

Hospital in 1882. She was one of its most brilliant students, and obtained her certificate in 1885; she passed on as Sister to the Children's Hospital at Shadwell, 1885-86; she was Superintendent of Nursing at the National Hospital, Queen Square, and here she came into touch with that brilliant pioneer of brain surgery, Victor Horsley, who at once realised her scientific bent and availed himself of her great gifts. She became Matron of the Chelsea Infirmary from 1886 to 1889, and in this office began her public work for nursing organisation. She was present at the very first little meeting held at 20, Upper Wimpole Street, to promote the British Nurses' Association, and through it the State Registration of Nurses in 1887. She was in South Africa in 1890, and was appointed Matron of the Royal South Hants Hospital in 1892, a post she held for eighteen years, during which time she associated herself with all the pioneer nursing movements of the day; when we threw ourselves with ardour into whirlpools of controversy and came up smiling.

In 1901 Miss Mollett attended the Pan-American Exposition and International gathering of nurses held at Buffalo, U.S.A., to celebrate the new century, as a delegate of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland. In the issue of the *American Journal of Nursing*, September, 1901, I contributed a short sketch of her career. Here we read "that she was born at Northfleet in Kent and was educated partly in England, but principally in Hanover in the Höhere Töchter Schule, after which she spent the impressionable years of her early youth in Hanover and Paris. If it is true that we owe certain gifts to our fairy godmother, then the sprite was in a lavish mood when she endowed the little Wilhelmina. Born of mixed parentage, an English father of Huguenot extraction and a German mother, she entered the world richly endowed with intellectual gifts. Thus, on the British characteristics were grafted French versatility and German philosophy. Indeed if one were asked for the dominant note of Miss Mollett's character, one would without hesitation say that it is kindly tolerance and breadth of view which has its root in a philosophic mind. I doubt if any one has ever heard Miss Mollett express an ungenerous thought. Again, the same characteristic makes her take a detached view of life. To some strenuous natures every event appears of vital importance; questions of principle are matters of life and death, and the issue of supreme moment. Not so with Miss Mollett. While in professional matters she is always to be found on the side of right, liberty and progress, she is able to maintain a philosophic calm and even to obtain amusement out of things which disturb the equanimity of intenser natures.

As a companion Miss Mollett is delightful. Handsome in appearance, a genial comrade, she can ride a beast or a

bicycle, sail a boat, or scale a mountain in excellent form. From which you will gather that Miss Mollett is a thoroughly healthy minded woman."

We journeyed together via Canada to the Congress; and one morning early Molletino called me on deck. What a glorious sight! We were surrounded by icebergs, like magnificent cathedrals, glistening and exquisite, sailing with majesty on aquamarine seas.

We realised danger, but also that death would be clean and glorious should a crash rush us into eternity.

Later we passed safely through the Straits of Belle Isle (the last boat of the season to do so) and steaming up the glorious St. Lawrence River, with a glimpse of Labrador to the north, came presently to picturesque Quebec founded with heroism, nourished with life's blood. Every French and British heart responds to emotion on stepping ashore.

Here on the quay awaiting to rush us up hill to the Terrace of the Chateau were old time *calèches*, *cochers* perched on precarious seats "made for two" swaying on huge wheels, cracked their whips and whooped for our attention. The monstrous horses between the shafts pawing the ground in a frenzy of impatience.

Half a minute and into the swinging seat, via the wheel, mounted Molletino, greeting her *cocher* in French no doubt, and waving to us to follow her. She disappeared in a flash. A new sensation, it must be tested—well, that was the way the lady loved life.

This is not the place to refer to the delight of that visit to Canada—enough said when I tell you that we enjoyed every minute of it, especially shooting the Rapids in an Iroquois canoe. Spacious Canada! Room to breathe! Such rivers, such lakes, such vistas of tender greenness! The freshness of it. Didn't we just feel young.

The Profession of Nursing has included few women upon whom the gods have bestowed genius, but at the birth of little Wilhelmina Mollett a splendid talent of which she made little use, was given to her.

I refer to her great literary ability, of which there is scant evidence in print. A few fine articles which she contributed to the early issues of the then *Nursing Record*, and the words of the Nursing Pageant, written in splendid heroic English, we possess.

But what could she not have done to enrich the world of Letters if she had given of her best? Alas! just a fatal lack of application—and what a sorry loss to literature!

But there, life is so short. We give as we can. Let us remember a Molletino who during life scattered so many happy hours around amongst a wide circle of admiring friends, who still hold her in deep affection.

ETHEL G. FENWICK.

Next month will appear an Appreciation of Miss Mollett by Mrs. Douglas Gray.



MISS W. J. MOLLETT, 1901.
Matron, Royal South Hants and Southampton Hospital.

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