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OBJECTIONS STATED

TO PROPOSED SITE OF THE TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL.

Two Subscribers to the Fund Tell Why They are Opposed to Erecting the Building on General Hospital Grounds.

Kingston, March 8.—(To the Editor): Having read Dr. W. T. Connell's letter in Monday's issue on the subject of establishing a consumptive sanatorium on the general hospital grounds, I am surprised that a man of the doctor's standing should make the charge that the petition signed by many of our prominent citizens requested the city council not to give grant towards the establishing of a tuberculosis building. Evidently, the doctor had not read the petition or he would never have made such a statement. For the benefit of those who are interested I herewith produce an exact copy of the petition, which is as follows:

"We, the undersigned ratepayers and citizens of Kingston beg leave to petition your honorable body regarding the establishment of a consumptive sanatorium on the general hospital grounds. We believe that such an institution should be isolated in a more healthy environment, and conducted on the country cottage system, with sufficient space to give room for the patients to take all kinds of healthy exercise. The most successful treatment of tuberculosis all over the continent is on that principle. We are in full sympathy with the project, and believe the promoters of the movement are entitled to the best of all citizens for their untiring efforts in collecting such a large sum of money for the purpose of bettering present conditions; but we are convinced that the institution (both for health and business reasons) should be located in the country. The Canadian press recommends the above treatment, and that the tuberculosis question should be dealt with by either the federal or provincial government. The Kingston association for the study and prevention of tuberculosis states (as per Educational Leaflet No. 2):

"(1) The germs or bacilli are contained in the sputum of tuberculous patients and in the minute droplets sprayed by them into the air in coughing and sneezing. Many consumptives throw off several billion of these daily. (2) If this sputum or spray is scattered about it soon dries, and as fine dust mingles with the air and may be inhaled. (3) Tuberculosis is thus spread largely by the sputum of tuberculous patients. (4) The maintenance of good general health is the key to safety.

"In the face of the above facts, and in deference to those of our citizens owning property in the hospital district, and damage to our manufacturing and commercial interests arising from our city being known as a consumptive centre, is in our opinion sufficient and good reason why you should oppose the hospital site."

Being one of the citizens who circulated the petition for signatures I might say that only one man, out of perhaps hundreds who were approached on the subject, refused to sign, and he did so without even reading the petition. The petitioners are men of the highest standing in the community, many of whom are classed among our first citizens; nearly all being contributors to the project, and members of our municipal bodies and philanthropic societies of the city. Dr. Connell presumed that these petitioners are opposed to the scheme; such is not the case. The only anxiety is that a very serious mistake might be made by establishing permanently within the city an institution which carries with it a suspicion of danger so far as the community interests of the city are concerned. When the doctor refers so flippantly to the possibility of locomotives, ships and marine engines contracting the disease, because of its establishment here, it seems to be a serious reflection upon the intelligence of Kingstonsians who assume a much more serious attitude. It is a well-known fact that certain cities have earned the reputation of consumptive centres, not because of their desire to be known as such, but because of the success of the enterprise, in treating and combating consumption in its various forms.

Kingstonsians are anxious to do all they can to assist those who have the matter in hand, but believe the enterprise should be outside the city limits.

I understand that Dr. Connell, in commenting upon my previous letter, admitted that the conditions set forth by me were ideal, but that it was a matter of convenience and economy on the part of the advocates of the hospital site. Now, we as citizens, think that the question of convenience and economy should be secondary, and that the site of such an institution is of far greater importance. The doctor claims there is no danger from a properly trained patient, at the same time recommends isolation. Does not this seem contradictory. The medical profession for the last twenty years admits the disease is both contagious and infectious, and that the most delicate people are the most susceptible. This being the case would not any reasonable man hesitate before giving his consent to establishing an institution of this kind at the very door of the general hospital, and within a few yards of one of Canada's leading universities, where our young and best blood in the country are compelled to pursue their studies from day to day. Surely the authorities of Queen's realize what this might mean to those selecting an institution wherein to complete their education.

