

THE MEDICAL LANDSCAPE, FROM A HETERODOX STANDPOINT.

To the Associate Editor for British Columbia.

DEAR SIR,—You ask me to say something more for the next issue of the *ONTARIO MEDICAL JOURNAL*. I may remark that I cut short my previous article mainly because I thought the limits had been reached.

I need not more than refer to the old and true saying about changes in a landscape by changes in the points of observation.

I dislike platitudes and commonplaces, and have ever tried to avoid grooves. Instead, I have aimed to rise above the dust and clouds of contending sects and obtain clearer views.

So long as the medical hare is caught by such unfair means as at present, it would seem a useless task to go into an elaborate consideration of the best mode of cooking him. Indeed, so thoroughly am I disgusted with the whole business that I have lost interest in the hare altogether.

Think of a man spending four or five years of the cream of his life to acquire proficiency in his profession, and, having secured his diploma unexpectedly, when he goes forth into the world to apply his knowledge to find a post-graduate examination in store for him of a totally different character, and by which he must stand or fall. Other standards are applied to him, such as I mentioned in my previous article. His proficiency goes for little or nothing. Then on top of this is the false notion of philanthropy which is deeply imbedded in the minds of medical men. Have we not been taught from our infancy up, and is it not regarded as of the very essence of right action, to do our best in season and out to enable the weak to live that they may propagate other weak ones and thus multiply and perpetuate suffering, instead of adopting Nature's way of letting the unfit go to the wall? Nature is merciful by being merciless. And if objection is taken to this, then there is the other way of so regulating marriage as to breed up and up, as is done with such splendid results in the case of the other animals.

It may be answered that this is impossible. It may be impossible to make a perfect success; but it is impossible to make the laws concerning crimes against the man who has come a perfect

success, but no one would wipe out these laws. Then, why not give the man who is to come the benefit of similar laws? Why allow him to be afflicted by cancer, by insanity, by scrofula, by criminal instincts, himself a victim and society his prey?

Why should the medical man be called on to shoulder these unnecessary burdens, or a large part of them, because the fountain of them is left untouched? Besides, with popular sentiment cultivated in this direction, which would be an easy or not a very hard job, the thing would be quite practicable.

Now, sir, I think you will see that you have stirred up a pretty radical sort of chap; but the question is, Am I not right?

If the grossest injustice was not being heaped upon thousands of *honest* medical men by schemers who do their best to fill the requirements of a foolish public, I might have passed the matter over. The public, too, are heavy sufferers. Of the many organizations which, on the bird-of-a-feather principle, foist these schemers into popularity and profit, the Methodist Church stands prominent.

Its motto seems to be, first, be a good Methodist, or pretend to be, and all other things will be added unto you. I could give many instances in proof. The thing is notorious. And why should it not be considered as great a wrong to injure the coming man, or allow him to be injured, as the man that has come? Has he not a right which should be held sacred to be born once well? And have society and the doctors themselves not also a right to be protected from hereditary criminals and the burden of diseased paupers?

Questions of how to deal with the hare seem unimportant while these gross wrongs have to be endured. The present is a period in which, thanks mainly to the spread of the doctrine of evolution, old usages and old doctrines, whose sole reason for existence is their age, are ruthlessly assailed and overturned, but, like the god Serapis of old, dire calamities are predicted of their downfall. But the medical hare being caught, the patient being secured, how shall he be cured? Many will answer, by the "Medicine of Experience." But in my previous article I pointed out what this was even within the personal knowledge of the