

whatever. A third of a century ago the medical men practising in this Province had complied with all the demands of the law and received their licenses from His Excellency the Governor of Canada ; they thought that in these licenses they held inviolable vested rights, but Parliament, in 1865, passed an Act practically annulling the licenses, and demanding other qualifications, to wit, registration and the payment of a fee of ten dollars. This was done because the public interest demanded that the people might have some standard by which they could distinguish the properly qualified practitioner from quacks and impostors.

Again I remind you of the fact that university degrees in Arts, which were at one time legal authorization to become high school masters and teachers, are no longer so regarded. Graduates have now to undergo an extended course of instruction in the Ontario Normal College before they are held qualified to legally practise their teaching art. Yet the universities have not rebelled against their degrees being thus degraded in legal and practical value. Why? Simply because they well know that the right of giving or withholding charters, or of amending them, or of abrogating them, or fixing or altering the potency of their degrees in the interest of the community, is inherent in the Legislature, and paramount to all demands for lost privileges or so-called vested rights.

Let me mention one more instance—a perfect parallel to the case under discussion. At one time Parliament established County Boards with power to examine candidates and give certificates as common or public school teachers, but a better day for education came and Parliament again enacted that all candidates for the profession of teaching should come to one common standard curriculum and be examined under the guidance and supervision of one central authority, and the old boards passed out of existence without a murmur by the fiat of those who created them. And this is precisely what occurred in connection with our own profession in 1869.

But I give positive proof that the privileged claim, as based upon so-called vested rights, is contrary to fact. The first Medical Council was created in 1865, and upon this Council each university, college and medical school was given a representative, whilst those institutions still continued to exercise their functions as examining boards until 1869. How absurd then to ask us to believe that the privileged representation was granted in place of the surrendered powers, whereas the fact is they had the representation four years before the “surrender” was accomplished. There is still another proof of the correctness of my contention to be found in the Acts of 1865 and