



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING

VOL. XV

NOVEMBER, 1914

No. 2

EDITORIAL COMMENT

ISABEL McISAAC

We know that hundreds of Miss McIsaac's friends in many distant places will want to know something of the circumstances of her illness and death.

We believe that the first breakdown, from which she never fully recovered, was from her staying too long at her post at the Illinois Training School. The difficulties of her position in this great hospital, dominated by political control, after seventeen years of magnificent service, proved in the end to be more than she could endure. After retiring to Cranford with her sister she gave herself no interval of perfect rest, but entered enthusiastically into the work of the home and the farm, one side of which she has shown in her little book, *A New Cranford*—and during these years she wrote her three text-books, *Primary Nursing Technique*, *Hygiene for Nurses* and *Bacteriology for Nurses* which were prepared for the definite purpose of filling a great need among young probationers and their superintendents. Although she had not been specially trained for literary work, she possessed a very unusual ability for literary expression.

During those years at Cranford she served as president of the JOURNAL Board, as chairman of the Robb Memorial Committee and, for two years, as inter-state secretary, traveling constantly from the Atlantic to the Pacific, which was a tremendous strain nervously and physically, from which she felt she never entirely recovered.

The two years of service as superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps were difficult ones as they meant adapting herself to a new kind of work and also because, on account of the illness of the president of the American Nurses' Association, Miss Sly, she was obliged to assume

the duties of president. In the second year of her service came the war in Mexico, which she took greatly to heart. One of her last notes to the JOURNAL office, accompanying the list of nurses sent to Vera Cruz, contained the comment:

They went with a few hours' notice so there was no time to write earlier. It makes me positively sick to think of them walking straight into that seething cauldron—but they are young and cheerful.

Her health was already impaired and then there came the crash of the war in Europe. Under the stress and strain of war conditions she failed to take advantage of the six weeks' vacation which was due her and spent only two weeks at Cranford early in the summer. Realizing that her strength was giving way, she resigned her position but refused to leave her office until her successor should reach Washington from the Philippines. On the day following Miss Thompson's arrival she became seriously ill and was taken to the Walter Reed Hospital where she lived for nineteen days. Her sister, the "Euphemia" of Cranford, was with her, to her great comfort. So long as she was conscious she was making plans to be taken home. The diagnosis of her disease was pernicious anemia. Burial was at her old home in Waterloo, Iowa. A description of the services at Waterloo was sent us by one of our readers there, Nanna Colby, as follows:

The burial of Miss Isabel McIsaac occurred at Waterloo, Iowa, her childhood home, on Thursday, September 24. Her sister Euphemia and a brother accompanied her. Before the appointed hour of service, a large representation of nurses, all who could possibly leave their tasks, assembled in the chapel. They were alone with her and very reverently they hovered about her, looking into the beautiful face that seemed to smile back at them. It was not like death and even to those who had never seen her, yet knew her, it seemed that she was there and knew and understood. Tenderly and softly they talked of her wonderful life, of all that she was to their profession and of the beauty of her character. Several were her own graduates from the Illinois Training School who loved her dearly. Not until others commenced to come did the nurses leave her side and take their appointed places.

The service of the Episcopal church was read by Rev. George Hinkle, rector of Christ Episcopal Church. He spoke briefly of Miss McIsaac's early home in Waterloo, of her noble life and her devotion to her work.

Her final resting place is an exceptionally lovely spot, on the crest of a hill in Fairview Cemetery. The old family lot is a large circle and overhead the primitive forest trees murmur. Doctors' automobiles carried the nurses to this place where, at the close of the service, they marched around the last resting place and lovingly dropped rosebuds on the flower-laden casket, as a slight tribute of esteem and reverence for one whose influence had helped to mold their lives.

THE ARMY NURSE CORPS

From the time that Mrs. Kinney resigned her position as superintendent of the Army Corps, there has been a strong desire on the part of its members to see one of their own number promoted to the post of superintendent. This has at last been done and we may all congratulate the Corps that Miss McIsaac's successor is Dora E. Thompson, a nurse who has served long and faithfully and who well deserved the honor. Miss Thompson was appointed to the Corps in 1902 and has been a chief nurse since 1905, serving at the Letterman Hospital, Presidio, and at the Department Hospital, Manila, so that she is thoroughly familiar with the life and its needs and will be closely in touch with the nurses under her care. Miss Thompson is a graduate of the New York City Training School and has shown by her work, particularly at the time of the earthquake and fire in San Francisco and in the care of the refugees at the Presidio, which followed, promptness, skill, and executive ability of a high order so that there is every reason to believe that she will be a worthy successor to those who have preceded her in office.

WAR NURSING CONDITIONS IN ENGLAND

The British Journal of Nursing, commenting editorially in the issue of October 3, on state registration and the war, brings out the fact that there exists in England at the present time a condition very like that which obtained here during the Spanish-American war. Any woman, whether trained or not, who can gather sufficient funds to finance a hospital, is doing so, in England, Belgium and France, and appoints herself its superintendent, under whom trained nurses must be content to work. The splendid nursing service of the American Red Cross is cited as an illustration of how nursing service in time of war should be organized.

