

The relation which medical men bear to the community, and the special nature of their life-work, is, I believe, becoming better understood and esteemed by the public. There is now every reason, founded on unmistakable evidence, for believing that greater interest is manifested by the laity in medical work, and in some instances in Canada we have seen tangible expression of that feeling displayed in donations for the furtherance of bacteriological research. Such instances show that the public does not altogether lose sight of the efforts made to remove or avoid the causes of disease by endeavoring to understand their origin. "Immunity from disease" is a theme for which the public has ever an attentive ear. We must not grow weary in well-doing, but remember that our first and paramount duty is to teach man to know himself—teach him all the laws of health, and set before him the consequences that are sure to follow their violation. Teach him what we now are certainly assured of regarding the hereditary nature of disease, and exhort him to avoid everything likely to encourage premature decay either to himself or his offspring. Let us be captains and generals—take the position of guides and directors. Point out the way to health and happiness, and urge man to walk therein. Teach man, if he is a moral leper, his body will be leprous; if he is a glutton, his earthly house will be filled with refuse and become unhealthy and decay early; if he is a libertine and sensualist, that his unholy indulgences will surely show in a rotten and polluted body; if he is a drunkard, his form is sure to reel and stagger, and his body to undergo degeneration, ending in early decay. Whatever he is internally will, by a law of correspondence, act outwardly, and show itself in his body either for good or for evil. It is our duty to stand by man in all his waywardness, and, although our warnings be unheeded, we must be ever ready to extend a helping hand and endeavor to restore the decaying parts. Armed with the best appliances and materials for our work, we may by their judicious and prompt use be instrumental in restoring this wonderful mechanism—the human body—to its pristine beauty and usefulness, and feel somewhat deserving of the Homeric commendation :

"A wise physician skilled our wounds to heal
Is more than armies to the public weal."

The very radical amendments to the Ontario Medical Act proposed during the last session of the legislature would, if adopted, have placed our profession in a most undesirable position. While some assert that the pruning knife might with advantage be applied to lop off a few twigs from a tree which none deny has borne good fruit, there are fortunately few who would encourage applying the axe to the root of a system whose very existence is a protection to the public and a safeguard to the profession.

The recent attack upon the Medical Council may, however, be productive of more than one useful lesson. Many who supported the pro-