Some months ago commissioners were appointed by the province of Quebec to make a report to the government upon the treatment of tuberculosis, and if the doctor will read this report he will find that the chief point of their argument is isolation. Further, that wherever a case is discovered in the family, it should be removed at once to an environment that would be conducive to the building up of the patient's general health,

and prevent the disease from spreading through the family. Now, then, what do we find. The most successful sanatoria in America are built on the cottage principle, in a country district, where the patients have plenty of sunlight and fresh air, and room for exercise, where the management can discriminate between the advanced and incipient cases.

In conversing with medical men on this acute question of location, I find they are almost unanimous in condemning the proposed site, as being totally unfit for the requirements, but would most heartily endorse by their endeavors and financial assistance a location with such environment as would give an abundance of fresh air operated on the cottage principle. The cultivation of vegetables, fruit and flowers and the raising of poultry, could be indulged in by those who are able to do a little work, and a half dozen healthy milk cows could be kept, thereby securing for the institution a supply of fresh milk and butter for the inmates. This idea, along with the government grant, would more than provide for maintenance.

Compare this idea with that of housing a number of consumptive patients in a stone building with limited space for recreation and exercise, when the treatment recommended is largely open air. Now, if open air treatment is the best, why not have wooden buildings which would guarantee greater ventilation, which are the exact considerations recommended by our own experts in treating this disease.

It would be a great mistake for the promoters of this worthy project to feel that they have not the best thanks of the community in their worthy endeavor; the very opposite is the case. I have not met a single contributor who would accept a dollar in return if the Sir Olive Mowat memorial was built outside the city, but in many cases they have expressed a desire, to renew their contributions, if necessary, to meet the demands of a successful institution of this kind would require.

The board of governors of the Kingston hospital must assume the responsibility of location, and judging from the consensus of opinion expressed from those I have met since the agitation began, I am convinced they will give it the consideration it deserves.—CONTRIBUTOR.

Another Complaint.

Kingston, March 8.—(To the Editor): I understand that a petition has been signed, opposing the building of the tuberculosis hospital on the grounds of the general hospital, and, though I have not signed it, nor do I reside in the vicinity of the hospital, yet I think that the main objections raised by the petitioners are good and valid ones. I don't quite agree with some of the reasons set out in the petition, but if I resided near the hospital or was the owner of property adjacent thereto, I would certainly strongly oppose the placing of the proposed hospital anywhere near the present one.

I have subscribed to the fund and have paid my subscription and having done so I consider I should with many other subscribers have a voice in the selection of a site.

For the life of me I cannot see where such a building could be erected except upon the low ground close to King street, where the patients could secure the foul air from the sewers that empty into the lake near the landing mill and get whatever damp air and mist that proximity to the lake would give them.

What tuberculosis patients want is good clean, dry air, and they certainly could not get that from the present hospital grounds.

There are many places in the outskirts of the city where either a hospital could be built on high and dry ground or a building, ready to hand, purchased for one-third of the amount that it would cost to put one up. I understand the Straubenzee homestead in Portsmouth is for sale or if this is too far out, there are other places nearer the city, with spare land about them that could be purchased cheaply and where there would be ample room for the erection of the sheds which are, as I understand it, an important and necessary factor in dealing with the disease. If no building could be had which would suit them there are any number of plots of land inside the city limits that could be made available, but, of course, the building question with high wages and expensive material would have to be considered. Experience has taught me that even the most careful architect has to add at least one-quarter to the original estimate made by him, principally for unforeseen extras, and for this reason I would strongly suggest the purchase of a site with a building already upon it and which a comparatively small outlay would convert it into what would be necessary for the important object. Keep it away, however, from the present hospital if you want the scheme to be a success.—Yours truly, A SUBSCRIBER.

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