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MONTREAL, AUGUST, 1895.

SHOULD PATIENTS IN PRIVATE ROOMS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS BE ALLOWED TO HAVE THEIR OWN DOCTOR?

For most people this question would seem to be an absurd one, for any other answer than the affirmative one would imply the subversion of every principle of right and justice. The question has been asked quite often of late, and has been answered pretty generally by the medical journals in Canada and the United States in a manner which has not pleased the cliques, who, having secured control of some of the public hospitals and a monopoly of attending the poor, wish to use their position as a means of taking from their fellow-practitioners those of the latter's patients who, by force of circumstances, find themselves in a private ward in the public hospital. Many of the laity are not aware of this unjust and selfish regulation, and others are loath to believe that such a thing is possible. A wealthy gentleman, subject to attacks of vertigo, falls down in the street. If he were left alone for a few minutes he would recover consciousness, call a cab and drive home, where his family physician would be summoned to attend him. But in less than five minutes an ambulance arrives, which rapidly conveys him to the Royal Victoria or General Hospital, instead of taking him home. When he recovers consciousness he finds himself in a private ward in one of these hospitals. He asks for his family doctor, but he is politely

informed that only the best doctors in the city are elected to that hospital, and only those who are elected to the staff are allowed to attend private patients there, and that his family physician is not one of them. It is easy to see how prejudicial to the interests of the family physician this is, to say nothing of the slight to his reputation; and it is extremely doubtful whether he will ever have an opportunity of attending either his patient or any of his family again. Many of the practitioners of the city are murmuring quite audibly against this unjust regulation, and it is more than likely that public opinion may become so strong that the management of the Royal Victoria and General will be compelled to follow the example of the Toronto General Hospital, the Hotel-Dieu, the Notre Dame and the Western, which all place their private rooms at the service of any reputable practitioner when patients are willing to pay for them.

SANITARY CONDITION OF MONTREAL.

The physicians and druggists of Montreal are all agreed that there never has been so little sickness within the memory of the oldest practitioners, and the superintendent of Mount Royal Cemetery bears out that opinion, having recently informed us that there never have been so few deaths as there have been this summer. This is as it should be, and is very gratifying to the medical profession, which has never ceased from putting forth every effort to improve the sanitary condition of the city. Although the healthier condition of the city and the diminished death rate are directly traceable to the efforts of the physicians, and although we were aware that if our efforts were successful there would be much less work for us, and that our incomes would consequently suffer, still, strange to say, many of these sanitary improvements have been persistently opposed by the citizens who have been the first to benefit by them. They could hardly understand such a thing as a whole profession working against its own interest for the public good. We are proud to say that such has been the case, and feel that such disinterested efforts in the public interest fairly entitle our profession to the claim of being one of the most noble of them all.