

## Correspondence.

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### COUNCIL LEGISLATION.

*To the Editor of ONTARIO MEDICAL JOURNAL.*

SIR,—I desire to call the special attention of the profession to the curious methods adopted by the Council in securing the legislation of 1891, which I shall show was the most arbitrary ever obtained by any corporate body in this country. I shall show from the records that from first to last the Council moved so as to keep those affected by the legislation in the dark. It could not possibly have adopted better methods for concealing from its intended victims the crucial powers an irresponsible body, as the Council is, was endeavoring to have placed within its grasp. I am aware these are bold words, and, if not capable of indisputable proof, I render myself liable to censure. But to the proof and the records:

On June 12th, 1890, Dr. Bergin gave notice of motion: "That he will at the next meeting move that some members of the Council do ascertain from the Minister of Education whether he will recommend the Legislature to grant the Council power to remove from the roll all members who fail to pay their annual dues."

And now the lights are turned down. In the same hour it was moved by Dr. Harris, seconded by Dr. Russell, "That 3,000 copies of the Annual Announcement be printed, and a copy be sent to such members only whose dues are paid in full." It must be remembered that the daily newspapers of Toronto did not publish the proceedings of the Council, and consequently the determination to withhold the Annual Announcement, which contained those proceedings, from the medical men in arrears, deprived them of their only opportunity of ascertaining either the existence, or the character and scope, of the proposed legislation. Here, then, is the first step—a determination to secure the guillotine for recalcitrant members of the profession, and a determination to keep the intended victims in the dark.

On the following day, June 13th, 1890, it was moved by Dr. Bergin, seconded by Dr. Bray, "That this Council do petition the Legislature of

Ontario for power to increase the annual fees payable by each member of the College, and for power to erase from the register the names of all members who fail to pay their annual dues."

Again the lights are turned down, and not one medical man in the Province affected by the motion was to have any knowledge of its passage, because by Dr. Harris' motion, given above, he was not to receive the Annual Announcement, which alone would contain this resolution. Here, I must digress for a moment, to call attention to the vote by which this motion was carried. Of the thirteen who voted "yea," five are territorial representatives, viz., Drs. Bergin, Bray, Day, Rogers, Williams. On principle, I accord to these gentlemen the right to vote as they please on every question, for there is a day coming when the general profession can settle accounts with them as their representatives. But what shall be said of the other eight, Drs. Campbell, Fowler, Fenwick, Henderson, Logan, Luton, Oliphant, Thorburn? Over these members of the Council the general profession has no control whatever. They are the appointees of colleges and homœopaths, and these are the major portion of the members who passed the resolution. I fail to catch the spirit which animates the 2,200 medical men of this province if they will longer submit to such domination by men who cannot be reached by their votes. This is the crucial point in the conflict between the profession and the Council which, in a subsequent letter, I propose elaborating more fully.

But let us return to the legislation. Having pointed out from the records the intention of the Council to secure clandestinely the most extreme legislation, the Bill for this purpose was prepared, and passed through the hands of Mr. Osler, the ablest criminal lawyer in the Dominion, and, as I shall subsequently show, bore the impress of his cunning handiwork. Now, if the Council, at this stage of its history, determined to deal openly, fairly, and frankly with the profession, it would have had the Bill introduced into the Legislature in the early days of the session (as the Defence Association did with theirs last year), had it printed, and distributed to every medical man in the Province, with ample time given for its consideration. This would have been the course of honest men, conscious of a just cause, for the con-