

their knowledge necessary to an intelligent discharge of their duties. And the various teaching bodies and medical faculties who, in a certain sense, confederated and surrendered the privileges which their degrees conferred upon students, felt they had no longer to compete with lax examinations or inefficient teaching when all candidates were required to come up to the same standard of proficiency.

The Ontario Medical Act cannot be accused of lowering the standard of medical education. Nor can it be accused of letting grossly incompetent candidates loose upon an unsuspecting community to trifle with their valuable time. While the Act does not provide any means of teaching, it provides ample machinery for testing those who are taught. Its penal clauses may press hard upon a few who are possessed of the necessary knowledge and experience to practise intelligently and have been unable to comply with the requirements of the Act. But it is better that the few should suffer than that many should be imposed upon. The British Medical Act has been a failure in preventing quackery and imposture. It merely deprives unregistered practitioners of the privilege of suing and recovering pay for their services or of holding appointments in the public service, and makes it punishable by fine to pretend to be registered without being so. It does not, however, prevent anyone from practising who holds any kind of degree from a medical college, whether foreign or domestic; and with the well-known ease with which such degrees can be procured it is easy to avoid being fined. And if cheap, spurious degrees can be procured by unlicensed practitioners in England, how easy it would be to procure them in this country; and how ineffectual a test of medical knowledge would the mere possession of a degree be, when degrees are advertised for sale at from \$5 to \$10 apiece!

From what we have seen in some parts of the United States, where quackery and highly-qualified medical and surgical talent flourish side by side, I believe that the public would be at least the chief losers, in a pecuniary sense, if anyone, however unqualified, were free to practise without let or hindrance; for, in addition to supporting the imposter or the incompetent, educated skill and ability would always command and receive a large share of patronage in repairing the mischief produced by ignorance and fraud.

I believe, therefore, it may be clearly shown that while the repeal or amendment of the Ontario Medical Act, indicated by the bills introduced in Parliament, would be annoying and unjust to the medical profession, the greatest injury and loss would be inflicted upon the general public.

It is the duty and should be the aim of every medical practitioner to do his utmost to increase the confidence of the public in the medical profession—confidence in its beneficence, confidence in its loyalty to the interests of humanity, confidence that its chief aim is to exterminate disease, to lengthen the duration of life and make society better and happier.

That it is not a trades union organization, or combined for the purpose of securing the greatest possible remuneration for its services; that the laws which regulate the course of study, the amount of general and special knowledge which every person is required to possess who proposes to practise surgery, medicine or obstetrics, are laws essentially in the interests of society, to protect it against ignorance and fraud.

While it is the obvious duty of the medical man to perfect himself in the knowledge of his profession to the very utmost of his ability and opportunity—for it is mainly by his qualifications in this respect that he can fulfil the primary object for which he has received a license—it is equally his duty to so deport himself as a man and as a citizen that his sense of honor and his public spirit, if not a pattern to others, shall be at least beyond reproach.