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PRIVATE NURSING.

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Of all the professions now open to women there is none possessing the possibilities of nursing. The deeper our medical men penetrate into the science of medicine, the wider grows the horizon of the trained nurse.

Scarcely a quarter of a century ago the physician regarded her advent with a feeling of distrust, fearful that as soon as her training was completed, she would proceed to the practice of medicine and in time share, if not entirely absorb, his circle of patients. Time has proved the fallacy of that idea, until to-day the reputable physician refuses to take a serious case unless the responsibility is shared by a competent nurse.

As a character-builder, the training-school has no equal; I think it is its prevailing atmosphere of unselfishness which causes all the tiny germs of good that have long lain dormant in our natures to develop and helps us in time to overcome our most glaring errors. The regular routine, the unity of purpose, the absolute rule of willing subjects, leave their mark for all time upon the character and disposition of its pupils; and they must, because of this discipline, go forth better women, better equipped for the battle of life, whether to grace homes of their own or to become the temporary members of the homes of the suffering.

In the present day there are many fields in which the nurse may find an outlet for her activities. The need of hospitals, the demand in the army, and the increasing growth of district and settlement work give a choice of usefulness unknown to her sister of a few years past. However, it is in private nursing that the large majority find an opening most suited to their capabilities. The reason for this is because of the great pleasure in personal ministrations. In other branches of the work, owing to lack of time or the inability to be in many places at the same time, one's work is apt to become largely that of the teacher and the guide, and the joy of personally making "a little comfortable the uncomfortable way" is seldom tasted.

From the financial stand-point the private nurse is paid better than any other; if she is an active worker, she can be busy from nine to ten months in the year. She has the advantage of being absolutely free when she is free. Unfortunately, she cannot ever hope to increase her salary; she is worth as much when she takes her first case as

when she takes one ten years hence. While experience adds greatly to her worth, it does not add to her financial value. The most she can ever hope to do is to "become established,"—to have her own little coteries of patients and physicians to whom she is absolutely indispensable.

In the larger cities in this country the remuneration for private nursing is almost uniform, twenty-five dollars per week, or four dollars per day, being the average salary. Some nurses, and, indeed, some hospitals, ask thirty dollars per week, or five dollars per day, for nursing male patients, still others make a distinction in obstetrical work, and I think all nurses in all places make an extra charge for contagious cases. In the smaller cities prices range from eighteen dollars to twenty-one dollars per week, but as living expenses are comparatively lower the difference is not so great as it appears at first thought. The question of hours is still worth considering. The nurse in the large cities does not feel this to any great extent, as in almost all cases requiring care at night twelve-hour duty is an established custom.

But in the smaller cities even people who can afford all sorts of luxuries feel that unless a nurse's training has done away with the necessity for sleep it has failed in its purpose. A few days ago I heard a physician remark that Miss B. was an excellent nurse, as she had gone seventy-two hours without sleep. Of course, he was a very young physician.

Nurses, no matter where their homes may be, usually locate in the city where they have taken their training. It would almost seem, when we consider the large classes which are graduated annually in hospital centres, that the supply would be greater than the demand. But this is not the case; the demand is constantly on the increase.

The family of moderate income, which a few years ago did its own nursing, now finds it impossible to get along without trained assistance. The family of affluence, which formerly employed one nurse, now finds it necessary to employ two or three. So that while hospital and club registers show an increased number of graduates on their lists, they show a corresponding increase in the number of calls.

The larger cities possess the attraction of affording a greater choice of work. Indeed, it is becoming popular to take up special lines of work. The movement has thus far met with the hearty approval of physicians and patients. It could hardly be otherwise, as the concentration of mind and effort in a given direction, if a nurse is at all progressive, must result in an added usefulness, and at the same time these special cases would require sufficient regular care to prevent her from growing rusty in general work. "Nervous

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