

limb is small, and so a large part of the limb is left free for massage, or if necessary for dressings.

Various methods of skeletal traction have been used including the various types of ice tong caliper. These, however, have a tendency to slip on the bone and their place has been taken by various appliances which pass right through the bone. The rustless steinman nail with a U shaped attachment is the best known method, the nail when used for the lower limb passing through the tibial tuberosity, thus obviating the danger of infection of the knee joint.

By using piano wire instead of a nail or pin very small wounds are made which quickly heal. Very good results have been obtained by Kirschner's method for fractures of the lower limb, stainless steel wire being kept taut by means of a metal stirrup with screws which can be tightened up as required. Weight is then applied and the leg put up on a Thomas splint with a flexion iron worked by a system of pulleys.

In cases of fracture of the humerus the wire is applied in exactly the same way, through the olecranon process while the flexion iron on the Thomas' arm splint worked by a similar system of pulleys, prevents long standing stiffness of the elbow joint.

Fractures of the tibia alone, without displacement, or without considerable swelling are treated at once by a plaster of Paris cast and the patient allowed to walk at once. In this way they are helped considerably by an iron walking heel. This is an iron bar bent in a U shaped manner so that the bend protrudes as a heel. The appliance is fixed over the plaster by another plaster bandage and if its walking surface is wound with a bandage or furnished with a piece of leather, or rubber, it adds considerably to the patient's comfort and to the protection of the plaster. Fractures of the ankle joint may be treated under local anaesthesia, manipulated and plaster applied. If there is considerable swelling, rest in bed on a Braun's splint until the following day is required, and then the walking iron is applied. Most patients walk without pain, and after two or three days without even a stick, the knee and toes being actively moved from the beginning.

The correct nursing care necessary in the modern treatment of fractures resolves itself into three main points:—

1. The maintenance of the required position, and the maintenance of the necessary apparatus in place, and in working order.

2. Careful and routine treatment of the patients' backs and all parts where there is undue pressure.

3. Quick observation and recognition of any unfavourable symptoms such as blue toes or fingers, cold or numbness, swelling or persistent pain, rise in temperature, cough or dyspnoea.

These should be reported immediately.

Thus modern methods of treatment of fractures, allied with the corresponding nursing treatment, aim at preventing atrophy of the muscles, and progressive stiffness of the joints, which are the cause of such long disability times.

QUESTION FOR NEXT MONTH.

Mention the infectious diseases affecting principally the central nervous system, their chief characteristics, and the special points in their nursing care.

NURSING ECHOES.

COACHING CLASSES FOR THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL EXAMS.

Coaching Classes are held by arrangement, at the British College of Nurses, to help nurses who require additional instruction, and to prepare them for the Examinations of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

Miss D. K. Graham, F.B.C.N., the Tutor, has had very successful results.

Apply for terms to the Secretary, British College of Nurses, 39, Portland Place, London, W.1.

During the past few years hundreds of probationers and nurses have failed in the State Examinations and this is now becoming a very serious question. These failures are not only injurious to the professional progress and success of the nurses themselves, but they react on the economic conditions of Nursing. Having passed three years in learning practical ward work, those who fail in the State Exam do not take up other work. They are largely employed in nursing homes, and on what are termed "Co-ops." run by persons who have no scruples in supplying them as "trained nurses" to the ignorant public, and making a large percentage on their fees, and they thus compete with Registered Nurses without let or hindrance. We believe with more thorough teaching many of these who fail in the State Exams might attain a standard of knowledge to pass them, and thereby secure professional status for themselves and cease to injure professional standards.

We therefore strongly advise all such young nurses to make every effort to secure sound teaching, and advance their own interests and the welfare of their patients.

This year will be celebrated in Liverpool the centenary of two remarkable women, Miss Agnes Elizabeth Jones, the pioneer of trained nursing in Workhouse Infirmaries, a woman as Miss Nightingale has told us, attractive and rich, and young and witty, who organised the nursing in the great Brownlow Hill Infirmary, and who died of typhus fever contracted in the course of her work at the age of 36, and Kitty Wilkinson, pioneer of public washhouses.

The name of Agnes Jones is known throughout the world, both her wonderful personality and the pioneer work which she accomplished for nursing reform in the connection with Poor Law Infirmaries ensure this, and Miss Nightingale characteristically wrote in describing the wealth of flowers under which after her funeral she lay embedded, "Let us add living flowers to her grave 'lilies with full hands'—not fleeting primroses, not dying flowers. Let us bring the work of our hands, and our heads, and our hearts, to finish her work which God has so blessed. Let her not merely 'rest in peace' but let hers be the life which stirs up to fight the good fight against vice and sin, and misery and wretchedness, as she did—the call to arms, which she was ever obeying."

Since that day the call has been insistent and impelling and many thousands of nurses, stimulated by her example, have found their vocation and their life's happiness in caring for the sick poor in workhouse wards and infirmaries.

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