

# The Medical and Nursing Professions and the Survey Report

---

By G. STEWART CAMERON, M.D., F.R.C.S.(C), Chairman, Joint Study Committee,  
Survey of Nursing Education in Canada

---

In the world in which we live, change is the order. It must be progress or retrogression. The human race—notwithstanding many pessimists to the contrary—is steadily moving forward. Measured in days or years, little or no advance is seen, but measured in centuries it is noticeable to all. The evolution of the human race from the primitive life of ancient times is evidence of this. In the process of development, emphasis has been increasingly placed upon the training of the mind. Whatever, therefore, may be the particular calling or profession, individual success can only be attained by having the mind thoroughly trained and equipped. Such training is in line with the principles of all progress. The successful man or woman must learn to think, and to think logically. He must be made familiar with the varied avenues of intellectual activity—science, art, literature—and the standard of excellence in each, so as to determine his own course according to his special aptitudes. At the same time, he must keep abreast of the movements of his own day in order to see his work in its proper perspective. Education is not merely filling the mind with facts; it is training the mind in observation and sound thinking, and in addition, keeping the body healthy and disciplined.

But, you may ask, what has all this to do with training nurses? If we have made ourselves clear, we are sure you will see that the education of nurses can differ in no essential from educational preparation in other professions. The same general principles must govern, or else we flounder about with no accepted compass to guide us, and reach only confusion. May one venture to suggest that part of the chaos in the nursing profession today is due to our failure to apply accepted educational principles to the training of our under-graduates? We must not be surprised at this, because the same confusion has existed in other professions. The desire, however, to find the cause of the dissatisfaction and to remove it, which is everywhere apparent today, is wholly commendable. It is an acknowledgment that things are not right, and that the faults should be corrected if nurses are to take their natural place as properly trained participants in that vast organisation which today ministers to the health and well-being of the human race.

It may be only a coincidence, but a significant one, nevertheless, that throughout the Anglo-Saxon world, at least, those interested have gradually reached the same general conclusions, and while the problems may not be quite the same in Great Britain, the