

SELECTED ARTICLES

LORD LISTER

The foundation stone of the Nurses' Home to be erected in connection with the Montreal General Hospital was laid by Lord Lister, Sept. 2nd. After he had performed the function he spoke of the interest with which he had listened to the president's remarks concerning the intimate relations that had existed between the General Hospital and the Medical School. Some people, he said, imagined that a hospital should be simply for the curing of disease, and that the teaching element was of small importance. There could not be a greater mistake, not only because the teaching practically of medicine was of vital importance, but because in direct proportion to the eminence and efficiency of a hospital school was the efficiency of the hospital. Where a hospital existed unconnected with a medical school, the tendency too often was that the medical officers, unstimulated by public criticism were apt to lapse into a condition of careless indifference, in spite of their success and of the importance of their noble calling. Where a great medical school was associated with a hospital there was perpetually upon those working in it the eye of public criticism, and the stimulus of emulation. He had the pleasure on the previous day of going through the hospital. Some parts of the old portions, no doubt, had lower ceilings than would be thought suitable at the present day; but what was wanted was not so much a very lofty ceiling as ample space between the beds. There might be an atmosphere extending to the sky, but if the beds were put close together, there would be insalubrity. In those wards of the hospital which had the lowest ceilings, the arrangement of the beds was such that there had been ensured ample provision of cubic space for the patients. He had been told that, excellent as the hospital was and had shown itself in the treatment of disease, there was not satisfactory accom-

modation for the nursing staff. Undoubtedly, it was of the utmost importance that there should be such accommodation as that home would provide. He touched on the women who acted as nurses when he was a student, and said that an immense improvement had taken place since then, thanks to the noble example and teaching of Florence Nightingale, and to the efforts of many others. When going through the hospitals he had been asked to take stock of the nurses. He did so hastily, and, as far as he could judge they were a healthy, able, amiable and loyal staff. He was sure that in their new home the nurses would have accommodation commensurate with their value. Addressing himself more particularly to the nurses, he spoke of the extreme gratification that he experienced last year when, being shown over one of the largest hospitals in Liverpool, by the nurses presenting him with an address, stating that his humble endeavors had done much in the way of alleviating the work of nurses. He was pleased to think that he had been in any way instrumental in this direction. He had been informed that the nursing staff did not confine their efforts to the hospital, but that there was a liberal arrangement made by the hospital authorities by which the nurses might be sent out in the town generally; and where the circumstances of the family were such that they could not pay the nurse properly, the funds were contributed by the hospital to aid in the payment of the nurses. That seemed to him a most noble idea, and he could not but think that if it could be extended, not only to all parts of the city, but to the remote outlying parts of the country, it would be a most valuable thing for Canada. Her Excellency Lady Aberdeen had this matter much at heart, and he was sure that if her idea of the Victorian Order of Nurses could be carried out, with due regard to the efficient training of the nurses, and also to the efficiency of their supervision, the matter would commend itself to all medical men.

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