

The third feature of the Act was to give the profession a right to say who should continue to remain members. Hitherto you could not strike a man from the list of practitioners unless for some serious crime. This Act of 1887 allowed the Council, by a committee of medical men, to try members of their own profession on charges of infamous or disgraceful conduct in a professional sense. They take the evidence in the case, both for and against, and if, in their judgment, the person is unworthy to practise, the Council has a right to order his name erased from the register. The effect of this 1887 Act was to give the medical profession entire control of themselves. It made them completely self-governing. It has now a right to say who shall enter the profession, and the line of conduct they must pursue if they wish to remain in it. In a word, the profession established its own matriculation, its own medical curriculum, without its being submitted to the Governor-in-Council, and its own methods of conducting the examinations; it can hold the requisite chattels to make the examination efficient; and the necessary real estate to provide halls, and such premises as may be required for the purposes of the Act; it may determine what is disgraceful and infamous conduct in a professional sense, may try the practitioner charged with such, and if found guilty, expel him as unworthy to belong to an honourable profession. But for these privileges, we must tax ourselves not less than one nor more than two dollars per year each.

The next Act we come to is that of 1891. This Act has given rise to considerable misunderstanding and dissatisfaction. It has a number of prominent features. Previous to this time, you will remember, any person who was a matriculate in arts in any university in Her Majesty's dominions, had a right to be admitted as a matriculate in medicine. It was felt by some, that this was opening the door too wide, that in some parts of Her Majesty's dominions, there might be universities whose matriculation standard was not sufficiently high. The Legislature concurred in that view, and the Council was given power to say just what the standard shall be, anywhere, up to a degree in arts. It was finally arranged that it should be the Pass University Department Arts Matriculation examination, with Physics and Chemistry.

There is a feeling with some, that the Council is blameable for not being willing to accept arts matriculation from any part of Her Majesty's dominions. It is feared a standard may be set up which would shut out some honest, industrious young men, and leave the profession open only to those born with "a spoon of silver." I need scarcely say to you, gentlemen, that the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario is not likely to take any such step.

Another amendment under the heading of "Appeals" is made. If a practitioner had his name erased for unprofessional conduct, under the '87 Act an appeal might be made to a High Court Judge. A change was made so that an appeal may be had to a Division of the High Court.

There are a couple of other clauses amending the '87 Act, with reference to the taking of evidence and to the assessment of costs, important to the conduct of these cases.

We now come to a more important particular: section 9, sub-section 22. This was placed in the Act for the purpose of enabling the registrar to keep a correct register of all medical practitioners in the Province. If you examine the present register, you will find on it about 2,600 names. After the most careful examination, we believe there are about 2,146 practitioners in the Province. You will see, therefore, there is a great defect in the register. The registrar does not become aware of those who have left the country, or who have ceased to practise from one cause or another, and, unless fully conversant with the facts, has no right to erase names. This clause provided, that in the event of an official letter from the registrar, sent to a practitioner, remaining unanswered for six months, we may have a right to assume that he is dead, has left the country, or gone out of practice, hence his name may be dropped from the register. A similar clause is found in the '65 and '68 Acts, and, I believe, in the British Act. It was not in the 1874 Act, but is re-introduced in the Act of 1891. It was put there, not as a means of punishing the members of the medical profession, but rather with a view for perfecting the register, so that we might know who had a right to practise, and who had not. It also had the object of establishing a means of closer communication between the profession and the Council.