

Medical Examination, Answers in Foreign Language. Foreign Language in Medical Examinations.

Applicants for license to practice medicine must use the English language in writing out their answers to the questions submitted.

Helena, Montana, Oct. 22, 1907.

William C. Riddell, M. D.,
Secretary, State Board of Medical Examiners,
Helena, Montana.

Dear Sir:—

Your letter of the 17th inst., requesting an opinion as to the State Board of Medical Examiners, received. The question submitted being as follows:

“Has the Board of Medical Examiners of the State of Montana a right to require an applicant for license to practice medicine in this State to write his answer to the questions asked him upon such examination in the English language?”

In our opinion it is not an unreasonable regulation of the Board to require answers to be made in the English language. There is no express statute to the effect that such examinations must be conducted in the English language, nor is there any law to the effect that they may be conducted in any other language. However, we have no provision authorizing the Board to employ an interpreter competent to translate answers written in some language other than the English, nor do we know of any law which would require the Board to pass upon the sufficiency of answers written in some language which the members of the Board could not understand or translate. It is certainly not an unreasonable requirement of the applicant for a license to practice medicine in a state where the English language is the only language taught and used in legal and public matters to hold that he must sufficiently understand such language as to enable him to answer his questions therein.

Yours very truly,

ALBERT J. GALÉN,
Attorney General.