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## Editorial.

### A Pioneer's Dream Fulfilled.

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO RECEIVE from the Authoress the gift of a copy of the first edition of "Wide Neighborhoods" and proud to find inscribed on its first page, in her own handwriting: "THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, from the Frontier Nursing Service, with affectionate memories and high regard—Mary Breckinridge."

"Wide Neighborhoods" is an entrancing autobiography of the Pioneer and Founder of the Frontier Nursing Service and her multifarious work for the reclamation of suffering humanity. The story of Mary Breckinridge's eventful life reveals her outstanding, forceful and talented personality whose indomitable courage brought to fruition a rural system of medical nursing and hospital care in "regions rugged, roadless and mountainous," covering an area of 700 square miles of Kentucky's mountain country.

Of a Kentuckean family, she is the daughter of Clifton R. Breckinridge, Minister to Russia during President Cleveland's second administration, and grand-daughter of John C. Breckinridge, Vice-President of the United States under President Buchanan, also Major-General of the Confederacy and its last Secretary of War.

The story opens when her father was Minister for Russia and her family was living in St. Petersburg; she was 14 years of age and greatly interested in the arrangements then being made in preparation for the birth of her younger brother, shortly to take place—the



Mrs. Mary Breckinridge, R.N., on Babbette, with Wendy and Fenette looking on.

time when she first learned there were midwives! a subconscious observation which the Authoress feels had a bearing years afterwards on her realisation of the kind of nurse needed for the Frontier Nursing Service.

Memphis, Tennessee, was her birth place, and in her wonderful career she was destined to live and work in many parts of the world—Russia, Switzerland, the British Isles, America, Carolina and Canada—circumstances which were to give her an immense knowledge of people and affairs. Until the age of 15 she was educated by private governesses and tutors, then she

went to school in Switzerland and Connecticut. When very young she learned to love the Kentucky mountains, which the many stories related to her of her family's long traditions in that country inspired. Books seem to have been her great joy, and she could not remember the time when she could not read—and very early she had read most of the children's classics. She was fond of skating and an

accomplished rider—of the latter her love and understanding of horses was to be of significance in the founding of the Frontier Nursing Service. Throughout the life work of Mary Breckinridge, one is impressed by the thoroughness with which problems are dealt. How best to be of service to little children, for whom she has an overwhelming affection. Ever acting on a sound basis she became a Registered Nurse—taking her training at St. Luke's Hospital, New York City. After the First World War she volunteered with the American Committee for Devastated France, and during her two years there organised a Child Hygiene and Visiting Nurse Service in the Aisne Department—a triumph of initiative ability! It was after this experience, despite her early

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)