We want to remind American nurses that the position which they hold in having a controlling voice in the management of the nursing department of the Red Cross is due to their own efforts as a result of the work of the committee appointed from both the National League and the American Nurses' Association which submitted plans for the affiliation of these organizations with the Red Cross, with suggestions for the development of the nursing service. It was not an easy nor an altogether pleasant task which the associations imposed on the members of this committee but it resulted in the service, as worked out by Miss Delano and her committee, which is now probably the best Red Cross nursing service in the world. This and the Army and Navy nursing services, which were also established through the efforts of nurses themselves, show the power of concerted efforts by our great national societies.

REPORTS FROM RED CROSS NURSES

The letters from Red Cross nurses published in this issue of the JOURNAL will be of great interest to their many friends who are following them in their thoughts and who are so eager to know of their welfare. We fear, however, that reports of their work, which would also be so welcome, will not follow, for we understand that they are under instruction not to write home either in private correspondence or for publication any description of their duties or experiences. One can understand why this is necessary, since the neutrality of the United States must be preserved by the loyalty of all its citizens. England is in a very different situation and *The British Journal of Nursing* is publishing most interesting accounts sent back by the army nurses of the conditions they find and the work they do. Through our Red Cross Department our readers will be kept in touch with whatever may be published in regard to our representatives.

"TWILIGHT SLEEP"

At the present time there seems to be great difference of opinion among physicians as to the value of the treatment by scopolamin and morphin of women in labor, resulting in what is known as Twilight Sleep. Articles for and against it have appeared in both popular and medical journals, many of the best obstetricians feeling that there is much danger involved for both mother and child, which is overlooked or not understood by the lay writers who have been sent to "investigate" the system, while others believe that it means an advance which, when carefully worked out, will become a part of good obstetrics. Dr. William H. W. Knipe, of the Post Graduate Medical School and Hospital, New York, writes in the October number of *The Modern Hospital* a paper in which he emphasizes the special training needed for nurses if they are to be called upon to assist in giving this treatment. He endorses the use of the method but insists that it can only be used with safety in a hospital with special facilities, as it requires for its success a degree of quiet and darkness which are not obtainable everywhere, and also the services of nurses who are competent to give the treatments during the intervals between the physicians' visits.

While such differences of opinion prevail, nurses should be very careful how they give expression to positive views in regard to the method and should influence the patients under their care to trust the judgment of their family physicians until the medical profession has had time to further test its value.

The statement is often made that modern life is responsible for the complications of childbirth and that it was an easy and painless process among savages. Words are our oldest historical records and the word used for labor in all languages, modern and ancient, is one that indicates either hard work or pain, so it seems safe to infer that there has never been a time when the process was a painless one. There are, as a rule, no short cuts to the things best worth having in life.

PROGRESS OF STATE REGISTRATION

We are informed that plans are under way in a number of states for amending the laws governing registration of nurses, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Missouri being among them. The nurses of the country must not be diverted by conditions of war or anything else from developing our own educational work. There was never a time when we more needed to stand firmly together. As legislation develops and our work increases in importance, our opponents increase, not only in numbers but in organization. Some one has said recently, what we all know to be very true, that the opponents of a good cause are always more strongly organized than its supporters; this must not be permitted in nursing affairs. Our organization life is so far-reaching and our interests are so interwoven that we should stand solidly for the great principles that are involved in state registration, such as thorough preliminary education, proper equipment of schools, comfortable living conditions, teaching worthy the name and a training which includes all the important branches of nursing work.

Knowing the force of the opposition we should be satisfied to gain a little each year rather than attempt to do so much that the effort is unproductive or that we lose something of value that had been gained.

THE NURSING JOURNAL OF INDIA

We hear from Mrs. Klosz, editor of *The Nursing Journal of India*, that one of the effects of the war is to stop some of the best advertising that has been carried by that magazine. As the income of any magazine depends almost as much upon its advertising as upon its subscription list, this is a very serious situation and threatens the very existence of the magazine. *The Nursing Journal of India* holds the same relation to the nursing profession of that country that this JOURNAL does to ours, it is the official organ of its associations, it was founded by nurses themselves and has been carried on by them. We should all

feel a keen interest in its welfare, and if any reader of this JOURNAL knows any business man who would find it to his advantage to advertise his goods in India, she should speak to him of this professional periodical which means so much to the nurses of that country.

THE JOURNAL AS A CHRISTMAS GIFT

Last year we were surprised to learn how many people subscribe for the JOURNAL as a gift to nurses or friends at Christmas time. In a good many instances these subscriptions were sent in so late that the order could not be sent forward in time for the Christmas number to reach the recipient of the gift before the holiday. We wish to suggest to those whom this may reach that subscriptions beginning December 1, in order to reach their destination before the holiday, should reach the editorial office at Rochester on or before November 15.

We are going to have, this year, a special Christmas subscription blank which may be sent to the recipient of the gift announcing that the subscription has been entered in her name.

RELIEF FUND CALENDARS

The Relief Fund calendars, which sell for fifty cents each, promise to be very attractive and we would suggest these also as suitable Christmas gifts. The proceeds from the sale of these calendars are added to the Nurses' Relief Fund and last year more than 14,000 were sold. After deducting the expense of printing and distribution about \$4,000 was realized for the Fund.