

often happens in the case of Hospital Night Nurses attending a course of instruction, were arranged at a time when the "blue-coats" should have been peacefully slumbering, and, at the end of fifteen minutes of lecture one, the whole audience was in the "land of nod." The reporter of a leading paper thought it a good opportunity, and made an intensely funny story of the affair, much to the amusement of the public and the disgust of the surgeon. He made a violent raid on the newspaper office, threatening if he could find the writer of the story that he would furnish such lively material for his ambulance pupils to practise upon that there would be no chance of their going to sleep.

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WE lately received a letter which it would answer no good purpose to print in full, speaking bitterly of the uncouth manners of the Nurses, met by a lady visitor in the wards of a county Hospital. This is, I regret to say, not the first complaint we have received concerning the same fault in Hospital Nurses, and we think the kindly words of the editor of our American contemporary the *Trained Nurse* might be read with advantage:—

"There are so many who undervalue courteous manners and a polite bearing. They cannot perceive they are making a sad mistake by cultivating a cold, rude and forbidding demeanour.

Politeness is very often violated through the lack of good will, which is its real source, than from any disdain of its superficiality. This is especially true in business relations, and is shown by petty acts of meanness which indicate very plainly the utter selfishness within. You can find this daily in stores, offices and hospitals. Instead of good will which should reign cheerfully and gracefully in those little acts of courtesy and good breeding that are so easily bestowed, and yet give so much pleasure, there is a gloomy frown, a disobliging manner, curt replies, and a selfish appropriation of little comforts, regardless of how much they may be needed by others. As a measure of policy, politeness is most valuable, but when you consider it an index to the feelings beneath, it has a deeper significance. It is a great mistake to suppose that all cultivation of a polite and courteous manner is but an imitation of genuine good will and kindness.

It is often the very best way of improving a disposition or strengthening a virtue to put into constant exercise the outward acts of which they are the natural source.

If we would increase courage, we must face danger though we tremble; if we would learn patience we must cease murmuring; if we would be generous in heart, we must make sacrifices. So to acquire that geniality of feeling, intrinsic kindness and good will which flowers out into pleasant demeanour and courteous bearing, we must begin by training ourselves to the amenities that cost so little, and yet are worth so much.

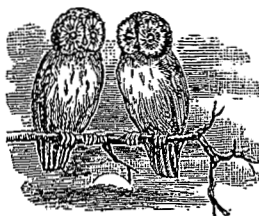
It is often said politeness costs nothing. This is not strictly true—if it were its value would be greatly diminished. It costs us constant guard over our moods and temper; it costs an effort to subdue irritability and fretfulness; it costs care and thoughtfulness for the pleasure and comfort of others and a great willingness to make sacrifices of our own.

But these costs are very trifling compared with the happiness they confer on others; they also doubly enrich and improve ourselves. Every honest effort to do right elevates the character and increases the happiness of the one who makes it; and the more the effort has cost the greater will be the recompense."

Matrons in Council.

WHAT IS A TRAINED NURSE?

QUESTION 5.—*How should a Nurse's knowledge be tested? If by examination, by whom?*



MADAM, — This question seems to me to be one of the most important of the series of what constitutes a trained Nurse, because the subject of examinations is one of the most chaotic in Nurse Training. There are still great numbers of so-called training schools (and they do educate their Nurses after a rough-and-ready practical method), who do not consider it necessary to test their pupils' knowledge at all. The Probationers attend lectures and take notes, they study little handbooks, and gain a parrot-like smattering of theoretical knowledge. But this aimless teaching goes in at one ear and out of the other, and were the lecturer to ask a question a month after his instruction, I doubt if he would, in the majority of cases, receive an intelligible answer. Why? Because the theoretical instruction is not usually applied intelligibly at the bed-side. To be of any lasting value theoretical instructions must be clinically applied, and it is here that so few of our Probationers have a chance to learn. How well I remember an incident of my salad days of Nursing; how irritated beyond measure I became day after day in accompanying round the clinical class of a great nerve specialist, who habitually addressed his boots in subdued undertones when instructing his class, and how being particularly interested in an obscure brain case upon which I was "special." I had edged myself close to his elbow, in spite of etiquette, to catch his words, when, taking me for the youthful house physician, usually close at hand, he placed his arm in mine (without raising his eyes) and continued to whisper confidential and terrible truths into my willing ears; how, prompted by an unholy thirst for knowledge which the great man was eager to impart, I asked, and he answered with evident pleasure, question after question concerning the patient I was nursing, and how, after a time returning to consciousness as from a dream, he raised his eyes, and finding his arm linked in mine dropped it like a hot potato, scanned his class hurriedly, moved quickly to the next bed where his face was hidden from view, and from whence unintelligible whispers could alone be heard. I remember now how I continued to stand by my patient until the great man had left the ward, and how hotly angry I felt, that in his eyes I was merely a reasonless dummy—well enough as a drudge to keep his patient clean, to put food in his mouth, to carry out directions, but evidently unworthy to be made acquainted with the reasons for which these directions were necessary. Imagine my surprise and pleasure upon the next visit of this physician to the ward—when seeing me hovering outside the charmed circle of students, straining my ears for crumbs of knowledge—to hear him remark (still to his boots), "Give

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