

## Correspondence.

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### THE LODGE DOCTOR IN RELATION TO MEDICAL ETHICS.

To the Editors of the MONTREAL MEDICAL JOURNAL:—

SIRS,—The fact that your editorial on above subject did not bring a shower of letters throwing cold water on the suggestions therein contained, is a matter of grave importance. Do your readers look at the number in your editorial staff, and fancying the editorial to be the concrete opinion of the lot, hesitate to express antagonistic views? Or, have they become discouraged in their opposition to lodge practice? It does seem to be useless to discuss lodge practice and its demoralising effects. It has been discussed until, as you say, the subject is "threadbare," and yet lodge doctors are to be found everywhere. It may be stated in passing that the very fact of the subject being threadbare is a proof that the profession in general does not approve of it.

We have had lodge doctors in our midst for a quarter of a century or more, and the ethics of the situation have been carefully considered and conclusions have been arrived at which are as opposed to your views as the north is to the south. You say, and you "feel certain that a majority of the lodge doctors themselves agree with you,—that the doing of lodge practice is degrading to the medical man and the profession," and yet, according to your interpretation of the code of medical ethics, these men who degrade themselves and the profession are to be treated as men of honour and in every sense our fellow practitioners. You seem to consider it legitimate and perfectly smooth sailing for the lodge doctor to attend any member of the lodge so long as he informs the old family physician—which he seldom does—but you would not allow the family physician to act in the same way. If he is called he cannot take the case and justify himself by informing the lodge doctor of what he is doing. No; "he has no right to see the case except in consultation" with the man who "degrades himself and the profession." The wishes of the patient are not to be considered. He must refuse to attend, although the "refusal under such circumstances would soon leave him without any practice." You seem to be a special pleader for the lodge doctor and his methods.

Now, let us look into this lodge practice a little and see what right it has to recognition at our hands.

In the first place it is not confined to young men struggling for a practice. At a meeting of the Ontario Medical Association several