

POINTS FOR PROBATIONERS.

BY MISS E. J. R. LANDALE

*(Lady Superintendent of the Fleming Memorial Hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne).**(Continued from page 149.)*

YOU may think, if you were in her place, you would act differently from your Sister or your Matron; but you are in your own place, and the spirit of obedience is against all criticism. Your duty is to obey, not to judge.

There is no evil growth more insidious than disloyalty. A little grievance talked about and fostered, what mischief it does! Always set your grievance (and other people's as well, when they are forced upon you) up in front of you, and look it full in the face—in nine cases out of twelve it will melt away; but whatever you do, do not keep and pet it. If it is real, represent it to whoever can put it right; and if it cannot be set right, then make up your mind to ignore it as much as possible. Be very sure you will never be able to rule others till you have learnt the beauty of loyal obedience.

An important factor in the happiness of Hospital life is the behaviour of Nurses to each other. Be kind, be courteous; think of others before yourself. Take your proper place with those you are working with; defer always to those who are senior to you in the work, though perhaps only by a few weeks. Remember, "Silence is golden." Try to be, as far as you can, a "non-conductor of the heats and animosities" that are sure to arise in a community of women. Be considerate of the comfort of others. But while I would urge on you great consideration one towards the other, I must put you on your guard against doing another person's work. No Probationer, Nurse, or Sister has any right to take duty for another without reference to the Lady Superintendent; if, out of good nature, she does so, she generally leaves some of her own work undone.

In the Wards be on your guard against getting out of temper with your patients. They are no doubt at times very trying, and at times you will be more easily tried. It seems now and then as if a patient had just waited till you had settled to do something else to ask you for something that you think they could quite as well have asked for half-an-hour sooner or later. To those who feel ruffled by such things I recommend a close study

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of St. Paul's definition of true charity, "Thinketh no evil." Do not impute motives to your patients. You are there to serve, and true service must be full of love.

"Only willing service
High in heaven is stored;
Ne'er a grudging labour
Bear we to the Lord,"

sang the angel, in the old legend.

A Nurse sometimes finds herself in a position of a little difficulty from the behaviour of Students and Residents in the Wards. Sometimes the information a Nurse possesses is very valuable to Students, and when asked for it she should be ready to help them; but in all well-regulated Hospitals any personal intimacy is forbidden between them. You must be on your guard against allowing any but professional matters to slip into the conversation. You are on your honour; but the young men have generally no such feeling, and therefore the check must be given by you, with quiet dignity. The same rule applies in regard to Residents; but generally they do not need your help—on the contrary, many are most kind and ready to teach you. Such clinical instruction is very valuable; but the relation must be limited to purely professional matters. Above all things, talk on the domestic affairs of the Nurse department, either inside the Hospital or outside; and the airing of grievances for the sake of airing them, is most hurtful and undignified. As I said before, "Silence is a great peacemaker."

Another difficulty which a Nurse is sometimes called to meet arises from Ward visitors. A Probationer should answer politely and shortly when spoken to, and go about her work; but the Nurse in charge of a Ward should remember she is in the position of a lady in her own drawing-room, and should receive visitors with all the courtesy due to guests. I am aware that the visitors do not always equally recognise their position in that light, and it is much to be regretted; but if the Nurse will go to meet them with a pleasant friendliness of welcome, and tell them anything she thinks likely to interest them, I think the visiting would become enjoyable both to visitor and visited. I feel sure that much that seems rudeness in visitors is due to their feeling shy and awkward; but a pleasant welcome from the Nurse sets them at once at their ease. When any Clergyman, Minister, Sister, or Nurse comes in—what one might call a religious visitor—the Nurse should at once see that all is done that is

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