

and took part in both the interne and externe practice of the Hospital. It was here my attention was called to the extreme importance of Obstetric Nursing, and I said then, as I say now, that a Midwife who does not thoroughly understand it only knows half her work. During my residence in the Hospital, a great opportunity, to my way of thinking, occurred, viz., a dearth of Nurses and an in-rush of patients. The dear Matron's difficulty was my opportunity, and I zealously took up the nursing work, and soon (under tuition) became an adept in it. My fellow-students and class-mates chaffed me unmercifully over my "low" proclivities, and some even went to the dreadful length of "cutting" my acquaintance over the matter. I did not care a bit. I went on with my baby washing, &c., and I had my reward, for it endeared me to the mothers, and in after days gave me the whip hand over all the Nurses I ever came across. It was not very long before I had a practical opportunity of testing the common-sense value of my views. Whilst in Hospital I was sent for to attend a "swell" case in one of the beautiful suburban houses of the Metropolis. Early on one lovely spring morning the Night Nurse came to my "den" to inform me that a carriage was waiting for me at the door and I was to go at once. I was soon off. Whether the horses knew they were going home, or that there was something "up," I don't say, but we went along at a famous speed. I felt a little trepidation at heart over my case, as any young practitioner in midwifery would do under the circumstances, but that soon went off, and my spirits rose in the beautiful fresh air and sight of the lovely blossoms all about. When I got to my destination the lady's husband was anxiously awaiting my arrival at the front door, and he soon had me out of the carriage. I went upstairs at once. My patient was really bad, but she had a trouble on her mind as well—the Nurse had not come, and there was some doubt as to when she would. "If this is the trouble," I said, "relieve your mind of all anxiety on that account, for I am perfectly able and willing to do all that is necessary for you and baby, *ad interim*." The sun came out in the shape of a smile, and the cloud of doubt passed away. I soon had everything in order, the baby put in an early appearance, and in due time, I flatter myself, I improved his appearance. When I departed my patient bade me good-bye with tears in her eyes, and said how pleased she was at all I had done for her and her little son. When I got downstairs her husband met me, and said, "I cannot tell you what a comfort it has been to me to have you here. I was so worried at first over Nurse not coming." Now here was a mother pleased, a father comforted, their little one snug in his cot, a household at peace, over what, to my views, was a simple act of professional duty; but from that hour to this I have never found out where the "lowness" came in.

During my professional attendance I was able to advise upon various nursing matters (about which the Nurse knew little or nothing), to the great comfort of both my patients.

Now, as a matter of fact, there was an important point of practice involved in the case, and in talking it over to one of our Hospital Surgeons, he was pleased to say I had managed it extremely well, and this was really the only thing I care about. Now had I thought

proper to put myself on my professional "stilts" and give myself a few sham professional airs, I should have done no more nor no worse than my fellow-students of the "degrading-yourself-to-the-level-of-a-mere-Nurse" type would have had me do. And I had some grounds for self-laudation, for although only a young beginner in practice, I had been engaged to attend a lady of some social position on the strength of my professional attainments alone. Nothing was said about nursing on either side. Had there been I should have declined the case, and this veracious history would not have been written.

What did my employers know or care about the scientific aspects of the case? Nothing whatever! But the nursing was talked about in all directions, and my patient and her friends were unanimous in their opinion that I "had been very nice over baby." What a coming down was this for an aspiring young practitioner! Fortunately, I did not view it in that light, and what pleased others pleased me.

I never forgot this lesson of my early career, and commend it to the consideration of my younger sister-workers of to-day in our branch of nursing work. Be ever a comfort to your patients. Without kindly qualities, no kind of qualification will stand you in their stead.—I am, Sir, yours truly, OBSTETRICA.

#### SPEAKING FRENCH IN FRANCE.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

Dear Sir,—I have been away from home for a time on account of rest being advised after a time of hard work, and my attention has been drawn to a letter in your paper of the 30th May, to which I should have replied at an earlier date had I seen it. In my letter to you I referred to my own staff of Nurses, and made no allusion to English Nurses working in Paris. It was pointed out to me before opening this Institution that the greatest importance should be attached to the E.H.T. Nurses whom I selected being conversant with French, and I have, as I think I told you, found this to be the case, more especially for those who work away in different parts of France. I have a Nurse now attending a case of typhoid in North France. The Doctor, who is French, writes his instructions in French, which, fortunately, the Nurse can read, but does not understand when spoken. I have lost several most important cases with French Doctors, owing to this want of knowledge of the language. I do not refer to Paris only, but to France and elsewhere generally where my Institution is working, that the Nurses should be conversant with French. In an article written by Miss Woodcock, of the Nice Institution, in another journal, who has had a long experience of nursing in France, she says that "Ignorance of French is such a drawback there"; and so it is elsewhere. In my remark of mixing with the people to acquire a language, to those who are really anxious to do so this is easy enough, as I have acquired many of the languages I speak by doing this. I may add that our work lies a good deal with Americans in Paris and also English, but out of Paris especially English.—Apologising for the delay, I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

ANNIE H. LEVICK, *Lady Principal*.

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