,000 of people. This is altogether beyond reason and this is said with no reproach. The same proportion of physicians and clergymen in Congress would be as bad. This was seen in the Methodist International Conference, held in the Metropolitan Opera House in New York some years ago, and in the AMERICAN MEDICAL and in the British Medical Association meetings. To me it seemed as if the clerics and medics argued as acutely, split hairs as finely and delayed business as refinedly as their legal brethren in Congress. Probably they could do no better.

When suitable persons can be found in all professions and employments in the United States they should be representatives in Congress, to avoid the "mint, anise and cummin" modes of doing delegated business.

I speak for 120,000 physicians in America and give the following reasons why they should be in Congress in larger proportion to lawyers than 10 to 303:

1. Out of fifty-six signers to the Declaration of Independence, two were physicians, *i. e.*, Benjamin Rush and Lyman Hall. Twenty were lawyers, according to the best of my information. Thus medicine was to law as one in ten. This is better than one in thirty.

2. Physicians are citizens entitled to representative-ship.

3. Physicians come into more intimate contact with the people and know them more intimately than any other class of professionals.

4. They are all the time studying *evidence* more than are lawyers, because life or death is involved in their business more.

5. The emergencies physicians meet far excel those that lawyers meet. Physicians at any time are liable to be called to attend the highest officials, whose lives are of priceless value to the Nation, and at once physicians are made to fill all the functions of lawyers; to be as to evidence, counsel for, counsel against, judge and jury, promptly within a few minutes, sometimes three, and on the physician's action depend the life or death of, it may be, a president! It took the law six months to decide Guiteau's case, but a shorter time to settle that of President Garfield, the victim. Physicians must exert the same qualities of mind as lawyers, but how much more rapidly! Matters of medicine are always coming up in State affairs which physicians should decide, not lawyers. It is needless to enumerate.

6. The effort to have a department of public health in the Cabinet is evidence that the public sees that lawyers can not and ought not to administer such matters, just as it is proposed to have a cabinet department of commerce and manufactures. The fitness of things urges this action. A physician in the Cabinet would be a rarity, but we aver that he ought to be there as to State medicine.

7. The good effect of having medical examiners in place of unmedical coroners is an argument in favor of our position. Its efficiency, economy and common sense are very palpable when this plan has been adopted.

8. The effect of physicians in their own department being ruled over by lay people is embarrassing, harassing, if not paralyzing. In our late war this was done away with in some cases and with the happiest results. At any rate, in 1889, British army medical officials made the most favorable comments on this and alleged it as a superiority over English administration. A like exaltation in Congress might do as well.

9. Laws have been passed, or tried to be passed, as to medical matters, which are not complimentary to the legal fraternity, as on their faces they showed a want of acquaintance with the subject. Once there was an effort of Congress to award \$100,000 for a cholera cure. It was required that all cases should be cured for one year. The lawyers forgot that this was impossible from outside causes, *i. e.*, feeble constitutions, late stages of disease, want of response to remedies and natural death rate. Sometimes the poison of disease is so powerful that the most active remedies fail. You can kick dead lions, but not some live dogs. Again, medicines act differently on different cases.

10. It is the right of physicians to be better represented in Congress because of legal medicine, and to do away with the disgraceful pitting of medical experts against each other. Commissions should be appointed as in France.

11. The medical profession is the most public spirited in deeds of charity. It gives away most to the public in unpaid labor. It has not its equal in its self-denying labors, in season or out, by day and night, summer and winter, storm and calm, danger and safety, for the worthy and unworthy. No profession works so hard to render its ministrations or existence needless. Many physicians pass their lives in going about doing good, and die poor because they