

framework for all the information we gather. What is essential must, of course, depend upon the object in view. A milliner's assistant might do well to observe the bonnet closely, and a person anxious to know if it is possible to earn a decent livelihood by third-rate instrumental music may be excused for examining the violinist's attire; but as a rule the essential points of a political meeting or of a classical concert are in a direction more closely allied to their object.

Leaving the more purely mental accomplishments, we now turn to arts constantly required in hospitals and easily learnt at home on a smaller scale.

*Marking and Mending Linen.*—Every nurse must know how to mark neatly both in ink and red cotton, and as the supply of linen, in proportion to the need for it, is often as limited in hospitals as in private houses of small means, the night nurse who can prolong the serviceable days of a tablecloth by darning it, or turn a hopelessly old one into four tray-cloths, or transform a dilapidated tray-cloth into fringed doilies, is a person to be smiled on by Matron and Ward Sisters.

The student should persuade her mother to allow her to take entire charge of the linen cupboard, marking, mending, making, and re-making. She ought also to make out the laundry lists and count up the clothes when they come back. These unheroic tasks commonly fall to nurses, and much needless friction is avoided if they know how to perform them in a swift and orderly fashion.

It is most desirable that the hospital nurse should be able to "find recreation" in needlework, not only because of the personal saving that it may be, but because of the tedious hours that it may ward off when she is a private nurse. Many patients cannot bear to see their attendant reading, and yet would take a languid interest in the progress of a piece of silk embroidery, or an elaborate specimen of knitting or crochet.

Dressmaking is a very useful art for the nurse, as unless she is able to make such things as a pretty delaine for the summer, coloured shirts to wear with a tailor-made skirt, or a silk blouse for the evening, she will probably, if she is to save any money at all, be obliged to confine herself entirely to uniform, and that is too great a trial for her relatives, and shuts her off more entirely from the world than can possibly be good for any young woman.

*Cooking and Housework.*—Girls who complain of cooking and housework as hindrances to their high ambitions certainly cannot realise how much work of this description has to be done by hospital nurses. Even when there are sufficient ward-maids for the rougher duties, and the main part of the cooking is done in the general kitchen, who is to dust, to tidy the rooms, to wash up tea and breakfast things and medicine glasses? Who is to make beef-tea, lemonade, custard, barley-water, and the scores of other small things required by the patients? The

answer seems obvious enough, but so little thought have girls of preparing themselves practically that I have scarcely ever known a probationer who could dust the patients' lockers properly, wash plates deftly and noiselessly, beat up an egg quietly, and handle small objects with the light, firm touch that neither drops nor crushes. These aspirants often have their thoughts turned towards the operating theatre; have they ever tried to picture to themselves what is the chief share of nurses and probationers in the work done there? Hours, literally hours, of washing, boiling, polishing and disinfecting.

*Care of Children and Elderly People.*—How idle it seems to me to speak as if care for baby brothers and sisters, or elderly relatives, or family friends were hindrances to the student's preparation. How will she like it when ward babies, perhaps twelve in number, turn from her shrieking their abhorrence, and the Sister-in-charge exclaims, reprovingly, "Really, Nurse Z., one would think that you had never touched a baby in your life before"? Or when she has to stand on one side and see her unmanageable patient of eighty odd years soothed, flattered, caressed, and coaxed into taking food or medicine, or into enduring some necessary minor operation, by another young girl who has not scorned her home opportunities of preparation for hospital life?

*Punctuality, Method, and Order.*—While carefully abstaining from making herself a nuisance or a standing reproach to her family, the student must try to acquire habits of order and punctuality, and maintain a high standard of personal tidiness. Above all, she should accustom herself to rise at a fixed hour every day. There is no need that it should be extraordinarily early; the discipline lies in its fixity. There is far more "training" in rising every morning in the week at seven than in rising four days very early, two days late, and one day not at all. A good watch is a great aid to punctuality, and the student should make it her ambition to possess a really trustworthy time-keeper, and learn how to take care of it.

The probationer should note exactly how long it takes her to perform certain duties, and thus gradually and almost insensibly acquire the valuable power of being able to estimate accurately how much work she can get through in a certain time. Often even in private life women get hurried and worried and flurried because they do not know whether in two hours they can manage to write a letter, order the dinner, make a cake, mend their gloves, dress, and walk half a mile; and they cultivate their powers of observation and comparison so little that each small domestic problem of the kind finds them in a state of equal unpreparedness.

*Social Duties.*—My young friends sometimes have a doubting and half-shamefaced air when they complain of household duties as hindrances in their

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