

**LEGISLATION CONCERNING THE RIGHT TO PRACTICE  
MEDICINE\***

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Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—

As the Premier of this province has stated his intention of appointing a Commission to investigate the whole subject of medical education and practice, and as our territorial representative has recently asked us by circular for an expression of our individual views, I consider the present an opportune time for a discussion of the subject of "Legislation concerning the right to practice medicine." My object will be to give a short sketch of present conditions and offer some suggestions for the purpose of drawing out the opinions of others rather than with the idea that I have completely solved, in my own mind, what ought to be done, let alone what will be done after this matter has been presented first before a Commission and then before our Legislature.

I believe this is a subject in which the average practitioner takes very little interest. Having received his diploma, he, as a rule, finds enough difficulty in paddling his own canoe through the rapids and eddies of practice, without taking much thought of who else has secured the privilege of taking the same trip and running the same risks as himself. He votes for his territorial representative, pays his two dollars a year, and is content to leave the matter in the hands of others. I must confess that I have no recollection of ever having read over, until I undertook the preparation of this paper, the Ontario Medical Act.

A complete consideration of this subject would involve an examination of the very foundations of human government—whether we like it or not, by whatever name we may call it. Whether it be the ushering in of a higher and better civilization, or whether it will prove to be a new kind of slavery, the march of events appears to be towards the state undertaking to either perform itself or to regulate the performance by others of undertakings which formerly were left to individual option and enterprise. What reasons are there why the Government should have anything special to say about this question of medical education

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\* Read at a joint meeting of Huron and Perth Medical Associations, held in Mitchell, July 15th, 1914.