

she will be so "put in her right place," that at the end of a month she will begin to wonder whether she ever had an idea of her own that was worth mentioning, or a will of her own at all. The process is harder for some than others, and when the power rests in the hands of unsuitable people, it undoubtedly degenerates from proper discipline into very intolerable petty tyranny.

And yet the working of a large institution is impossible without proper discipline, every nut and screw must be in its right place in the mechanism of hospital management, or the whole machinery will not work.

For far more work can always be accomplished by a disciplined body than by the same number of units without discipline; individual enthusiasm is never capable of the same sustained effort as a united body working under a proper system. See how much more smoothly the work runs, how much more easily extra pressure is borne in a ward that is well organised, where each nurse knows what her exact work is and for what she is responsible, than in a ward in which there is no proper supervision, where much is left to the individual discretion, or indiscretion, of the nurses, and where, consequently, the unpleasant little details are either entirely left, or shifted from one to the other until they fall upon the junior probationer.

Yet discipline should never retain the form without the spirit. True living discipline is founded on loyalty; the obedience to a discipline that has its root in fear and not in loyalty is dead and mechanical, not alive.

The world rates loyalty highly, and is right in so doing. Loyalty to a cause, a trust, a person, loyalty to a given word, are all points of honour, indifference to which indicates a low standard of morality; while true loyalty, even when carried to a fantastic pitch, evokes the admiration even of the most worldly. True discipline, not mere eye service, is the obedience loyally given to rules and laws that have been voluntarily accepted. A nurse who is loyal will be chary of discussing the failures and shortcomings of her hospital with strangers; she will bear the inevitable inconveniences and restrictions of its regulations in a cheerful spirit of obedience—as a part of her duty, not as an irksome repression; she will take her share of the discomforts and disagreeables of her life without that incessant grumbling, the privilege of discontent, to which some nurses apparently think they have a chartered right.

Among all the good qualities which a perfect nurse should possess, a little of that "courage of endurance," that spirit of self-sacrifice, which was so important a point with the old religious sisters, would not be a bad thing. Cheerful obedience to discipline, the idea of accepting restraint in any spirit but a hostile one, loyalty to superiors, faithful

submission to subordination are the very rarest virtues among them. Yet it is the spirit of self-sacrificing loyalty that leads to the highest and truest discipline, that will stand to its colours through sunshine and rain, that will take the rough with the smooth, making the best of inevitable difficulties, loyally silent over its own wrongs, and punctilious to a fault in the fulfilment of its duties.

But it is not possible for a nurse to submit herself loyally and intelligently to restraint unless she has learnt that self-discipline which gives her power to exercise true control over her own life, to govern her passions and rise above her weaknesses. She must possess the discipline of mind which engenders an unconscious logic, a precision of thought and purpose that ousts the desultory habit of thinking—or rather not thinking—which leads to dreamy shiftless ways, that if indulged in make any concentration of mind such a difficult matter—a terrible trouble to many women. A nurse who is always "wool gathering" when she should have all her wits about her and her mind bent on the one thing in hand, who has a careless, listless habit of letting her thoughts drift away when she should be maintaining a proper control over them, is an intolerable nuisance in a ward. Her desultory habit of mind leads to desultory action. There is a want of connection and finish about her work; she is not neat and orderly in her mind, and it shows in her work; she prepares a dressing and forgets one-third of the necessary preparations; she tidies the ward, and leaves a mug on one locker and a plate on another; her mind is not well-disciplined, not methodical and well in hand; she is up in the clouds when she should be well on *terra firma*. Often clever and able in her work, she is not able to rivet her attention on the details around her, and cannot arrange her knowledge so as to use it to the best advantage. She irritates her superiors, and harms her own character by being continually unpunctual. Self-discipline teaches us not only to do without forbidden things, to abstain from doing wrong, but to check all thoughts, words, and actions that are in their tendency harmful, to practise self-restraint until it becomes natural and easy, and all external restraint is but little felt. No nurse will be happy or successful in her career unless she accepts the fact of the absolute necessity for self-discipline and self-restraint, otherwise she will be impatient of control, hasty in her judgment, desultory in her actions, and the results of her work will be desultory and untrustworthy.

At the same time it should not be forgotten that we are human beings, and that self-restraint pushed to the extent of smothering all wholesome natural human feelings, of throwing an icy mantle of reserve over all warmth of heart, is an affectation that may easily lead to real apathy. Hospital nurses already stand in much too great a danger of becoming callous to be able to encourage an affectation

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