

CANADA

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THE ONTARIO MEDICAL AMENDMENT BILL.

We observe that the bill of amendment to the Ontario Medical Act was rejected by the Committee of the House, and we do not at all wonder at it, because, in the first place, it was the most extraordinary production of its kind that had ever been submitted; and, again, if the Legislature was guided by the opinions of the profession in Ontario it had no other alternative but to ignore the bill, as the opinions were many and various, as expressed in the daily press; nor do we think that the Medical Council itself was in accord on the subject. We have heard that the Executive Committee of the Medical Council notified the Examiners that in view of the small number of candidates likely to present themselves at the coming examinations and the lack of funds, the customary remuneration to the Examiners could not be guaranteed, and a request was made that they should state whether they are willing to conduct the examinations on the uncertainty of being paid for their loss of time. This action of the Committee was forced upon them, but we do not think it at all likely that any of the Examiners will, under the circumstances, refuse to conduct the examinations; by so doing they will show themselves unworthy of the trust they assumed at their nomination.

But, referring again to the Bill in question, the Council has asked too much of the profession. It is right and just that the profession should be taxed, and we do not doubt that it will freely admit its indebtedness, but not to the surrender of rights already possessed. The Bill in effect deprived every defaulter of his license, and he became liable to prosecution, fine and imprisonment for exercising his calling, if he failed, through inadvertance or incapacity, to pay the sum of two dollars on or before the 1st of January of each year. Furthermore, by the provisions of the Bill the onus of proof, as to the correctness of the register, was thrown on each member of the profession. The experience of the profession as to the business capacity of the College official is far from being satisfactory. It was notorious that the late registrar of the College never presumed to answer official letters, and many of the candidates who have passed the College examinations do not possess a single document in proof of their having