Hunter. (Jas. B.)

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE WOMAN'S HOSPITAL.*

By JAMES B. HUNTER, M. D.,
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In the year 1855, when the Woman's Hospital was established, gynæcology, as a distinct branch of medicine, was "without form and void." The practice in diseases of women did not differ materially, in this country at least, from the practice of twenty-five years before. Twenty-five years later the difference was very great. The striking advance that took place in that department in this country during that period was due, in great part, to the influence of the Woman's Hospital, and to the teachings of its founder, Dr. Sims, and its chief supporter, Dr. Emmet. Sims planted and Emmet watered. It is true that great changes took place during the same period in the practice of general surgery; but in no department was it so marked, so complete, so radical, as in that pertaining to the diseases of women.

My purpose on the present occasion, knowing the prejudices of my audience, is to call attention, very briefly, to the large share which the Woman's Hospital has had directly in the advancement of gynæcology, and indirectly

* Read before the Alumni Association of the Woman's Hospital at its third meeting.

in the advancement of general surgery. The influence of the Woman's Hospital has been:

1. Through the medium of the men who have been trained within its walls, including surgeons, assistant surgeons, members of the house staff, and those connected with the out-door clinics during the past thirty years. Availing themselves to the full of the ample advantages there afforded, many members of the house staff have continued the work of the hospital in other cities and in other lands. They have been instrumental in founding other woman's hospitals, and wards for the treatment of diseases of women in general hospitals. They have also founded dispensaries for diseases of women, and in various schools and colleges they have given able instruction, didactic and clinical, in the same branch. Between fifty-five and sixty physicians are now living who have enjoyed the teachings of the Woman's Hospital as members of the house staff. Those, more than any other officers connected with the hospital, should represent its best teachings and advocate its best practice. Many of those gentlemen have become specialists, and have attained distinction; many have labored with extraordinary success in the field of general practice, and have there turned to good account their hospital instruction. In the colleges of this city, and in the polyclinic and post-graduate schools, as well as in the dispensaries and clinics devoted to diseases of women, there may be found a very respectable number of those having or having had some connection with the Woman's Hospital. Some details of the work accomplished by former members of the house staff will be given hereafter.

2. Less direct, but very much more wide-spread and general, has been the influence exerted by the Woman's Hospital through the medium of those who have attended its clinics, and witnessed as spectators the operations per-

formed there. Over three thousand physicians and students annually avail themselves of the privilege of visiting the hospital on operating days. Many more would gladly go did not the facilities of the hospital render it necessary to limit the number. Many come from a great distance for this purpose alone, and among the spectators may be found intelligent practitioners from every part of the civilized world. They go home, many of them, carrying with them the ideas, the methods, the instruments, the practical details of the Woman's Hospital. In Europe, in Australia, in China and Japan, in India, the Woman's Hospital has, through this means, been abundantly fruitful. As a single instance, it may be mentioned that one gentleman from Australia, after having visited the principal schools of Europe, established himself in this city for a whole winter for the express purpose of improving his knowledge of gynæcology. He is now practicing in a large city in Australia, turning to the best possible account the information gained in the Woman's Hospital, and having in his possession a complete set of instruments made in this city after the Woman's Hospital pattern. Many others who have had no official connection with the hospital have become earnest students of gynæcology, and for an entire season or more have followed faithfully the operations and, as far as possible, the clinics and the treatment, and have gone home and put in practice, with most gratifying success, the instruction thus acquired. One gentleman from a distance, from whom I had formerly frequent calls to operate on his patients, and whom I urged to come to the city for instruction, followed my advice to such good purpose that now he does all his operations himself, and I am never sent for. I am bound to add that he does them well.

