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Margaret McLaren

A Biographical Sketch

Wherever you go to make your life, you must take yourself along. It little matters where you go or what you do, but much depends upon what you are. This I learned from Margaret McLaren.

Margaret was born on a farm in the Province of Ontario, Canada, the first of a family of eight children. She comes of sound Scotch stock that has always adhered to the simple life of only one pride, the pride of good works. Her mother brought with her to this new country the high ideals of honesty, respectability and christianity which she imparted to her children.

The life of the McLaren family although simple and confined within the narrow horizons of an isolated farm, was far from commonplace. An appreciation for the finer things in life demanded living beyond and above the ordinary way of the pioneer. A well disciplined family life enriched by good books, some music and strong religious faith was suf-

ficient. The influence of the family doctor and the minister was immeasurable. These two men were looked upon as apart from ordinary men and respected accordingly.

When she was sixteen years old, Margaret left school to remain on the farm to help her mother. For the next twelve years, under the tutelage of her mother, she learned cooking, sewing and general home management. Not until the youngest of eight children was well started in school was her task done. She was then twenty-eight years old. The time for the greatest decision in her life had come. With the parting admonition from her mother, "It's now or never, Margaret," she left her home to enter the Nurse's Training School of Grace Hospital in Detroit.

Margaret McLaren began formal training for her life's work in 1917, and graduated in 1920. At the graduation exercises, as a total surprise to her, Dr. Babcock, superintendent of Grace Hospital, presented her with a special diploma of proficiency as an award for outstanding achievement, as the highest class honor.

She left Grace Hospital with the impact of the great personalities of the staff of doctors and teachers on her mind. She feels a respect and reverent admiration for those doctors that is like a fealty. After graduation she did private duty nursing in Detroit for two years, refusing several hospital jobs because she felt that she needed the experience of general duty.

In 1922, a letter from Miss Schill, superintendent at Hurley Hospital, brought an offer of the position of surgical supervisor, which Miss McLaren accepted, and her professional career in Flint, Michigan, began. During the next two years her work at Hurley Hospital met so well with the approval of the doctors and other hospital personnel that she was recommended for the position of general superintendent of the Women's Hospital. She went to Women's in 1924. Another milestone in her career was passed.

During the trying hard times of the great depression she guided the Women's Hospital through a \$100,000 debt and constructed the north wing. The hospital progressed and



MARGARET McLAREN

prospered. Miss McLaren constantly sought and worked for approval for her hospital from the American Medical Association and the American College of Surgeons. Through the contacts she made with great hospital and medical authorities, as she puts it, "A nonentity from Flint gets an inspiration." The Women's Hospital, through this inspiration, gained full approval in 1928. Today that ugly duckling has undergone a metamorphosis into the magnificent new McLaren General Hospital.

Margaret McLaren has earned some leisure,—leisure from the exacting details of hospital management. The philosophy of her own life dictates that nursing is, after all, a substitute for motherhood and home making. One's fate is decided by the circumstances under which it is guided and developed, and one submits to fate. She is looking forward to more reading, music, lectures, club and church work. She loves her home surroundings with some cooking and sewing and a little social life,—"just enough for spice." She feels that the grand new building is after all, only a building. The important thing is education. She knows that good medical and nursing services can only be built and maintained by years of combined effort of many people. She accepts the new name for the McLaren General because it pleases those who bestowed it. Nevertheless, she holds for teamwork, and rejects individual brilliancy. "A self-

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Margaret McLaren

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governed organization working as a unit produces the permanent results."

As a parting salutation to Margaret McLaren, we can think of none more fitting than the cry that came from the crowd as Queen Victoria's coach passed on the occasion of her diamond jubilee, "Go it, old girl, you've done it well!"—A.C.P.



New Hospital Has Latest Equipment

(Continued from page 21)

er convenience and speed. In the laundry, soiled linens and clothes will not be touched by hand from the time they enter the washers until they emerge ready for sorting, ironing, and distribution. Meals for patients will be conveyed to each floor from the central kitchen by a novel system which also allows easy return of dishes to the dishwasher.

The doctors' comfort and medical activities have not been overlooked. Conference rooms and library with an adjoining recording complete with dictation booth are available. Locker rooms for both male and female surgeons are conveniently arranged with a neighboring lounge sumptuously appointed with piped-in oxygen. Never will the humble listener cower in fear of *asphyxia bullosa*.



News Note

Local doctor's names appear in recent medical literature. M. C. Kozonis, R. F. Wigglesworth, H. M. Golden as authoring article entitled "Primary Lipoma of the Mediastinum," in the September, 1951, issue of *Annals of Internal Medicine*.



New Mothercraft Class

Tuesday, October 23—

7:15 p.m., Rankin Building
302 W. Second Avenue

Wednesday, October 24—

7:15 p.m., Rankin Building
302 W. Second Avenue
(This class is for women whose husbands are attending the Forum at the same time.)

Friday, November 2—

1:30 p.m., McLaren General Hospital

Monday, November 6—

1:30 p.m., Hurley Hospital

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