

British Columbia.

Under control of the Medical Council of the Province of British Columbia.

DR. MCGUIGAN, Associate Editor for British Columbia.

MEDICAL COUNCIL.

THE annual meeting of the British Columbia Medical Council took place in Victoria, on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 8th and 9th. There were present, Drs. Davie, Harrington, Milne, McGuigan, De Wolf-Smith and Duncan. The retiring President, Dr. Lefevre, now in Vienna, was the only member absent, but that did not prevent the Council from again re-electing him to the same position for another year. All the old officers were reappointed and are as follows: President, Dr. I. M. Lefevre; Vice-President, Dr. John Duncan; Registrar, Dr. G. L. Milne; Treasurer, Dr. W. J. McGuigan. Three candidates presented themselves for examination, of whom two, viz., Drs. Sutherland and Bowes, were successful; the third while not attaining the required percentage of marks to enable him to pass, was quite interesting in a way as a type of a class of practitioners in the United States who, it is to be hoped, are rapidly disappearing from the public view. A great deal has been said in some quarters about the beauty of free trade in medicine, both in Ontario and in many of the states of the great Republic to the south, but if the people knew the value of medical councils and examining boards, and how these bodies stand between them and destruction, they would bless the members of those societies and the legislatures that brought them into corporate existence on their bare knees. A writer in the May number of the *Forum*, President David Starr Jordan, of the Leland Stanford Junior University, at Palo Alto, Cal., in an able article entitled "Pettifogging Law Schools and an Untrained Bar," exposes the weaknesses of many of the American institutions in which students receive their training for—what in their cases is a libel—the "learned professions." He says: "It is

possible with us to enter any one of the 'learned professions' with no learning whatsoever. In fact, in many of our States, it requires no more preparation to be admitted to the bar than to be admitted to the saw-buck. Fortunately, admission to either on these terms carries with it no prestige or social elevation whatever. But the danger in the one case is greater than in the other. The inefficient lawyer may work the ruin of interests entrusted to him. *The ignorant physician is more dangerous than the plague.* The incompetent wood-sawyer harms only the wood-pile. A large part of our criminal records is devoted to legal and medical malpractice. In other words our bulk of crime is swollen by robbery and murder committed under the guise of professional assistance." It would be pretty hard to use language much harder than the above quoted remarks, and coming from such an eminent educationist as President Jordan, the danger to which the community is exposed on the other side of the line is truly startling. In the mining districts of British Columbia, particularly in West Kootenay, close to the American frontier, it is only by the existence of the Medical Council and the stringent examination which that body demands of all would-be medical practitioners contemplating a location in the Province, that that part of the country is not flooded with the class of physicians that President Jordan tells us are only fitted for the saw-buck and the wood-pile. *It is true that swinging a pick is about as easy and simple as sawing wood, and in the Kootenay more money is often made by handling that useful implement than by wielding the lancet or the scalpel; and those of our fellow-practitioners who are afraid to face the music of an examination at Vancouver or Victoria may, after a while, have reason*