

one of Emerson's maxims, viz., "Stand by your own spontaneous convictions with good-natured inflexibility, the more so when all the cry of voices is against you." I do not hesitate to affirm, from pretty close observation of what I have seen others do, and from what I have been able to do in a fairly large practice extending over a quarter of a century, that instruments can be used with the greatest possible freedom without fear of inflicting either present or remote injury on mother or child. My excuse for introducing a personal reminiscence is the profound impression I secured when attending the second labor case in my student days at the old institution, I think, on Bay Street. A young girl was in labor from Thursday until Sunday morning. She almost battered her brains out in her agony before relief was invoked. Dr. Temple was called—applied forceps and in a few minutes delivered the completely exhausted and demented creature of a healthy child. I at once recognized the absolute necessity of acquiring the art of using forceps, but soon found it was impossible to learn it from books or lectures, and our teachers of that date gave no opportunity of acquiring it from experiment. However, just as soon as I got my license, I quietly ignored all the objections and restrictions I had been taught, and availed myself of every opportunity of using the forceps. About the only cases missed were those where the birth had taken place before my arrival. I always regretted missing these. Now, without presuming to have acquired a particle more skill than any young man who tries can most safely and easily obtain, I soon had a record of a hundred successful cases. I had the privilege of watching nearly every mother and child for seven years. Not one of them suffered any ill effect; but I am fully satisfied that the experience and confidence thus early acquired have saved the lives of scores of patients and children.

The following deductions may be briefly summarized, especially for the benefit of the host of youthful medicos soon to be launched on the professional sea:

1. Acquire by wide reading and close observation full knowledge of the resources of obstetric art, and by persistent practice the most complete mental control so as to be able under all circumstances to calmly and intelligently use your knowledge and resources.

2. Cultivate early and most assiduously how to make an aseptic, scientific, efficient and painless examination.

3. Consider most carefully every factor that can add to the peace of mind, relief of suffering and prompt delivery of your patient.

4. Whilst always exercising the most intelligent precautions against every possible danger to either mother or child, avail yourself of every opportunity of acquiring the utmost dexterity and confidence in the use of forceps, for in many abnormal cases two lives are absolutely dependent upon this skill. The forceps should