

The pleasant side has two aspects:—Firstly, the foreign service, thus giving an opportunity for travel and change; and, secondly, the social side, which to some natures is a question of great importance.

As only those who come from a certain social strata are admitted, there cannot be that trying friction of living with those who have been brought up differently from ourselves. This is what we have all got to go through during our days of training, and in various other branches of nursing, and though we may all pretend to ignore it, yet it is a fact which exists, and which tends to be very trying at times.

The reason of limiting the nursing staff to women accustomed to a certain social position is very obvious. It would be impossible to expect nurses of the other class to maintain discipline with kindness and dignity, unless they rank with the doctors and officers; and it seems to me there must yet be another great advantage in having educated women who do not need constant supervision and who can in times of emergency think and act for themselves. In going abroad, they must meet with a variety of new cases, new ailments, illness and diseases due to circumstances and climatic reasons, which they have not seen before. They must then fall back on their books, their theoretical knowledge, and on their general education in order to cope ably with their unexpected difficulties. This is where the partially educated woman fails, however practical and full of common sense and valuable she may have been in the wards.

A thorough knowledge of the theoretical part of our work need not make *theorists* of us, as some people seem to think, but it ought, on the contrary, to enable us to do our practical work with more judgment, intelligence, and skill.

Nothing could be more practical, and, indeed, *manual*, than surgery, and yet I expect our great surgeons would be not a little surprised if we told them that a knowledge of anatomy and physiology would be quite sufficient for their work.

Another great argument in favour of the military nurse being educated is her being better able to keep abreast with the times by reading, or even *writing* on nursing subjects. This she would, I am sure, have much time to do, and there must be many interesting subjects and aspects of their work upon which military nurses could write.

One would like to see a little more broadness and a little more of the freemason spirit amongst nurses—a little more interest in each other's lives and interests.

We frequently hear of army nurses giving themselves airs with other nurses, of becoming haughty and domineering with the orderlies. If such is really the case this is a great pity, as some of the nicest gentlewomen I know, possessing large private incomes, are quietly devoting their lives to workhouse and district nursing, just as we know of

men in the Church who have come off with the highest Oxford and Cambridge honours, or peers sons, working away in dirty manufacturing towns or the poorest and most evil parts of London.

Some of this dignity and self-effacement one would like to see, and in it the Matron-in-Chief, Miss Browne, sets a beautiful example.

But I must not forget the end of my visit to the Herbert Hospital, Woolwich. Miss Jones kindly took me back to their "quarters," and to her delightful sitting-room, where a dainty tea awaited us. Miss Garriock, who has just returned from foreign service, and is taking Miss Jones' position (who is moved on to Millbank), joined us at tea, and while we conversed she made the simple remark, "Outsiders cannot possibly understand our lives by simply visiting us." Quite true, I thought to myself, and it reminded me of a wise Arab saying which runs thus:—

Question: "Do you know him?"

Answer: "Yes."

Question: "Have you ever *lived* with him?"

Answer: "No."

Reply: "Then you know nothing about him?"

And then the thought struck me as to how those who were on the Reserve must find themselves out of it, when suddenly in times of war they have to undertake military nursing without the slightest knowledge of the work, the life, rules, and regulations, and I wondered whether it would not be a good plan if they all went through from one to three months' experience beforehand. This would not only be an education to them, but would give an opportunity to the Matrons to judge of their qualities and fitness for the work, so that in the time of war each would fall into her right place, and perhaps, too, a little judicious weeding might be done.

In reviewing the nursing profession in general, and military nursing in particular, we must not overlook the laws of evolution. Time and circumstances alone can enable us and teach us how to develop and advance in any subject, and the nursing profession is now ripe and ready for us to strike the deciding blow. It is entirely in our hands whether we show decision and energy and aim at perfection, or whether we show apathy and indifference, and allow all the splendid uphill work which has been done to slide down the hill and fall into the valley of self-satisfaction and stagnation.

EDLA R. WORTABET.

The Local Government Board for Scotland is considering the question of issuing to parochial medical officers, sanitary inspectors, and inspectors of poor, leaflets containing the opinions of the Committee on Physical Deterioration relative to ventilation and the bringing-up of young children, with a view to the dissemination of information on these subjects.

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