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MEDICINE AND SURGERY IN MONTREAL.

ALTHOUGH there are hospitals in Montreal, with many patients in them, it is a singular fact that operations are very rare. In passing through the spacious and well-ventilated wards of any one of the charitable institutions of the city, which are principally under the immediate control of different orders of nuns, no one is seen, at least at present, either recovering from a surgical operation, or preparing for one. Infirm and idiotic men and women, and old and white-headed people, tottering under the weight of years, make up the amount of beneficiaries. There seems to be no specific regulations in regard to the period when a patient shall leave, nor special inquiry into the claims of an applicant for admission. We saw a pale, feeble Irishman, sitting near a door, who said, when questioned about his health, that he had been there "*seven years with a great weakness in the legs*"!

A student would not be essentially benefited by attendance either at the Hotel Dieu, under the surgical care of Dr. Monroe, or at the General or English Hospital as it is called. This latter establishment has a charter from England, and derives considerable of its support from a small tax on emigrants. There are, however, many annual subscribers, by whom the medical officers are selected, but who receive no compensation. Professional merit has no influence in the appointments: because an individual happens to be well esteemed by those exercising the most influence, he takes the post—to have and to hold as long as he lives, for aught we know to the contrary. Of the military hospitals, of which there are a number, each is under the care of the surgeons attached to the regiments on garrison duty. Consequently they are frequently changed.

As nearly as can be ascertained without a special call for numbers, there are not far from fifty practitioners in Montreal, out of which a few perform the most lucrative part of the business. Dr. Holmes is spoken of by the inhabitants generally as a man of superior professional attainments. Singular as it may appear to us, in the States, where quackery in all its varieties flourishes like a green bay tree, there is not one of the family of quacks in the whole city—not even a Thompsonian or a reformed Beachite;

nor is there a bottle of hot crop, or, as far as we could discover, a spoonful of composition tea, within the limits of the municipality. The *poor man's plaster* is indeed on sale; but no mention was made of Sherman's lozenges or Brande's pills. More wonderful still, the Science of Life, as promulgated among us from the pulpit, instead of a college of medicine, by one of the greatest quacks in the Union, if ever known in Lower Canada, has not been long remembered—since they are prodigious meat eaters in all British America, even to a proverb, yet are as hardy, strong, long-lived and happy as the disciples of any new school of dietetics.

Till within a few years, the city practitioners of Lower Canada went to England for a medical education. Those whose means are sufficiently ample, do so still; but since the discovery was made that lectures at Boston, New York and Philadelphia were open to them, the number now annually matriculated at these places, is increasing. When a physician goes from the States into Canada to establish himself, a diploma, from any school of acknowledged reputation, is a sufficient document to obtain the approbation and license of the board of medical examiners, appointed by Government.

A collegiate institution, called M'Gill College, the academic department of which was never organized, has a medical school in active operation, with a talented faculty. There are six chairs, filled by the following gentlemen, viz. :—Practice of Physic, W. Robertson, M.D.; Chemistry and Pharmacy, A. F. Holmes, M.D.; Principles and Practice of Surgery, G. W. Campbell, M.D.; Midwifery, A. Hall, M.D.; Anatomy and Physiology, — Bruncan, Esq.; Demonstrator of Anatomy, J. R. Dick, M.D. Lectures commence the first Monday in November, and continue till May first. Three winter sessions are requisite for graduation.

A stranger is everywhere struck with the devoted attention and unwearied kindness of the sisters of charity. They are the hospital nurses, the apothecaries in some places, but always the vigilant, conscientious attendants of those admitted to their hospitable abode. Much of the success in hospital practice depends on the nurses, since they often really kill or cure, however skilful the medical attendant may be.

The medical institutions of Quebec will constitute a future page.