



Turtlehead

POETS have spent much verse—and justifiably—on the beauty and hardihood of the gentians. A poet is needed to celebrate the gentian's somewhat remote cousin, the turtlehead, which in its robust way has real beauty, and which holds its own against the creeping threat of winter quite as well as does the gentian. It is likely enough that even now one could find turtleheads still in good bloom, lurking as they do in sheltered ravines where there is plenty of trickling water.

The turtlehead grows on a tall, slender, strong stem like a gentian—a stem usually taller than a gentian's, and much more given to branching. In outer form the flower would be a closed gentian, had not some Gothic quirk of nature broken the radial symmetry of the gentian and substituted a two-lipped, bilaterally symmetrical structure. There really is some suggestion about it of a turtle's head. Botanists recognize this, too, and call the plant *Chelone*, which is Greek for turtle.

Though it blossoms during gentian time and looks from the outside like a sort of lopsided closed gentian, it really isn't as close kin to that flower as might be supposed at first. It is more nearly related to the lousewort and the toad-flax.

There are a number of turtlehead species, ranging widely over this country. The commonest is the smooth turtlehead. *Chelone glabra*, a white-flowered sort. There are some others, however, that are exceedingly rare. One species, the pink turtlehead, was rediscovered near Washington a few years ago, after it had been lost for more than a century.

Science News Letter, October 6, 1934

MEDICINE

Financing Hospital Care For All is Major Problem

President of American Hospital Association Urges Coordination of Activities and Group Insurance

By DR. N. W. FAXON, Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, N. Y.

TWO MAJOR problems confront the hospitals of the United States and Canada. First, the formulation of a definite plan for coordinating the facilities and work of governmental and non-governmental hospitals in providing hospital care for people who can not afford to pay for hospital care. Second, the development of a plan by which people of moderate or small means may finance their hospital care.

The coordinating of governmental and non-governmental hospital activities requires the definite acceptance on the part of local government of the responsibility for the care of indigent patients, either in governmental hospitals or through paying for their care in non-governmental hospitals, according to the available hospital facilities. A corollary of this is that voluntary hospitals should provide such portion of this care as their financial resources will allow. Such a course is dictated by the history of voluntary hospitals and by provision made in gifts and endowment which they have received. It is obvious that every community should make full use of existing facilities before building new hospitals.

Group hospital insurance offers a definite and adequate plan whereby self-supporting people may, through periodic payments upon the insurance principle, finance the cost of hospital care when needed. It should be established upon a non-profit basis as a community enterprise and should not and need not disturb present relationship between patient, physician and hospital. A more inclusive plan for health insurance might possibly develop from such hospital insurance plans.

From the standpoint of hospitals alone the problem facing voluntary hospitals is one of not reducing cost but of increasing revenue, through payment for services rendered to indigents and through increased use of existing facili-

ties by paying patients. The acceptance by local government of responsibility for indigent patients would provide for the first and group hospital for the second condition.

While this would help hospitals and as such is eminently desired by them, the basic principles involved lie much deeper and rest upon that which is best for the community as a whole. It is the concern of the community as a whole to provide hospital facilities for the care of all classes of patients: the indigent, the well-to-do, and those of small means. It is indeed fortunate that the same plans will serve both the needs and welfare of the community and the needs and welfare of the hospital.

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METEOROLOGY

Meteorology Not Common As A College Course

METEOROLOGY is taught in only slightly over one-fifth of all American colleges and universities. This and other interesting figures on the teaching of weather-science were compiled by Woodrow C. Jacobs of the University of Southern California, and are published in detail in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society.

Of the various groups of institutions studied, the state colleges and universities made the best showing; 55 per cent. offering meteorological courses.

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between

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Professor of Zoology, Tufts College

and

JAMES F. PORTER

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