

On Craik, R.

THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

THE VICTORIAN ORDER OF NURSES,

PUBLIC MEETING AT MONTREAL, APRIL 21st, 1897.

ADDRESS BY

DR. CRAIK, DEAN OF FACULTY OF MEDICINE,

McGILL UNIVERSITY.

Your Excellencies, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen:—

In endeavoring to assist in my humble way in the objects of this meeting, I would desire it to be understood that what I have to say will be chiefly from a professional or medical point of view, and although I cannot by any means claim to speak as the official mouthpiece of the Profession, yet, as one of its oldest members I may fairly claim to speak with some knowledge of its wants, and also with some knowledge of its views with reference to the proper treatment and the proper tending of the sick.

The time was, not so very long ago, and within the memory of many of us, when the attendance and advice of the doctor with the kindly but unskilled assistance of friends and neighbors, were all, or nearly all, that sick persons had to rely upon for their comfort or cure; or if nurses, so called, were to be had, they were at best self-taught, and without scientific training of any kind.

Even the doctors' ideas about the nature of disease were often misty and indefinite, and the science of Medicine had but little claim to be ranked among the exact sciences. But, thanks to the great progress and discoveries of modern science, all these things have been greatly changed for the better. The causes of disease have become so much better known and its processes and effects so much better understood, that most diseases are now much more manageable and the resulting mortality has been greatly reduced. In short, Medicine—including, of course, Surgery—is rapidly establishing its claim to be ranked among the Exact Sciences.

And how have these changes been brought about? By substituting accurate scientific methods of observation and practice for the crude and indefinite methods of the past. But the doctors themselves would have been powerless in carrying out these changes but for the able and valuable assistance of the