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EDITORIAL

CONSIDER THIS BILL—IT NEEDS IT.

Safeguarding the public health is far more important as a Legislative duty, than building an empire in which every man in it shall be an Emperor.

Individual liberty should always yield when this principle, sacred and inalienable though it be, stands in the way of the public good.

And the public health IS the public good.

No doubt about this.

So far we tread on safe and sure ground.

For the proper safeguarding of the public health, it is well that some organization be perfected.

No one can deny the truth or force of this statement, and finding the footing still firm we may take yet another step and say—

That in order to have an organization approaching perfection it is necessary for those who live in a democracy to entrust power into the hands of men chosen for their wisdom and virtue.

Being in Florida, this line of reasoning brings us to—

The State Board of Health.

And viewing the work done by this excellent organization, we are well pleased with it, and are content to let the good work go on.

Under the executive direction of Dr. Joseph Y. Porter, who is the right man in the right place (I can say of him, no greater thing than this), the State Board of Health has been a blessing to the people of this State.

It should be clothed with all the power necessary to enforce good rules for public sanitation in its broadest sense.

The things that are Caesar's should be rendered unto Caesar—

But no more.

The Legislative function should not be surrendered to the State Board of Health, no matter how necessary it may be, and no matter how completely its executive head may have proven his capacity.

Let the power be given, but let it be given wisely.

Let it be ample, but let it be specific.

Let it be positive, but let it be proscribed.

Do not surrender the will of the people to the judgment of four men.

This is what the bill which passed the Senate Thursday will do.

I refer to the bill which by its title reads to—Prescribe and Declare Certain Powers of the State Board of Health.

I take the liberty of pronouncing it a bill to Give ALL POWER to the State Board of Health, and to leave none to anyone else.

Read the first four lines of the bill—

"Section 1. That the State Board of Health shall have the power to make, adopt, promulgate and enforce rules and regulations and from time to time alter, amend, repeal and add to the same."

Now, get out your pencil and try to figure yourself alive—

No use to try. You can't do it.

If the State Board of Health makes a rule—I believe PROMULGATE is the word—that you must not eat meat—

It's you to the tall grass.

Then, there's that compulsory vaccination clause.

Enough to cause a man to sigh for the land of Mungo-Jungo, where they eat up little children with a rusty iron spoon.

There's lots of good things in this bill that should be enacted into law.

But it needs careful scrutiny before it is put on the Statute books of Florida.

If we were in Turkey, we need not be so careful—we would be up against it anyhow, and a little more or less despotism wouldn't cut much of a figure.

This bill passed the Senate without proper consideration.

Senator Beard made this point on the floor of the Senate, and asked for time in which to consider it.

Senatorial courtesy shut him off—the President of the Senate being son-in-law to the State Board of Health.

And so the bill passed.

Title as stated.

But not as it really was.

This bill will come up in the House next week.

It should be there given that careful consideration which it lacked in the Senate.

Its good things should be saved; its bad things cut out of it.

We need the bill.

But we need some other things, too.

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