

If it is proper to prohibit the coining or passing of counterfeit money, or obtaining goods under false pretences, it is surely desirable to defend the community against the ignorant pretender who trifles with human life by claiming to be able to cure all manner of diseases, more especially those which all the doctors have signally failed to benefit or cure. There are credulous, unsuspecting people in every community, not always those who are called ignorant people, for illiterate people are often shrewd and quick in detecting imposture; but people who have the reputation of being comparatively intelligent, and yet give credence to the assertions of any fakir who claims to be able to perform miraculous cures.

For wealthy self-conceited persons who feel competent to judge and act for themselves in anything which concerns them or their families, and who choose to allow themselves to be imposed upon, we are apt to have little sympathy. But we know from experience that the victims of the imposture of rapacious quacks are frequently persons weakened in mind and body by chronic incurable diseases which have been so diagnosed beyond any doubt, and yet the sufferers cling to the hope of a possible chance of obtaining a cure, and so listen to the charlatan who assures *him* or *her* that he is quite able to effect a cure, and who takes the money which the poor sufferers and their families often pinch themselves to procure.

People would smile at an individual who would undertake to repair or adjust the mechanism of a watch, or a steam engine, or an electrical apparatus, who had no acquaintance with the structure and arrangement and functions of the different parts of the mechanism. They would naturally say that such a person, if entrusted with the repair or adjustment of the mechanism, would disarrange it more than before, if not entirely destroy it. And yet the same person would entrust his own corporeal mechanism, or that of one of his family, to a pretender who has little or no acquaintance with the structure of the human body, or of the functions and relative positions of its vital organs either in health or disease.

There is, perhaps, no art or profession in which imposture can pass undetected for a time so readily as in the healing art—probably due to the fact that medicine is not yet an exact science, although approaching to that position with steady strides. But so long as there are cases in which the diagnosis can only be made clear by a post-mortem examination, so long will there be room for a difference of opinion as to prognosis and the most suitable treatment. And when doctors disagree, disciple and patients are free to follow any advice or opinion, however absurd.

We may repeat that it is quite competent for the State to guard and protect its citizens against imposture or fraud of any kind, to suppress whatever is a menace to lives or property—even if in so doing inconvenience may accrue to individuals whose pleasure or advantage must give way to secure the general good. This is the principle upon which human society is organized, whether tribal or national; every member must surrender a part of his natural liberty to enjoy the advantages which are common to all.

It is to prevent loss of life and property that rigid laws have been enacted regulating the requirements of ships carrying passengers and merchandise. The navigation laws of all civilized countries make it conditional upon being allowed to engage in the occupation of carrying passengers that hull, boilers and appointments shall be of a certain standard; that the officers shall be duly qualified to pass certain examinations as to their knowledge and efficiency.

The laws regulating pilotage in this Dominion are similar in principle; the pilot must be examined as to his practical knowledge of the management