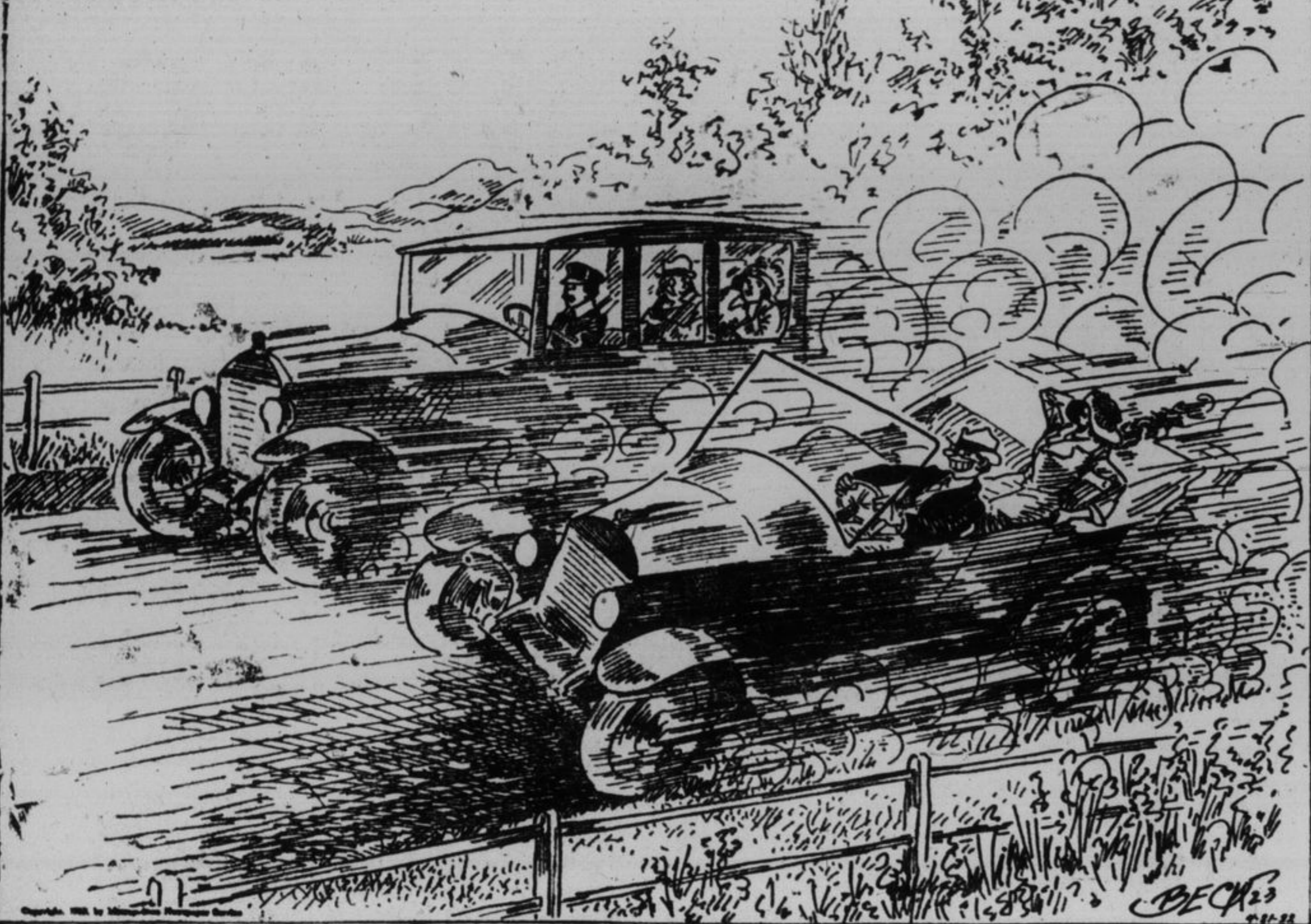


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DR. C. K. CLARKE PRAISES ROCKWOOD HOSPITAL

Which Compares Favorably With Any Up-to-date Institution He Knows.

