

## REMARKS.

Although the death rate of the University Lying-in Hospital for sixteen years compares favorably with that of similar institutions in Europe and America, the mortality for the first twelve was markedly lower than that for the last four years. Thus from October 1st, 1867, to May 28th, 1879, there were 1,392 women delivered, with ten deaths, a mortality of only 1 in 139, or 0.73 per cent.; and the causes of death were epidemic puerperal fever in seven cases and chronic Bright's disease in the remaining three. Whilst from May 28th, 1879, to October 1st, 1883, there were 328 women delivered, with seven deaths, a mortality of 1 in 47 or 2.14 per cent.; the causes of death being rupture of the uterus in one case and sepsis in six cases.

This remarkable variation in the death-rate of the same institution at different consecutive periods is startling, and demands consideration and explanation. From careful enquiry there does not appear to have been any material difference in the class of patients admitted into the hospital during the two periods. The domestic hygiene, the diet and the nursing of the patients were as carefully attended to in one period as the other. There was no epidemic of puerperal fever in the second period as in the first to account for the mortality, and the deaths from sepsis did not follow each other at short intervals, having occurred at the following dates: May 1879, April 1880, April 1881, December 1881, March 1882, and May 1882.

The only reasonable explanation of the increased mortality during the latter term of four years is, I conceive, the following: The University Lying-in Hospital was partly established, and has always been utilized, for educational purposes, the students of medicine in McGill University having access to its wards, and the Professor of Midwifery in the University holding the position of Physician-Accoucheur to the Hospital. For a long period the resident midwife superintended the ordinary labors, and the students (two in number) who had the charge of each case, although invariably several others were in attendance, were restricted to the number of times they examined the patient *per vaginam*: their hands having been previously cleansed by