

no nurse conscious of education and abilities in the least above the average should be without it; but, at the same time, you must be prepared to reconcile yourself to any position in which you can gain an honest livelihood and be of real service to the world. We cannot all found institutions or reform hospitals, but we can all do something towards preventing the need of reform, with all its struggles, waste and bitterness.

"Am I fond of children?" Most girls can honestly answer "Yes," but the children they will know are not like the children they have known, and many of the circumstances will be different. In hospital life the children are all ailing; many of them are suffering acutely, and consequently nearly all are fretful. In addition, few of them have been trained to obedience and courtesy; they have none of the "pretty ways" of more tenderly-nurtured children, and they have to be gently broken of many unlovely habits. There is little in them to attract a dilettante kind of affection; they can only gain our love because they have first had out heartfelt pity. If there should be more engaging little ones among them, no partiality can be shown, and indeed the nurse has no time for the dandling and baby-talk that so often pass for love of children. Her love must be shown by careful attendance to their manifold needs, with such smiles and caresses and playful suggestions as can be put in by the way. Does the girl who wishes to be a nurse realise that in many hospitals a nurse may not hold a baby in her arms except to perform some needful office for it? It may seem hard, but, unless such rules were made, one or two small tyrants would monopolise all the available attendance.

"Do I love old people? Does their mental or bodily weakness appeal to me?" A girl, more especially of the upper classes, would generally unhesitatingly answer "Yes," and it would be strange if she did not. From her grandparents and their contemporaries she has probably received great kindness and indulgence, and the "old people in the village" whom she has been allowed to visit from her childhood are usually the *élite* of their class. But old people as patients; old people who have no affection for her, and perhaps no respect for her youth; old people to whom her ministrations are not a kindness and a condescension, but her "duty," and "what she's paid for"? Will she have the patience to bear their whims and fancies, the tact to circumvent them, or the loving humour to laugh tenderly and yield?

"Do I expect gratitude from my patients?" Many of the patients will be distinctly ungrateful, and many more will only be grateful because they believe they ought to be, and because they are persons accustomed to do their duty. The ingratitude will vary from an innocent, childlike, matter-of-course acceptance of your most arduous service up to forms that are incredibly malignant. I once

knew a doctor who checked an outburst of virulent slander against a browbeaten nurse by saying, drily, "Yes, she is very unsatisfactory; she is the last woman nurse that I shall engage for you. I have little practical knowledge of male nurses, but it seems probable that they would have less objection to being sworn at, and they might be less disconcerted by having glasses, &c., thrown to the other end of the room instead of being handed back to them in more conventional fashion."

"Do I expect gratitude from the patients' friends?" Strange to say, the friends are even more subject to ingratitude. If the patients dislike or only tolerate the nurse, they are convinced that she is unkind to them; if the patients show the smallest preference for her, she is exercising undue influence. From the point of view of the patient's interest—and we must remember that he is always the chief person to be considered—this attitude of suspicion and ingratitude is not altogether to be regretted. Anything is better than the indifference implied by blind trust in an unknown nurse. Only a nurse knows how good, and how bad, a nurse can be, and how rapidly an indifferent nurse deteriorates when surrounded by selfish, indolent credulity. A shudder of horror runs through me when I hear such statements as, "Oh, we are free to go out as much as we like now; mother has a trained nurse"!

"Can I bear a life of strict discipline and routine?" Ask yourself if obedience to authority and the ability to rule others are natural gifts with you, or within your power to acquire. Many probationers come to the hospital in a state of such total indiscipline that trainers are obliged to lay stress chiefly upon obedience to rules, but the power to command and direct others is almost equally necessary before a single step upwards can be taken in the profession. Unless nurses could command as well as obey, the men's wards would often be like the proverbial bear garden, while the general atmosphere of the women's and children's would resemble a back alley on an August day.

"Have I a constant sympathy for all forms of suffering, and an earnest desire to relieve them?" Not merely for suffering so obvious that at the sight of it a dog would utter a pitying whine, and not merely for physical distress, but for all degrees and all forms that can affect the mind or body of the patients? At all times, the *sufferer* must be more plainly visible to the nurse than the faulty, imperfect man, woman, or child actually before her.

To sum up briefly: Do you know what a nurse is? Do you wish to become one? What reasonable chance have you of success?

The International Congress of Dermatology has been meeting this week in Berlin. An important paper, was read by Professor Neisser, of Breslau, University, on leprosy,

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