

OUR FOREIGN LETTER.

NURSING IN THE GREAT MID-WESTERN
FLOODS.

By FELIX J. KOCH.

If ever nurses have been in demand in any one section of the United States since the great earthquake and fire at San Francisco, in 1906, sent relief trains and hospital corps scurrying Golden Gate-ward, it was when the first news of the terrific flood-catastrophe at Dayton, Ohio, went forth, to be followed, so soon after, by similar stories from Hamilton, Columbus, Middletown, and elsewhere. In the San Francisco holocaust,

size, and almost the only point untouched by the floods, with which any manner of communication could be established, twenty nurses, almost all of them from the City Hospital, though there were a few from the Jewish Hospital and from the "Good Samaritan" as well, had place.

A few of the number were but newly-graduated from the Training School, but there was work for all at such time. The nurses wore the badge of the Red Cross for this occasion, all of them, and, though volunteers, they soon fell into the work required, and were as adept as the most seasoned Red Cross workers.

Once aboard the relief-train, made up for the occasion, progress to the scene of disaster was slow. The C.L. & N., the only available railway,



THE PASSING OF THE WATERS AT DAYTON.

however, one might see his way even at the edge of the flames, but at Dayton water was everywhere, even up to the second stories of the homes in the bottoms; and on this water, first the current—in which no boat could live—and then the wreckage, causing shoals at most un-looked-for places, long precluded passage. More than that, the night was bitter cold, sleet and snow rushed down from the lurid skies, and the wind howled a perfect dirge around the tumbling corners.

Into such chaos the nurses went, obedient to the summons.

The very first quota of nurses had, of course, the most perilous conditions to meet. On the first relief-train from Cincinnati, the nearest city of

is a notably bad road; and coupled with this was the matter of wash-outs and fear of loose tracks and bridges, thanks to the flood and the rains, still pouring. The first word was that the nurses would be forced to spend all the night in the coach; and so the young women prepared coffee and sandwiches there for the doctors and the men, come aboard, who were soon to launch out on the rescue-work. An inky-dark night was all they could see without; and in the filthy coach—the road did not proffer a Pullman, rest assured—conditions were far from pleasant. Leaving Cincinnati at three in the afternoon, that train did not reach Dayton until between eleven and twelve that night!

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