

CONCERNED
MILITARY LEGISLATION.

The influence of legislative enactments upon the practice of medicine is a matter of interest to the body as well as the public; to the subjects as well as the practical acts of the art of healing, and hence the propriety of general discussion.

The first American appeal for the admission of medical men was organized in the city of Philadelphia over two years ago, and the second in New York City about seven years later. When it is remembered that Dr. Benjamin Franklin was president of the board of trustees shaping and controlling the Philadelphia college, and that Dr. Benjamin Bush was its brigadier and most influential professor for more than forty years, it will not seem a matter of surprise when it is seen that in that institution is still due the credit of having made the practice of medicine a liberal profession, a free androgen calling. At least, in those days. In an introductory lecture to his class, nearly a century ago, Dr. Bush, whose summarizing the sciences in the progress of scientific knowledge, was the author of a series of lectures, "An Account of Particulars in Promoting the Use of Certain Remedies and Ensuring the Use of Others in the Practice of Medicine," he mentioned "Conferring extensive privileges upon bodies of physicians and dentists, making their services available under severe penalties, from practicing medicine within certain districts or cities and counties." He considers such institutions, however, unprincipled and unchristian, as the basis of medical legislation.

In speaking of these matters Dr. Bush had in mind the laws made in other countries to check the introduction of new methods and new remedies and to prohibit the practice of "unorthodox" upon what was then-honored and orthodox. He remembers the arbitrary and unjust discriminations made in favor of certain schools and against others. He considers whereby education was sacrificed to age, lineage and favoritism. As another obstacle to medical progress the doctor mentioned, "the refusal in universities to tolerate any opinions in the field of medicine which did not harmonize with those of the professors, thus restraining a spirit of inquiry in that period of the world's history distinguished for order and uniformity." In 1837 "It was from the prevalence of this error that Dr. Adam Smith has so justly called universities 'the dull depositories of exploded systems.'

When we remember the horrors that were placed in the way of medical progress from these influences, it is no wonder that the good Doctors Bush and Franklin helped successfully to remove them from that baneful oligarchy which had reigned supreme for centuries. Astounding by a sense of law and truth, which is always characteristic of a true American, and having little to do with the narrowness of the orthodoxy, they opposed all arbitrary laws and favored the greatest of liberty to extend the practice.

Such was the progress of medical teaching in the United States from that time until now, and those same influences of power who knew best the evils of such a monopoly, saw the advantages of a liberal policy, and were more susceptible to political influence, the spirit of pride and pomp, new spise, and mutual snubs and mutual enmities, and seek a master such as existed in the old world. Most engineers were called by compelling every practitioner to possess himself of a license to practice, the diploma of a licentiate, which had the plenitude of the dominant practice regulated least at the request of less of these political officers.

Such was the slow, intellectual history in the progress of medical science in America. After years of exertion and litigation to keep out and suppress "irregulars," other names given to those who sought medical practice, these, in particular, had only one narrow path to follow, which was simply a matter of

form, without form. It is always interesting to hear a countryman "accused" regular physician" of having venereal and syphilitic, gross leprosy, and was unable to give and subtract to the cities in order to be regular and sensible, although he might be in his judgment to be perfectly and regular and worthy with the highest degree of skill in an universal healing of his patients.

It is the opinion of the writer of this article, dangerous to place the question of medicine in the hands of any particular school or group, and with the same penitence that were leveling for medical legislation to protect the poor people against usurers. Just speak to one of those questions alone the economists are agreed that it is better to let the market regulate itself than to tax it in the hope that you would support legislation.

Medical colleges are concerned and interested in the welfare of the public, but they are all commercial, and nothing is taught in a medical school that may not be taught elsewhere, especially in this age of free books and pamphlets. With the exception of a few individuals, the majority of educated observations, the diligent student may become familiar with all that is taught by visiting professors, without ever entering the lecture room. The student does not need to pay for his education, and the teacher does not need to pay for his room. In this respect the medical college, still offers the largest and most numerous students as much information as may be had in a medical school, but it may be had in a medical school at a much smaller expense. The teacher is a great professor in actual service, who is worth more than all the teachers that were ever appointed by any faculty of professors. Medical colleges should be abolished, and the money used to support them should be applied to all the needs of the public.

The casual observer will note the difference in young men coming from medical schools, those who have been exposed to the influence of the wisdom of the sage who was, perhaps, his own good grandfather. Sick Headache, Why endure continued Martyrdom?

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