3. The patients of the Woman's Hospital themselves have had much to do with promoting the advancement of

knowledge of diseases of women. Many thousands of women are scattered over the country, some from almost every county in almost every State, who have received some substantial benefit, often amounting to the saving of life, very often to the permanent cure of some dangerous or painful malady, during a sojourn in the Woman's Hospital. These women necessarily spread the fame of the hospital, and create a demand for the knowledge by which they have profited. Their influence extends to the profession at large. The country practitioner becomes ambitious to keep abreast of the times, and often feels that he *must* do so in order to keep abreast of his patients. Hence, often, a pilgrimage to the Woman's Hospital, and a profitable sojourn there. Not a few ambitious physicians make a business of spending a few weeks in this city every winter, having as the chief incentive the opportunity of visiting the Woman's Hospital. Some weight must be given also to the influence of the many nurses who have passed through the Woman's Hospital, some dwelling there for a very short period, and a few for a long period. The more intelligent among them have carried the methods of nursing peculiar to the Woman's Hospital into private practice, and into the practice of other hospitals.

First among the hospitals which may be considered as offshoots or outgrowths of the Woman's Hospital I shall mention that established by Dr. W. H. Baker in Boston. It was small at first, but modeled, as nearly as possible, after the Woman's Hospital in everything except its government. It was originally a single private house, but now a second house has been added, and the accommodation consists of from thirty to thirty-five beds. These beds are all free, being endowed by private individuals or by different churches. The influence of that hospital has been felt, not only by the Harvard Medical School, but by the pro-

fession at large in Boston. It is known as the Free Hospital for Women. According to the "Eleventh Annual Report" of that hospital (1885–'86), one hundred and twenty-eight patients had been admitted to the hospital during the year, and in the out-patient department seven thousand and seventy-six had been afforded treatment. Dr. Baker, when he first settled in Boston, after leaving the Woman's Hospital, established a clinic for diseases of women at the Boston Dispensary, which has grown and prospered. Before dismissing Dr. Baker, it should be mentioned that he has for several years held the chair of lecturer on gynæcology in the Harvard Medical School.

The California Woman's Hospital is, in some sense, an outgrowth of the Woman's Hospital of this city. Dr. John Scott, when he came to this city in 1867, a pilgrim from Calcutta, India, was advised and encouraged by Dr. Emmet, and inspired by what he saw done here, to attempt the establishment of a hospital on the Pacific coast. I remember well how eagerly and keenly Dr. Scott scrutinized every detail of the operations and the treatment at the Woman's Hospital during the few weeks he could afford to qualify himself for the undertaking. The California Woman's Hospital was organized in 1868 and incorporated in 1873. It had at first thirty beds, but has now double that number. Two graduates of the Woman's Hospital have had some connection with it. Dr. W. S. Whitwell for some time occupied the position of assistant surgeon, and Dr. A. P. Dudley for one year the position of house physician. The California Woman's Hospital deserves to be honorably remembered by this association from the fact that the house surgeon is paid a salary of fifty dollars a month. Dr. Whitwell has now a private hospital of his own. It is not exclusively for diseases of women, but admits "medical and surgical and obstetrical patients." He deserves the credit,

I believe, of having introduced the use of hot water for hæmorrhage in Germany.

In St. Louis, Mo., the late Dr. W. L. Barrett, who served in the Woman's Hospital in 1867 and 1868, had charge given him of a gynæcological ward in a general hospital, and for many years did a special practice in that city. Not long before his death he was appointed lecturer on gynæcology in one of the St. Louis medical schools.

In Hartford, Conn., Dr. P. H. Ingalls holds the position of gynæcologist to the Hartford Hospital, and according to the third annual report of that hospital there were treated during the year ending September 30, 1886, thirty-four uterine cases.

In Baltimore, Md., the Woman's Hospital was opened in April, 1882, with a capacity of seventeen beds. In November, 1886, it was moved into a new building, having a capacity of thirty beds. The hospital is modeled very closely after the Woman's Hospital of this city. One graduate of the Woman's Hospital, Dr. C. W. Riley, holds the position of assistant surgeon to the Baltimore hospital.

In Providence, R. I., Dr. G. W. Porter, after leaving the Woman's Hospital, engaged in general practice. After some years he was appointed gynæcologist to the Providence Dispensary, which position he held for some time. In 1872 the department of gynæcology was established in the Rhode Island Hospital, and Dr. Porter was appointed surgeon to that department, of which he has entire control. His service consists of twelve beds, in which about sixty patients are treated every year. He has also an out-patient department connected with the same ward, in which one thousand two hundred and thirty-seven patients were treated last year. He has also a cottage for abdominal operations. Dr. Porter now gives his attention exclusively to gynæcology.

