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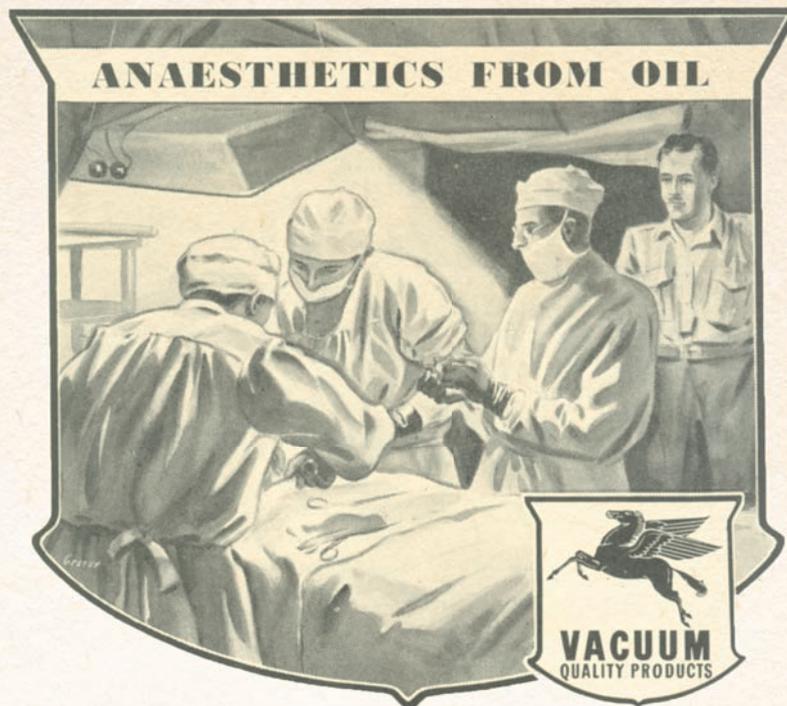
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Highlights from our archives



As World War II progressed, most of the advertising in the MJA reflected a common goal to help the war effort. This advertisement for an oil company, in the 9 September 1944 issue, highlights the military and medicinal benefits of the product.

Why glorify murder?

SIR: Recently a Sydney commercial station broadcast “The Sacred Flame”, a play of evil influence, in which the plot revolved around a murderess (an elderly mother), the victim (her incurable invalid son paralysed after crashing), his errant wife — pregnant to her paramour (the invalid’s brother), a nurse and the family doctor. The play — well produced and very well acted — finished on a note of conspiracy between doctor, nurse, murderess (a poisoner at that?) and all concerned to hush up the deliberate murder — all apparently in the cause of sacred flame of “love”.

Subversive of all ideals of British law and justice, unethical, unchristian and pagan, it was a sorry business, and one cannot congratulate those who chose the play for public entertainment, nor the authorities who passed it for general broadcast. Since the first world war there have been many

British mothers, wives and sisters who have become devoted “slaves” to their permanently incurable invalid men, and after this war there will be many more. In fact, since the “blitz” on England, one might add husbands to the list who will gladly care for their incurably crippled wives. One can imagine the tortured feelings of permanently invalidated service personnel when listening to this broadcast.

The play also was a mephitic slander on the medical profession and on the noble women who for years before and after Florence Nightingale have ornamented the nursing profession, and would tend to lessen public confidence in these professions. Recently a public inquiry was held concerning the effects of “horror films” on impressionable children. Why strain at the gnat when a camel of this size is allowed to pollute the air?

Kevin Byrne NSW 26 November 1943



Party man

Dr Mervyn Archdall was the second editor of the *MJA*, serving from the death of Henry Armit in 1930 until his retirement just before his own death in 1957. His leading articles were published in two volumes, *In pursuit* and *In pursuit: II*. Awarded the Gold Medal of the British Medical Association for outstanding service to medicine and the medical profession, Dr Archdall was known for his “love of parties and simple fun, and his dislike of anything insincere or sanctimonious”, according to the Roll of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.