

at any rate, there is no doubt, that it rests in a great measure with themselves, how much, or how little, they become fitted to understand thoroughly, and to carry out intelligently, the orders given them. Even the mechanical part of a Nurse's work now-a-days requires scientific training, if by scientific we understand "skilled," and if we realize the fact, that there is a dexterous aptitude, which use alone can give.

It may be, however, that there is a danger underlying the actual position of a trained Nurse, which we should do well to bear in mind—the risk that is, of scientific knowledge covering up and putting out of sight the value of homely details, and small matters connected with a patient's comfort and well-being. Each day we live we are learning, as trained nurses, more and more the means which are open to us of rendering our work "artistic." There is, however, "a science in the perception of beauty," and, to some extent at any rate, we require to be educated in our profession up to a certain point before we even perceive the possibilities which be hidden, it may be, behind its meanest details.

"Artistic" does not necessarily mean beautiful, in the sense of visible beauty. Perfection in detail,

and a sense of pervading harmony, may stamp any production as the work of an Artist. A skilled mechanic alone is to be trusted to detect defects not manifest to the naked eye, and why?—because, having mastered his art by long apprenticeship, he becomes in some mysterious way, sensitive to slight imperfections which would escape the sight, and seem beneath the notice of one less experienced in his craft. When we first become Nurses we do not recognise how much of our work is made up of small items, nor how failure in apparent trifles may go far to mar our efficiency.

It is difficult for a Probationer to understand that the art of easing a patient by every means in our power, probably often by what, to an outsider, would appear a scarcely perceptible change, is verily an art not easy to acquire. It is only arrived at by a special sense, partly gained by experience, partly the result of being in touch with patients through sympathy with their needs—

"Oh the little more, and how much it is,
The little less, and what worlds away."

A few inches in the slope of a pillow seems an insignificant thing, but rest to an aching muscle may send the temperature down. A piece of coal

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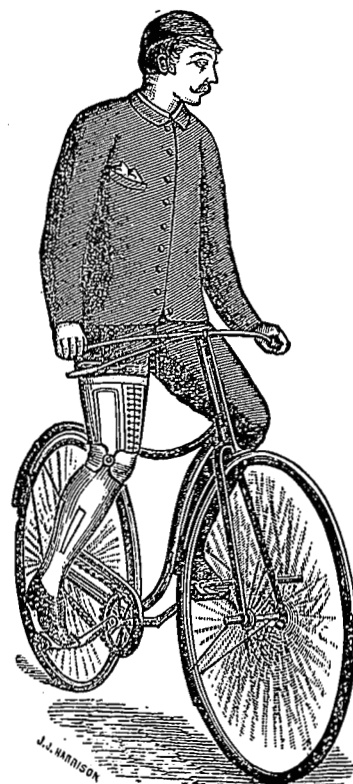
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