

marriage, "Now I can make your life a misery, but I will never bore you."

He didn't. They were separated frequently, divorced in 1927, remarried in 1929 and divorced in 1934. Professionally Bethune was also unorthodox, "even for a Canadian" said a colleague.

At 34 he set up his first and only private medical practice in Detroit, Michigan. He lasted there two years, contracted tuberculosis, and recovered only after insisting on a rare operation. He left the sanatorium saying:

"I am going to look around 'til I find something I can do for the human race, something great, and I am going to do it before I die."

He did.

He moved to Montreal in 1928 as a surgical assistant at the Royal Victoria Hospital. In 1933, under pressure from medical colleagues, he left to head the department of thoracic surgery at Sacré-Coeur Hospital, ten miles north of Montreal. During the period he wrote for medical journals and began to invent new medical instruments, something he would continue to do for the rest of his life.

Bethune was a character among co-workers. "He didn't fit in here", said a colleague at the Royal Victoria.

"He was a hell of a good surgeon... and occasionally he made mistakes," said a former student there.

#### Devotion to the Poor

He was devoted to his patients, admired and despised by his colleagues, a man impatient with others and with himself. A friend and artist Marion Scott said he would often call himself an artist, both when he was operating and when he worked on canvas.