

The State should assuredly furnish the legal machinery by which adequate air-space, &c., is secured; it should see that no unfair demands are made upon it by reason of the admission of indigent sufferers from the disease from other countries; its duty it is to empower local authorities to make suitable by-laws for the prohibition of spitting in public places; the State alone can insist on compulsory notification. It is a disputable matter as to how far the State as against the municipalities should control the inspection of the foodstuffs capable of transmitting the disease; but it is when we come to the allocation of the cost of carrying out requirement No. 1 that the greatest diversity of opinion is to be found.

In the Old Country many splendid sanatoria have been erected through the generosity of benevolent citizens, and, save with respect to those sufferers who are inmates of a poorhouse, it is never suggested that the State should play the part of banker. Here, by reason of the fact that our ordinary hospitals are in part supported by local rates and part by the central authority, the common answer to an appeal for funds to establish a hospital for such cases is, "It is the duty of the State."

I suggest that this only expresses half the truth, and if my contention be right it will be seen that in this country, at any rate, the State does more than fulfil its duty. For every pound raised by rate the central authority is by law bound to subsidise it to the extent of one more pound; and for every twenty shillings subscribed by private persons, another twenty-four can be obtained from the Consolidated Fund. In addition to this, the Government has established a splendid sanatorium on the hills near Cambridge for sufferers throughout the colony.

There are a large number of both curable and incurable cases among the absolutely penniless, and I submit that the time has come when appeals such as those made by Dr. Valintine, Nurse Maud, and Nurse Holgate should receive the same satisfactory answer as has been given in Taranaki, Christchurch, Nelson, and Wellington.

One other way in which great help could be given would be to enlist the sympathies of every one by means of the setting-up of a society for the prevention of consumption somewhat on the lines of the association of which our Sovereign King Edward is the patron. His Excellency Lord Plunket, in the course of a speech at the Cambridge Sanatorium, expressed his willingness to help such a society in any way that seemed best. I ask you, as representing the medical profession of New Zealand, to affirm the desirability of establishing such a society. Under its auspices medical men should deliver lectures, and endeavour to interest the public in this great life-saving propaganda. Members might become a sort of preventive police, reminding persons who were careless in spitting on pavements and in public places that such practices were not only illegal, but dangerous. With such united action it would not be a difficult matter to stop or lessen the yearly sacrifice to this modern juggernaut.