

Editorial.**OUR MEDICAL ETHICS.**

We have a code of medical ethics, compiled chiefly from American sources, which has been adopted by the Canada Medical Association, and is supposed to guide us in our conduct towards our patients the public, and our brother practitioners. Yet it must be acknowledged, however humiliating the confession, that the open and unblushing violation of all ethical considerations is as often the rule as the exception. In Great Britain there is no written code of ethics, but there is, what is far more effective, a public opinion both in the profession and out of it, which keeps everyone, except the very lowest, from any flagrant breach of courtesy. We however, can boast of a sublime disregard of our written code, while the public, by regarding our profession merely as a means of livelihood, sanctions in the prevailing spirit of the age, anything which savours of smartness.

Of course the peculiar manifestations of this evil depends upon locality and circumstances. In the cities, as a rule, people have some notion of professional etiquette, and flagrant breaches of it are comparatively rare. But then we have in every large town a class of people, well to do mechanics and small tradesmen, who have worked themselves up from nothing to their present positions. These men cannot understand that a professional visit, occupying perhaps a quarter of an hour, can possibly be worth a dollar, although they may be far better able to pay it than some struggling clerk, or needy gentleman, whose income is totally inadequate to his presumed position. On the other hand there are a large number of medical men, trying to struggle against enormous competition, into a practice sufficient to keep themselves and their families in comfort. Then what follows as a natural result? Dr. X. gives it to be understood amongst a certain class, that his charge, after the first visit is only fifty cents, or even less. His practice increases rapidly, though he may have to work pretty hard for his money. Still he gets rich, while others go on year after year in comparative poverty. There is a great difference between this course, and that of merely moderating the charge to a person in poor cir-