

general welfare of the profession. We publish below, an address extensively circulated for signature among the profession in Canada West, with what success we know not. Much as we regret that *any circumstances* should have arisen to induce our Western brethren to seek a Medical Bill of their own, we yet cannot see why their interests should be so diverse from ours in Eastern Canada as to render an event of that kind imperative.

PETITION

To the Honorable the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, in Parliament Assembled:—

The Petition of the undersigned Medical Practitioners of Canada West, humbly sheweth:—That it is highly desirable, that those persons who have the care of the health and lives of their fellow men, should, by their education, acquirements, and skill, be in every way worthy of so important a trust, that the majority of the public cannot reasonably be expected to justly estimate the qualifications of those who tender them their Medical services; consequently, most civilized nations have endeavored to establish such regulations as will secure to the afflicted, the services of educated men, worthy of confidence, and protect them from ignorant pretenders to Medical skill.

That your Petitioners have found, that the law now established with this view, has proved ineffectual for the object apparently designed; as empiricism flourishes to an extraordinary extent—to the discouragement of your petitioners, and the serious detriment and danger of the community. Men of skill and eminence are deterred from settling in the province; and several such now residing here, have been induced to relinquish their profession, to follow other vocations better calculated to ensure them a competence, and to advance the interests of their families; moreover, no sufficient inducement is held out to young men of talent, to adopt a profession, in which there is so slight a prospect of obtaining an adequate return for the necessary, laborious, and expensive study required.

Your Petitioners are of opinion, that the act regulating the practice of physic, surgery, and midwifery, (8th Geo. IV, c. iii.) is inoperative, from two causes—one of which is, that no prosecution can be commenced one year after the offence. Parties transgressing, can thus readily evade the penalties of the law, by refraining from claims for their illegal practice, until more than that period has elapsed. Another, and probably the principal reason of the inadequacy of the law, is, that although the whole community suffer from infractions of it, they have been in the habit of looking to the regularly qualified practitioners to enforce its enactments; and it will not seem surprising that but few have been found willing to endanger their own prospects, by incurring the odium attached to the capacity of an informer.

Your Petitioners, therefore, deeply impressed with the uncertainty of individual action in promoting the interests both of the public and of the medical profession, beseech your Honourable House to take into favorable consideration, some measure, to unite into one body, the whole of the medical practitioners in Canada West. And as a preliminary step to establish *Medical Societies* in each district—to which it shall be imperative on all medical practitioners to attach themselves in their respective districts.

Your Petitioners pray, that these District Medical Associations shall be authorized to make By-laws for the management of all local matters connected with the profession—such as their tariff of fees, the suppression of illicit practice, and other objects calculated to advance the combined interests of themselves and the public.

Your Petitioners further consider it desirable, that, for the examination of candidates, granting licenses, the expulsion or suspension of unworthy members, and other purposes, there should be established a *General Provincial Medical Board or Council*, possessing the confidence of their brethren in the profession. They, therefore, humbly pray that each District Society shall be authorized to nominate to that honorable office, two of its members, subject to the approval of the Governor General, and to be annually re-elected.

A *Provincial Medical Society, or Board*, so constituted, would unite in one common centre, the views and wishes of the whole profession; and it is earnestly hoped, that it would confer upon

the practitioners of medicine, the independence, respectability, and advantages, which the incorporation of the Law Society has obtained for its members, and thus ultimately raise the medical profession to that position in public regard to which it is, by its utility and importance, so justly entitled.

Your Petitioners are the more emboldened in thus beseeching the intervention of your Honourable House, that they feel that, in complying with their requests, you will not only cheer and encourage them in the performance of their benevolent and most laborious duties, but you will confer an immediate and permanent benefit on the country.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(To the Editors of the British American Journal of Medical Science.)

GENTLEMEN.—I have read with much pleasure, the comments you offer, in the last number of your valuable Journal, on Professional Etiquette; and trust you will extend them in future numbers, as such editorial castigations maintain a wholesome discipline in the *corps Medical*, and serve as a guide and caution to what Percival in his medical Ethics terms, the “Professional busy-body.”

I am led to make the above remarks from the uncourteous conduct I experienced from a medical man who was called to see a patient under my care, and who without the slightest allusion to the practitioner he was told was in attendance, suggested a change of treatment, thereby succeeding in what no doubt was his *only* object—getting the patient for himself.

Is not such conduct unbecoming the dignity of a member of a liberal profession? And can we not with propriety assume that the person alluded to, is another proof of the truth of the remark of Lord Bacon, that the man of science is always a man of humility, and respects the feelings and opinions of others—and we might add that where this humility does not exist, we find ignorance and presumption hand in hand.

The position of the person referred to is so high, that he was about the last man from whom such unprofessional conduct could have been expected—and as there are rumours of such things having before occurred in Montreal, it is time that a stop should be put to them, and should any such “busybody” cross my path again, I will most assuredly forward you his name to be placed No. 1, on your list of the “Proscribed.”

Your obedient servant,

M. D.

Montreal, Feb. 28, 1846.

Our Correspondent has given us the name of the party alluded to in the above letter, and with him we cannot but express our surprise at his conduct in the case, the particulars of which he has detailed to us.—(Eds.)

OBITUARY.

Died, of Phthisis Pulmonalis, on Saturday morning last, the 14th inst., William Macnider, M.D., at the early age of 31 years. In the year 1836, Dr. Macnider graduated at the University of Edinburgh, after having previously become a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons of the same place. He returned shortly afterwards to this his native city, and entered upon his duties as a practitioner. His career was for several years, the same arduous and difficult one that attends the path of almost every young physician. Possessed of talents of high order, and steady perseverance, with