In Washington, D. C., Dr. George Woodruff Johnston is the sole representative of the Woman's Hospital, of which he writes: "On gynæcology, here as elsewhere, the Woman's Hospital has produced, through the medium of the writings of those connected with it, and the occasional visits of physicians from this city to its operating-rooms, a most decided and wide-spread impression." Dr. Johnston is lecturer on operative gynæcology in the National Medical College, and is also chief of the clinic for diseases of women in the Central Dispensary and Emergency Hospital.

In Jersey City, N. J., the late Dr. John Van Vorst, Jr., had established a successful gynæcological practice, and had performed many operations.

In Chicago, Dr. E. C. Dudley has been for many years a successful practitioner of gynæcology, and has done a large number of operations. He holds the position of gynæcologist to St. Luke's Hospital, the Cook County Hospital, and the Mercy Hospital; is also professor of gynæcology in the Chicago Medical College, and delivers lectures on gynæcology in Mercy and St. Luke's Hospitals.

In this city (New York), the ex-members of the house staff of the Woman's Hospital are represented by two surgeons to that institution, six assistant surgeons, a pathologist and registrar, and an electro-therapeutist.

In Bellevue Hospital an alumnus of the Woman's Hospital has for several years conducted successfully a gynæcological department, and has performed a large number of operations of all kinds.

It would be personal, perhaps, to speak more particularly of those who are so near home, or to say much of the many instruments and appliances invented by graduates of the Woman's Hospital. Suffice it to say that neither the speculum nor the pessary has entirely escaped their attention. It may be permissible, however, as a means of avoiding a dis-

cussion on priority in future ages, to place on record the fact that the use of the rubber coil in peritonitis after ovariotomy was first suggested by Dr. A. B. Townshend, when he was house surgeon in 1881, and that he himself manufactured the first coil, which was used by Dr. Emmet on one of his patients in 1882.

Speaking to this association, I am not afraid of being criticised if I dwell for a few moments on the substantial advantages enjoyed by the members of the house staff of the Woman's Hospital during their pupilage. I use the word "enjoyed" with a full knowledge that the experience in question was not always joyous in the getting; but I believe those gentlemen learn some things not always learned by the graduates of other hospitals. I will not say that they learn to give ether better; but I will say that we have had many graduates of other hospitals who certainly gave it better when they left our hospital than when they entered it. As the influence of the Woman's Hospital is exerted very largely through its graduates, I must not omit to say a word of the advantages which accrue to those who do not become specialists, and who, strange as it may appear, never expect to. The graduate of the Woman's Hospital has an advantage over his fellow-practitioners in many particulars which he does not discover until after he has engaged in general practice. This is especially true as regards many obstetric manipulations. The man who has acquired a thorough familiarity with the methods and instruments of the Woman's Hospital will find that he has the key to many of the mysteries of obstetrics, and he may even be inclined to regard obstetrics as a branch of gynæcology. In all uterine manipulations, in the arrest of hæmorrhage, in the removal of débris from the cavity of the uterus, in the use of the tampon, in the management of the bladder and rectum, and in the appreciation of any lesions which may occur, he

will often find himself unexpectedly "at home." He will find, in other words, that there is a far wider range than he supposed for the skill and knowledge he has acquired.

In conclusion, I think it may be fairly asserted that the Woman's Hospital has exercised a widespread influence, and that its influence has been for good. At first unique in its character and purpose, it has impressed its principles on the profession and on other hospitals to such an extent that it has no longer a monopoly of any particular class of diseases. It has established gynæcology on a sure and firm basis, and rendered it popular, simple, and accessible to all. It has abolished the old heroic methods of treatment, and furnished something better in their place. Above all, it has enlarged the domain of surgery in diseases of women, and defined its proper limits. It has taught the profession not only what to do, but what not to do. It has also borne a large and honorable part in the development of abdominal surgery. In short, whatever may be the future of the Woman's Hospital, it has already a long and glorious record, of which every one of its graduates may be justly proud.

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