

Correspondence.

Illinois Nurses' Bill Vetoed.

CHICAGO, May 26, 1903.

To the Editor:—An editorial bearing the above caption appeared in THE JOURNAL, May 16. As the information therein is incorrect, and as an injustice has, doubtless unwittingly, been done Governor Richard Yates of Illinois, an executive whom the Illinois State Medical Society took occasion to highly compliment in formal resolutions adopted less than a month ago, I beg leave to state the facts in the case.

The editorial states that the bill was vetoed "simply on the ground that the examining board was to be appointed from names selected by the Illinois State Medical Society." Again, "the governor objects to this as taking from the executive his prerogative, and, we might add, his political perquisites."

The above must be a mistake, as the Illinois State Medical Society is not mentioned in the bill (Senate Bill No. 147).

The bill provided for the appointment of an examining committee by the State Board of Health, from names submitted by the Illinois State Association of Graduate Nurses; the appointment of one board by another. The board of health, not the governor, was clothed with the appointing power. Furthermore, appointment from these nominations was mandatory as the word "may" in the law means "shall." This practically gave the appointing power to the Nurses' Association, and at the same time held the governor responsible for the work of the board over which he had no control.

The governor says in his veto:

I veto this bill because I do not believe there was due deliberation in its consideration and passage, and because it is not consistent with the general policy of the constitution.

The theory of the constitution is, that the governor of the state, by and with the advice and consent of the state senate, shall nominate and appoint the state officers, and that the state officers shall perform state duties. . . . The performance of said duties by persons who are not state officers is not contemplated by the constitution, and was not contemplated by the framers thereof. . . . When the people shall deem it wise to commit the performance of the official duties of the state to persons who are not state officers, they may revise the policy of the present constitution by amending the same. . . . Until then, state duties should be performed by state officers and not by persons selected or nominated by societies. . . . The tendency to create boards consisting of persons whose selection is absolutely dictated by mere volunteer associations of persons who gather themselves together and constitute a society, is a tendency that should be checked.

The above is in accord with the decision of the Illinois Supreme Court in 1899 in the case of Charles W. Leshar vs. the People of the State of Illinois.

In the matter of appointments by the executive, the governor thus takes the ground that the constitution guarantees to the governor the right not only to appoint, but also to nominate and appoint. This being the case, it is his opinion that any statute which undertakes to nullify and abridge the constitution must be considered not only a violation of the constitution, the fundamental law of the state, but also wholly wrong in policy and principle.

That Governor Yates does not object to "the assistance of a qualified organization in the selection of persons for a purely professional function" the Illinois State Medical Society is in a position to testify. At the beginning of his administration the governor submitted to the judicial council of the society the names of many persons seeking medical appointments under the state government, and asked for recommendations. The judicial council by resolution has since expressed its appreciation of this act of Governor Yates. In the presidential address in 1901, the president of the state society stated that Governor Yates had kept his ante-election promises, and had given the society all possible consideration. As late as two months ago the legislative committee of the Illinois State Medical Society, in a circular letter sent to over 5,000 physicians, stated that Governor Yates had given the medical profession of Illinois more consideration than any governor of recent years and that he was in hearty sympathy with the high ideals entertained by the profession.

In conclusion permit me to quote from the remarks of Governor Yates in his veto of the Dental Examiners' Bill on May 15, 1903:

The present executive is willing, and doubtless any other executive will be willing to listen to proper and reasonable recommendations, and it may be in the appointment of professional boards every executive will, in nine cases out of ten, select as members the persons recommended by the profession affected, inasmuch as the executive will doubtless assume that the profession affected is more interested and better informed than any other persons or citizens can possibly be.

GEO. W. WEBSTER,
President State Board of Health.

Maternal Impressions.

TELL CITY, IND.

To the Editor:—In THE JOURNAL of April 4, Dr. E. T. Shelly relegates the maternal-impression theory to the medical lumber-room, a very comfortable, if not a very satisfactory, way of disposing of all abstruse theories which are not clearly understood. The difficulty, however, we meet at the very threshold of such a happy disposal of the subject, makes it a herculean task, for are there not on every hand too many and too conspicuous cases to satisfactorily dispose of them with a wave of our wand? When Dr. Shelly declares there is no anatomic or physiologic connection between the mother and child he assumes a conclusion not thoroughly established, and which may be a figment of the fancy. If, however, there is no such connection, it does not follow that there is an absence of psychologic connection. Surely we witness the too often painful effect of environment during the gestatory period. The mother may not be wholly blamable if her offspring, gestated in an atmosphere reeking with all that is base and degrading, is born a pitiable object. True, the child born in a den of vice and infamy may, by inherent qualities or central impetus, burst the restraints of infamy and burn a star of light over a sea of corruption. Too often, alas, the reverse is true.

There is a subtle and possibly a reciprocal connection between the mother and the fetus during the entire embryonic life. Nor is she blamable if, during gestation, she be so rudely shaken from the poise of harmony by some sudden shock that the brunt is borne by the offspring ever after. I have witnessed too many well authenticated cases to doubt it for a moment. The mother should have the most harmonious, beautiful and elevating surroundings during gestation. The restraints of toil and care should irk her not. She should not be stewed with worry or spitted with starvation. She should be placed on a well-guarded pedestal, canopied with comfort and gently basted with sweet-scented bouquets. Her make-up is intricate. She is a problem, to be solved by no simple rule of mathematics. On her environment hangs the future welfare of posterity. Her mental impressions may wonderfully impress the embryo, may mark it, ay, may destroy its harmony, its usefulness, its life.

F. ANSON EVANS.

Preserved in Wax.

MUSKEGON, MICH., May 22, 1903.

To the Editor:—The following case illustrates the remarkable preservative properties of cerumen: J. W. S., age 63; white; Civil War veteran. A beetle of the species *Tenebrio molitor* entered right ear one evening in August, 1861, while patient was in Camp Good Hope, near Navy Yards, Washington, D. C. Patient immediately applied to regimental surgeon, who, failing in efforts to remove insect, applied olive oil to ear and instructed patient to return to tent and lie on right side, and suggested that the bug would probably be found on blanket in the morning. Pain in ear kept patient awake until nearly morning and when awakened ear felt much better, and patient forgot to look on blanket for insect, which he supposed had escaped from the ear. Since insect entered ear, patient has been able to hear but faintly with right ear.

Patient applied to me for relief from deafness May 8, 1903. On examination, I found external canal filled with cerumen. Applied solvent and instructed patient to return in twenty-four hours. After syringing the ear the following day, I found the beetle, which was $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in length and slightly greater in width than the normal caliber of the canal and with ear teneaculum, removed it, not without some difficulty. The head of insect lay within one line of tympanum.