

1882 requires each registered practitioner to pay an annual fee of not less than one, nor more than two dollars; and sec. 2 of the Act of 1884 gives power to erase from the register the name of every man who does not pay his fee—being exactly the law subsequently adopted in Ontario. In Quebec, clause 3,986 of sec. 2, chap. 4, revised statutes, fixes a fee of two dollars a year; and clause 3,994 deprives of all his professional rights the physician who does not pay. The Manitoba Act, sec. 15, calls for an annual fee not exceeding five dollars, recoverable with costs in a county court; and sec. 22 of the amended Act of 1888 debars the delinquent from voting at Council elections. The North-west Territories Act is similar. In British Columbia, sec. 53, chap. 81, fixes an annual fee of ten dollars and provides for the issuance of an annual certificate. So that this so-called "outrage" appears to have been perpetrated elsewhere without awakening any serious indignation.

But it is claimed that not even the Legislature can give the Council power to deprive a physician of his license for the non-payment of an annual assessment; that he has a vested interest in his license which cannot be successfully attacked, unless, possibly, for felony on his part. Speaking on this subject, elsewhere, I have said that "this opinion is based on a confusion of ideas as to the respective rights accruing from the possession of a diploma and a license. A man may be said to have a vested interest in his diploma, which is a certificate of scholarship, and nothing more. But no man can claim to have or to hold a license to carry on any business in a community, no matter how laudable that business may be, except on such reasonable conditions as the community may impose. In this province, the people, acting through their representatives in the Legislature, constitute the only power that can authorize a man to practise medicine. They have exercised their power by the enactment of certain laws, and only by obedience to the laws so enacted, whether by the Legislature, or by the Council's action on the authority of the Legislature, can any person obtain or retain a license. And the same power which granted a license may, for good cause, such as the refusal to obey its requirements, suspend or revoke that license."

Every physician practising in Ontario to-day, whether he graduated fifty years ago or five years ago, is practising solely by virtue of his membership in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and of his registration by this Council. He has acknowledged the authority of this body by applying to it for registration, by paying the fee required therefor, and by receiving its license. He has availed himself of all the privileges granted under our license, even to the extent of voting for members of the Council, of holding membership in it, and

of acting as its paid examiner. It is too late now for anyone to repudiate the authority he has hitherto recognized, or to attempt the evasion of the duties imposed by that authority while availing himself of all the rights and privileges it accords.

Of course, while the action of the Medical Council in this matter was legitimate and *intra vires*, I am quite well aware that there may be honest differences of opinion as to its expediency. And in regard to that I do not propose at present to say anything. The Council acting for the profession, and in the interests of the profession, did what it thought best. If the profession disapproved of that action, the remedy could have been easily applied on the day of election. Had a majority of territorial representatives been returned in opposition to the annual assessment law, it would have been repealed; for the collegiate and homœopathic representatives would have had no object in opposing the wish of the profession at large.

And the objection we take to the conduct of our critics is that, instead of appealing to the medical electorate, and settling our affairs in our own corporation, they appealed to the non-professional element in the Provincial Legislature. Of such conduct I have previously expressed a strong opinion. My words in this connection have been misrepresented; and I am accused of insulting the profession. Let me repeat them, therefore, so that I may not be misunderstood: I said that to go to the Legislature for a redress of grievances, real or supposed, in connection with matters which our own representative body was capable of deciding, was to make the humiliating confession that we are incapable of self-government. And, "*if that be so*," I said, "then the logical conclusion would be that the profession should abolish the Council and place the profession in charge of the Education Department, which attends to the needs and requirements of children, or else hand us over to the Inspector of Charities, who looks after the interests of the feeble-minded." And I am of the same opinion still.

The other leading charge against the Council is that it has gone into real estate speculation, and erected a large and expensive building in Toronto, which was not required. Now, the wisdom of the Council's building operations is a legitimate object of criticism, and opinions may differ thereon. The majority of the members of the Council are of the opinion that it was in the interest of true economy, and for the facilitation of the business of this body to erect a building which would not only give us the accommodation required, and which we could not secure otherwise, but would also be in time a source of revenue sufficient to relieve the profession from the trifling burdens hitherto imposed upon it. Others