

quirements of our examining board, *and if they are satisfied, as so many of them are, with the diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons only, even that limited acquaintance with midwifery is unnecessary.*" (The italics are ours.)

The Principal of the Calcutta Medical College, which requires two full courses of seventy lectures each on obstetrics, writes Dr. Playfair thus :—

"I am proud to think that some of you will not rest until you have seen this great evil set right. To what a hideous extent is the practice of midwifery carried on in England, by utterly unqualified men, whom the unhappy women and their friends believe to be qualified, and the system in your hospitals sadly favors this. You gentlemen *who have acquired, by much subsequent study and painful experience, the knowledge you ought to have gained in your schools*, could, I doubt not, tell many a sad story of blighted health, and of houses rendered desolate by this lamentable ignorance of a large and important part of practice."

I would entreat our young men who are pursuing their medical studies in our own Provincial schools, in which midwifery is taught by lecturers of acknowledged ability and large experience, in full courses of two years, and to students with perpetual tickets, through three or four years, if they desire to avail themselves of the prolonged advantages, to "read, learn, mark, and inwardly digest," the instructive declarations of Professor Playfair, and his Calcutta correspondent. Such a confession of deplorable defect of obstetric education in England, from the lips of the "Professor of Obstetric Medicine in King's College, London," is surely an admonition to all Provincialists that if they neglect the opportunities for obstetric education presented in our own schools, they will not add much to their knowledge by crossing the Atlantic; and yet should any of those students who leave the English "schools more ignorant of obstetrics than of any other subject," and with merely "sufficient knowledge to satisfy the limited requirements of our (English) examining board," or any of those who come to Canada with the algebraic tail-flourish of M. R. C. S., present themselves for legal registration in Canada, they can command the obedience of our College of Physicians and Surgeons, and forthwith take rank with the most thoroughly qualified men of our country. But let any of our young men, however well instructed, seek for recip-

rocal privilege in England, and what will be the reply given to his application?—O! you are only a Provincial barbarian; you have not undergone our "superficial cram;" you have wasted two, three, or four years in acquiring that knowledge which we condense into a summer course of forty lectures; nor can you exhibit to us even the "Diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons," which is here legal evidence of artistic educational compression. Step aside, young man, and enter your name in King's College, or some other recognised grinding factory, where midwifery is taught at a 2.40 pace.

Now if the English schools regard obstetric instruction as a matter of such light moment, I, in all seriousness, ask our Canadian medical, and all other, readers, whether it is the province of our medical licensing authorities to admit to legal registration persons so imperfectly instructed as Prof. Playfair has shown his pupils really to be? I have always regarded midwifery as the most important branch of medical practice, as it undoubtedly is the most responsible. To very many rural practitioners, opportunities for performing formidable surgical operations, requiring exact anatomical knowledge and superior manual dexterity, but very seldom are presented; but how different is the course of professional life with the practitioner of midwifery? Everybody has to be born, at least once; and every woman should, on the fair average, give birth to half-a-dozen children; but of all those born, how few, we would hope, may require the operation of lithotomy, ovariectomy, amputation, fracture setting, or even reduction of dislocation? The medical neophyte who hangs out his shingle in any remote hamlet, may well begin to feel melancholy if he passes his first six months without a call to a case of midwifery; and who knows but his very first case may be one of formidable character, demanding not only thorough knowledge of his art, but also unswerving self-reliance? Verily it will not suit our market to import to Canada British licentiates, who are, as Prof. Playfair designates them, "*more ignorant of obstetrics than of any other subject.*" We have no room for them in our cities, and we should not be instrumental in sending them into the country, to augment "*the story of blighted health, and of houses rendered desolate by their lamentable ignorance of a large and important part of practice.*"

Yours truly,

JOSEPH WORKMAN.

Toronto, Sept. 15th, 1879.