

are imperative. Then, one could be licensed to practise medicine who had attended but two college courses of less than six months each; now, four sessions of six months each, and one of three months is demanded. Then, examinations for diplomas and licenses were conducted with varying degrees of mildness; now, they are both practical and thorough.

This is the natural result of having one door of admission to the profession, through which all must pass. Before the time of the Council these doors were innumerable. There were three separate examining boards; there were a number of colleges in Canada authorized to grant degrees in medicine; and the certificates of the boards and the diplomas of the colleges all entitled their holders to the provincial license. And, in addition, the diploma of any medical college in the British Empire was recognized as well as our own. It would have been impossible under the old regime to have had a uniform curriculum. And while, even under this state of affairs, the standard of medical education might have advanced to some extent, yet, so far as individual licentiates were concerned, the advance would have been largely optional, and the imperative curriculum would have been no higher than the lowest that would satisfy any one of the innumerable examining boards whose certificates were recognized.

The Ontario Medical Act gave to this Council the control of medical education. It has neither neglected to use its power, nor has it used that power rashly; but, intelligently and discreetly, as rapidly as public sentiment would sanction, it has been continually raising the standard higher and higher, until now we are far in advance of any country on this continent, and equal, if not superior, to the Motherland.

The Council has further benefited the profession by securing power to deal with unlicensed practitioners—the uneducated and incompetent men who prey on the public. This power has been so effectually exercised that I doubt if there is an English-speaking country anywhere that contains so few of this obnoxious class of people as Ontario. Then there were the licensed quacks—men who were registered, but who were disgracing their calling by adopting the dishonest methods of the charlatan. Ontario is the only part of this continent where men of this description can be punished by the withdrawal of their right to practise. The Council deserves the gratitude of the profession in that it has secured the power to discipline these men, and has used that power to the extent of purging our ranks of some of them, and of exercising a salutary restraining influence on others.

In addition to these benefits, the Council has endeavored to secure from the Legislature such

other rights and privileges as would be to the advantage of the profession; and while we have not been able to obtain all that we desired, we have been to some extent successful. The physicians in every territorial division may now adopt a tariff of fees, which, on receiving the sanction of the Council, defines the legal charges that can be made for our services, without leaving that matter to be decided in each disputed case solely by judges and juries at their discretion. So, too, the law now limits the period during which action for malpractice can be brought against a physician to one year from the date when the services complained of were rendered.

These are some of the benefits which Ontario physicians have received through the Council. And more might have been obtained, had there always been that unity of action on the part of the profession and that loyal support of its governing body which characterizes people of other occupations.

As against this favorable record the critics of the Council find ground for complaint mainly in two matters—the annual assessment, with its penal attachment, and the erection of a building in Toronto. The personal charges against members of the Council do not require an answer here.

In order to maintain a revenue sufficient to meet all its requirements, the Council, under the Act of 1874, has levied an annual assessment, sometimes one dollar, but never exceeding two. And because certain physicians persistently refused to pay this assessment, being willing to accept all the benefits derived from their membership in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, while refusing to bear the trifling burdens that membership imposes, the Council secured power to remove from the register the names of delinquents until such time as they should liquidate their indebtedness.

This proceeding was not, as has been claimed, unprecedented. The power secured by the Council is nothing more than that which is exercised by all corporations. Every association has the right to fix fees to be collected from its members for necessary expenses, and to suspend from membership those who do not pay. A notable example is that of the Law Society of this province, which taxes every lawyer \$17 per annum, part of which only is returnable to him in printed matter; and the non-payment of this assessment results in the suspension of the delinquent, who loses all the privileges of his profession, besides being subjected to the penalty of a heavy fine.

Nor is this unknown in the medical profession of the other provinces. I have not at hand the various statutes of the provinces, but if the medical laws as printed in Powell's "Doctor in Canada," edition of 1890, are correct, the following facts are apparent: In New Brunswick, sec. 5 of the Act of