

## A CASE OF BLACKMAIL.

*To the Editor of* ONTARIO MEDICAL JOURNAL.

SIR, I wish to call the attention of your readers to a case of attempted blackmail, and to the noble stand taken by the would-be victim, Dr. Bullis, of Dresden, to vindicate his honour and uphold the profession.

Some time in November last, a girl by the name of Escott laid a complaint, and brought criminal action against the Doctor for seduction and an attempt to produce an abortion, after he refused to pay her any money to hush the matter up. The following is her story in brief:

She says, in February last, that she visited the Doctor's office, not feeling well, and he assaulted her. She returned in March and the same thing occurred again, although she made no noise at the time, nor told her father or anyone else. She again visited him in June, and said she was in the family way, and asked him to give her something to bring her round, which he refused to do. She called again in September, and said she was constipated and had the whites, &c. - which he gave her some cathartic pills and a syringe to wash out the vagina. She again begged him to bring on her menses, and, on his refusing to do so, she threatened to swear it on him. He ordered her out of his office, and heard no more from her until he was sent for by a lawyer in Dresden, and was asked to settle. He indignantly refused, as he had nothing to settle for, and walked out. She then had him brought before the police magistrate in Chatham, when he offered no defence, preferring to sift the matter to the bottom and have his trial before the judge. The police magistrate took his own recognizance for \$500 to appear before Judge Bell, which he did in due time. In the meantime he had procured the services of a detective, and secured evidence to show that the girl was a notoriously bad character; that she had been common property; and that one man in particular, whose character was even worse than her own, had induced her to bring this action against the Doctor for the purpose of bleeding him freely, telling her she could easily get \$500 out of him rather than have his name mixed up in such a scandal, and when she got the money they would go away and have a good time together.

All this and more to the same effect was brought out, by cross-examination, and the consequence was the Doctor was honourably acquitted, after asking to make a statement himself, in which he said he never saw the girl till June, when she came to his office and wanted him to induce a miscarriage; that at the times she said he committed these assaults he was not in Dresden.

The two medical men, Drs. Duncan and Sieve-wright, who had been summoned by her to give evidence, clearly proved that it would be utterly impossible for her to introduce a large syringe through the os, and that the medicine he gave her could not produce an abortion. No evidence was called for the defence, although the Doctor had a dozen or more reliable witnesses, neighbours of this girl, who were ready to swear she was a common prostitute, and could not be believed on oath. And the sequel proved they were right, as she has since stolen her father's money and run away, and her father has, through the papers, warned people not to give her credit on his account. The learned judge, in discharging the Doctor, said he was sorry that any professional man should be at the mercy of such a character, and that it was a clear case of blackmail, and further, that there was not a stain on the Doctor's character, which has been proven by the fact that he now enjoys the confidence of the people to a much greater extent than even before.

I may say the profession of Chatham rallied round him in his hour of trial, as it was their duty to do. And I think every medical man in the Province owes him a debt of gratitude for his manly fight for his own honour and that of the profession.

I would not have troubled you with this long letter, but the press had very sensational accounts of the proceedings before the magistrate, and very little was said after the trial, and as some of these articles, no doubt, were read by his brother practitioners, I thought it my duty to put the case in its true light before the profession through your columns, which must be my excuse for taking up so much of your space.

I am yours, etc.,

JOHN L. BRAY.

Chatham, January 25th, 1894.