Writing on April 5th, Dr. C. K. Clarke, Toronto, says:

At the request of Dr. Edward Ryan of Kingston, superintendent of Rockwood Hospital for the Insane, I to-day made an inspection of Rockwood hospital, with the idea of learning how much was being done to develop an institution which has had an important history, evolving as it did from a criminal asylum into a modern hospital. I knew Rockwood in its early days and am probably more familiar than any one with its development and history.

The building itself stands as a monument to the ability of those who designed it. It has been greatly improved as far as the wards are concerned, by the enlarging of the corridor windows on the north side, which in the old days were an eye sore and a glaring defect. The changes made have resulted in brightening all of the north rooms and giving the corridors more light. As hospital architecture goes, Rockwood is by far the best of the old buildings erected for asylum purposes in the province.

The arrangement of the dormitories apart from the day rooms, is a unique feature that might be repeated with benefit in more pretentious buildings. It adds to efficiency, comfort and care of supervision. The wards have undergone many improvements, and with the installation of an adequate supply of continuous baths and hydrotherapeutic apparatus, Rockwood compares favorably, from the standpoint of treatment, with any up-to-date institution I know. The superintendent has evidently been ambitious to take advantage of everything possible to keep his institution in the foremost rank.

The complete absence of noise, confusion and excitement spoke well for those who have the nursing in charge, and altogether the hospital air prevalent in all of the wards was a marked contrast to much that is to be seen in many other Canadian asylums, which, by no stretch of imagination, can be called hospitals. The occupational side of treatment was very good indeed. The idea of having a trained vocational aide in charge of the work, and also acting as instructor to the nurses, is to be commended. After a great many years of experience with the industrial side of treatment, I am satisfied that it is much better to have the nurses themselves trained by competent instructors. In this way the best results have been obtained. The nurses appeared to be competent, of good appearance, and evidently have the right conception of the duty to be expected of them in a hospital for the insane.

Personally it was gratifying to see that the ideals I had before me, when in charge of the institution, had not only been followed, and traditions preserved, but the whole work improved and developed to a greater extent than was possible in the earlier days. The superintendent has had before him the scientific side, and although hampered by conditions which so commonly exist in provincial institutions, owing to the fact that governmental control, which is swayed constantly by the changes of government, is not the ideal state of affairs. A properly constituted commission, which would have an intimate relationship of course with the government, would enable the scientific side, which after all is the important one, to reach perfection.

Rockwood is evidently, as it always was in the past, an institution built for the cure and care of the patients, rather than for the glorification of its officials; and the reception wards for acute cases are excellent in every sense of the word. The staff of physicians is somewhat larger than one ordinarily finds in provincial institutions, and they are evidently interested in their work. I took occasion to read several histories, which were admirable, and worked up in a way that showed the interest of the young physicians writing them.

