

We turn next to the section that has given rise to the greatest amount of controversy, section 41, "A."

This section has several striking features in itself. The first is, a medical man is required to take out an annual certificate, and he is required to pay his annual dues before the 31st December in each year. According to the Statute of 1874, the fee was due on the 1st of January. He is given twelve months in which to pay the sum of not less than \$1.00 nor more than \$2.00. But even then, should he not pay, he must receive two months' notice; and if at the end of that time he does not remit the amount, the assumption is, that he does not wish to practise, and his name is erased from the register. The matter is thus left optional with himself, either to practise and pay, or to cease to practise and cease to pay. He is prevented, however, from taking advantage of the payments made by others, and profiting at their expense.

The idea has been promulgated, that when a member is dropped from the list, he cannot be restored without considerable difficulty. That is not correct. Under clause 6 of the Act, provision is made that, whenever he wishes to resume his position among the medical men on the register, he need ask no favor from any person. He requires simply to pay his fees, and be reinstated.

It has been said the Council impose the fee. Gentlemen, you all know the Council do not impose the fee. It was imposed by the Statute in 1874, after it was made clear to the Legislature that the fee was necessary to meet professional requirements; and every member of the profession at that time, or who entered it since, knew, or ought to have known, that it was one of the obligations he assumed as a member of the profession; he knew, or he ought to have known that this fee was due and payable; and he should have known that unless it was paid, it is the duty of the Council to collect the amount and to collect it from every man alike. If they did not collect it they were negligent of their duty. Many have paid annually, or at least periodically, their entire indebtedness. Some there have been, who have taken all the advantages, and have not contributed their share. Is this just to the others?

The Council did not make collections as fully as they should. What is our excuse? Simply this:

When we attempted to collect, the costs consumed nearly the whole amount, and the process through the Division Court was vexatious to those from whom we collected. Let me read you some figures. In the medical year 1887-88, an expenditure of \$434.00 collected \$630.00 in fees. In 1888, an expenditure of \$319.00 collected \$376.00. Now these are the excuses and the only excuses the Council can offer, why it did not compel every member of the profession to contribute his fair and honest share as he should have done, in justice to his fellow-practitioners. Finding this difficulty in the way, and knowing that every member of the profession was alike responsible, and knowing, too, that this was part of the revenue to meet current expenses, the Council came to the conclusion that it was time steps be taken by which the payment should be equalized, and every man made to pay his equitable share. To receive a fee from one part, to use that money in the interest of the profession, to allow others to pay nothing, was laying an unequal burden on the shoulders of the medical men, and could not be justified. This clause was inserted, that it might be impossible for any to enjoy the advantages at the expense of others. Is that not right? That the amendment will meet the object desired, I need only mention that, since it came into operation, nearly \$6,000 in fees have been paid, with no expense other than postage. In connection with this same provision, the Act was made retroactive; this is said to be an unprecedented thing. What does this retroactive feature mean? It simply means this: That men who have been taking advantage of their fellow-practitioners for years, shall now be compelled to pay their fair share. It means, that they shall not be allowed to plead the Statute of Limitations, but at this late day, they shall pay as others have done. Could justice demand less?

It has been urged very strongly that the taking out of an annual certificate is derogatory to the profession—that it is humiliating—that it is placing you on a par with the hackman who requires to take out an annual license. The members of the profession are supposed to be so very dignified in their make-up, that they should not be asked to pay their just debts, and get a receipt, under the more genteel title of a certificate. Yet, some of these gentlemen, but yesterday so pachydermatous