

of the whole profession, and less a plaything in the hands of those who represent "petty corporate interests." Yours for a peaceful settlement,

OBADIAH OLDSCHOOL, M.D.

THE TORONTO GENERAL HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of ONTARIO MEDICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—With your permission I shall address to the medical gentlemen of this city a few words.

Toronto General Hospital has now been a long time in existence, and in that time certain usages have become somewhat established, but the lapse of time should not confirm forever customs that urgently require changing.

To attend a patient in the General Hospital, a physician must first be appointed to the attending staff. This may simply be impossible. He may be an excellent physician or surgeon, but, lacking influence with the few who govern the hospital, he has no chance whatever of appointment.

The effect of this is that, when such a practitioner is attending a patient who requires hospital care, the case passes out of his hands, and comes under the treatment of one of the staff. The hold of the former is thereby weakened on the patient, who often passes, in future, away from him to the hospital doctor.

The hospital has a staff of physicians and surgeons who, indirectly, gain very much by their appointment. It acts as a constant advertising medium for them, the public thinking that it is because of their special fitness that they have been appointed.

The city and the Government give a large subsidy to the General Hospital. Now, all medical men and their respective clients contribute to this. A claim is established that every practitioner in good standing should have the right to attend his own patient when removed to the hospital. Certainly, this ought to be the case with regard to pay patients in private wards.

A patient naturally, and rightfully, says that he pays, like others, his share, and ought to enjoy freedom in the choice of his medical attendant.

It would do good to the profession of the city; it would interest all medical men in the city to feel

that they had the right to attend their own patients in the hospital. Every medical man will bear me out in the statement that it is a hard trial to be severed from a patient in whose welfare he takes a keen interest.

Further, it would bring physicians together on a common ground. All would have the advantage of any new advances that may be made. This information would be carried away for the benefit of other patients who do not go to the hospital. The precedent in St. Michael's and Grace Hospitals might be quoted.

I have only hinted at a few points. I shall be glad to hear from others on this matter.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN FERGUSON.

Toronto, Jan. 12, 1893.

DISSECTING ROOMS AND OBSTETRICIANS.

To the Editor of ONTARIO MEDICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—Dr. Slee says most emphatically the practice of midwifery by those connected with dissecting or post mortem rooms is not dangerous. I will simply put him in the witness box, and let him tell his own story and leave the profession to judge. I think I shall get a verdict by his own evidence. These are his words:

"It would not be advisable to go direct from the dead-house to a case of labour, but let a man change his clothes and sterilize his person."

Now, I ask if, to make this practice safe in the opinion even of its warmest advocate, it requires all this trouble and time which is rarely available, can it be considered a safe or prudent one? It is always a sign of weakness in defending a case to bring in a lot of other matters. All this about diphtheria and dirty nails has no bearing on the subject whatever; it is simply drawing a red herring across the scent. The real question is the dissecting or post mortem room, and nothing else.

I have practised midwifery for upwards of half a century, and I can hardly recall to my recollection cases where a husband would wait patiently till I had sterilized myself and changed my clothes. Is this not more likely? The doctor, just come from two hours' work in dissecting room, exhaling an odour of "araby the blest," is pounced upon by a