

OBSTETRICAL NURSING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF ASEPSIS.

A lecture delivered to the Canadian Nurses Association

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I understand you have had a lecture on the ideal nurse. I fancy from the faces I see before me, you have profited by that lecture, as I am quite sure there is none but the ideal nurse here.

I am quite within my right if I say that Montreal, for its size, is as well equipped with well-trained nurses as are larger centres. I have been able to observe the work and training of nurses elsewhere, and I am quite sure other medical men will confirm what I say,—we should be satisfied with our training schools here, and the quality of the graduates turned out by them.

Remember, when I say this, I do not say there is not room for improvement, and that you are to rest on your laurels because there is nothing more to learn. This would be a mistake, and absurd. There is always something to learn in any walk of life, and this is doubly true in medical and surgical work. The medical man who thinks he knows all that is necessary to be known, when he graduates, will know a great deal less ten years after his graduation, and become simply a cipher in the professional ranks. This is equally true of your own work, and I am glad to see you are aware of that fact, and are attempting to hold on to what knowledge you already possess, and are wishing to add to it. You are fully in the medical ranks. A medical man can do very little satisfactorily without you. You are a necessity to him in most cases he is called to treat. You are to bear this in mind—in fact, it is upon the careful nursing and ceaseless watchfulness and tact of the nurse that many a difficult case is pulled through. I am speaking now from experience of my own work. I could give you cases of typhoid fever, one particularly, and others in surgical and obstetrical work, where, if it had not been for the devoted care of the nurse, they would have been lost. When I say this you will easily perceive how much we are dependent upon your assistance, and in no class of cases are we more so than in obstetrical work. It is upon your nursing and our attention that a mother is again restored to her position in the family.

In obstetrical nursing you have to remember all you have been taught in asepticism and the objects to be attained by it. It