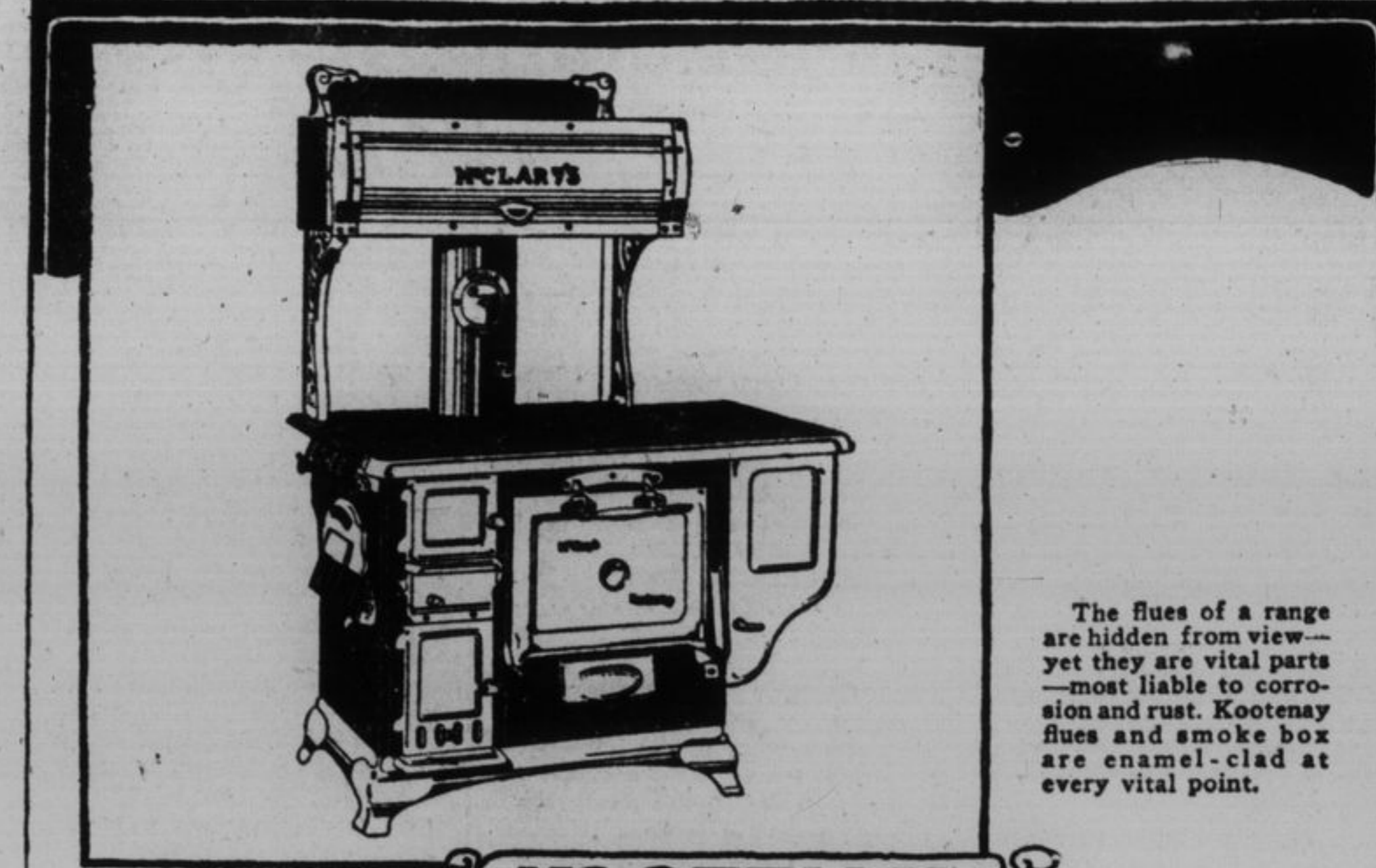
The pathological side is being cared for too, and altogether Rockwood must be classed as a credit to the province. Dr. Ryan evidently feels that general medicine and psychiatry should have a close relationship, and is ambitious to advance along the best lines possible to ensure success. The pathological work being done is of interest. Post mortem examinations, as frequently neglected, is receiving proper attention, and altogether the outlook is hopeful.

I suggested to the superintendent the advisability of developing an out-patient clinic, preferably in one of the city hospitals, as by this means he would confer a great boon on the community, help out in school and other investigations, and by cooperating with the different social agencies give then the benefit of the experience derived from his work. Not only that, such an arrangement would keep the staff in touch with the development of mental disease as well as its prevention, two most important things. If a follow-up system with a small Social Service Department were available in the hospital another blessing would be conferred on the community.

Altogether the visit to Rockwood was an experience that gave encouragement to those of us who wish to see Canada in the front rank. I hope the day will come when the government may be induced to provide further facilities for the education of students where the Rockwood hospital staff will carry on the work, giving due attention to the much neglected department of research. After all, Canada owes a duty to science and with the cooperation of the psychological department of the university and the hospital staff, even better things may be achieved quite easily.

(Signed) C. K. CLARKE.

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