

TELLS TRIALS OF PIONEER NURSES

Mrs. Abigail Scott Duniway
Addresses Oregon Nurses'
Association.

ADVANCE OF WOMAN'S LOT

Speaker Shows How Conditions of
Sex Have Improved in Ore-
gon in Her Lifetime — The
Womanly Professions.

The quarterly meeting of the Oregon State Nurses' Association was held yesterday afternoon on the spacious grounds of the North Pacific Sanatorium. After the business meeting refreshments were served and a paper was read by Mrs. Abigail Scott Duniway in her brilliant and inspirational manner. "Early Pioneer Nursing" was Mrs. Duniway's subject. Her paper follows:

In the early days of my frequent maternal experiences on an Oregon ranch, the idea, or even necessity of a professional nurse was not thought of. The prospective mother, feeling that her hour of tribulation was nigh, hastily gathered together all the soiled clothing belonging to the household and hired men, and between pauses of pain and suffering, put out on the clotheslines a family washing of sufficient magnitude to supply the needs of those dependent upon her exertions during her periodical confinements. The "hired girl" (a raw recruit, in her teens), from a neighboring farmhouse, was installed at such a time in kitchen, dairy and nursery, and, as soon as the mother could resume her duties, the girl was in demand in some other household for a like purpose, leaving the convalescing mother, so to overtax her strength as to bring into her depleted body many of the ills that now, thanks to the Oregon Nurses' State Association, rarely follow the advent of the stork.

Nor is the modern nurse alone in demand for maternity cases. She has become a professional; and that men are often rescued by her services from the jaws of death, many a physician cheerfully bears witness.

It is a great pleasure to a veteran in the service of woman's progress to note the advancement of the sex in this most important realm of human endeavor. The fact that women, in all the handicrafts of life, are organizing in professional associations, thus elevating every kind of womanly effort into the ranks of art, is gratifying evidence of the growth of the woman movement along the lines of highest endeavor.

We are indebted for much of this progress, or rather the popularity accompanying it, to the example set for us long ago by professional men. Time was when a professional cook or laundryman was unknown. This necessary work was all performed by women, whose maternal duties—a profession of itself, if women had only known it—so handicapped their unskilled efforts that scientific cookery, laundry work and nursing were alike unheard of. But when women began to make these duties professional, and thereby elevated them into the arts, we began to have trained chefs in the household, trained nurses in the sick-room and trained laundry women here and there. Lessons in sanitation naturally accompanied these professional efforts, and the former village doctor, noted chiefly for his skill in the use of phlebotomy and cantharides, has given way to the trained city physician, who could cut your head off to mend it, if necessary, relying fully upon the skill of the trained nurse to finish, or rather to assist nature in finishing the work for which he is responsible.

The advent of women into the ranks of a profession peculiarly their own, like this important one that now concerns us under these unbragous shades, brings us to a complete contrast with the early days of which I have spoken, before trained nurses were to be had for love or money and no beautiful surroundings afforded the tired maid-of-all-work a moment of healthful recreation.

Therefore, ladies, you need not wonder that I greet you, assembled as you are to combine business with recreation, with feelings of joy. I am glad to see you taking interest in your association. The more ardent your interest in your organization the more heartily will you rejoice in your duties. It has ever been the duty of woman to assuage human suffering, and the better prepared she is for her profession the better can she conserve the life forces of the sick, and if need be, comfort the dying. The better class of physicians everywhere are glad to welcome the ministrations of the trained nurse. That you have advanced to the dignity of a complete profession among yourselves is here attested by the splendor of your present surroundings, the co-operation of the honored head of this honored institution, and the health and joy you bring to homes where your presence is hailed in times of distress as that of ministering angels.

As I contrast the present conditions accompanying the trials of motherhood with those of my own early years, and look back along the decades to the difference between the then and the now, I am reminded of the explorer along the icebound shores of the Yukon, who, unable to note the progress of the glacier that breaks its output, and with thundering roar escapes into the surging waters of the Pacific seas, discovers that even while he slept, the icy river was all the time making progress. So, I, in looking back over the departed years can note the progress of women, since the days in the long ago when ridicule, misrepresentation and rotten eggs were my portion instead of the roses and acclaim that greet me now.

I feel all the time the current has been moving, even when I saw it not, except when measured by its grand results. I ask and expect your co-operation, my daughters, as I love to call you, in launching the equal suffrage campaign that is now upon us. Every step we take in the line of progress brings us nearer to the goal of liberty.