

Profit Sharing for Nurses.

Under such a title you naturally look for something about money. But this article deals with matters of greater moment than money—things that come more easily and stay with you longer than a nice bank account.

In these days of correspondence schools, university extension courses, and clubs whose name is legion and whose purpose is personal improvement along some line or all lines, the nurses have not been forgotten. They, too, have their organisations, local and general, with their publications, official and unofficial, all on improvement bent, all "elevating the profession." The profession has been subjected to this elevating process so long and so vigorously, that there is a disposition on the part of all nurses to persuade themselves that they are having a hand and a voice in the good work. Not so.

There is a big difference between elation and elevation.

Think about it seriously, and you can decide without assistance which of these things is happening in your own case.

Would you like to help your profession and yourself at the same time? Then you must remember that all associations of nurses are essentially mutual, and that no member has a moral right to expect to take out profits until she has *put in* her contribution for the good of the whole. The nurses' meetings and their journals are clearing-houses for the ideas that gain currency among nurses. Everybody is entitled to contribute to this intellectual capital. Indeed, everybody who hopes to escape the fate of a mere parasite upon her organisation and her profession must contribute in some way to the general good.

Have you been a silent listener in the meetings of your organisation for several months or years? By this time you should have something to say, to which others shall listen. Have you been a constant reader of your journal for years, and have you never felt the desire to write, if only a word, for the benefit of other readers? Are you content to be forever drawing cheques upon a fund in which you have never deposited?

The counsel which Dr. Hurd, of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, gave last year to the graduates of the Albany Hospital Training School is so valuable that it will bear frequent repetition. Among other things, he said:—

"I would suggest that you continue to be students. . . . Let me urge each one of you to pursue some special line of study. Get the latest text-books on nursing each year and read them. Learn to speak. Familiarise yourselves with public questions. Avoid gossip and tattle. Fill your minds so that you may be fit companions for cultivated persons. Continue to give earnest and careful thought to all matters connected with nursing and keep your minds bright and active. If you are to engage in private nursing, you will inevitably feel the isolation of your lives in a professional sense and a benumbing of the faculties

you have been cultivating unless you take special pains to resist the tendency.

"To assist you to keep yourselves abreast of the best thinkers in your profession, I would also suggest that you take one or more of the excellent journals which are now published for nurses. Read them carefully each month and note the new ideas which are contained in them. Above all things do not be content with reading only, but contribute something of your own experience. Learn to use your own pens and to feel the responsibility of doing something for the general good. Light the torch of knowledge and pass it along."

The best endorsement of Dr. Hurd's advice is the fact that many nurses have followed it and have attained excellent results. Every reader of this article knows one or more lights in the profession who are to day passing the torch along. They remind us of the ringing exhortation of Thomas Carlyle:

"Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called To-day; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

—*The Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette.*

A Distinction with a Difference.

We are glad that circumstances are making lay authorities concerned with nursing matters understand that a difference exists between nurses and midwives. The Local Government Board has informed the Halstead Guardians that "as matters stand they do not consider Guardians are empowered by law to appoint midwives as outdoor officers. The District Medical Officers are responsible for, and should personally attend to midwifery cases in respect to which they receive orders." Questions addressed by the Clerk to another Board elicited the fact that, with the sanction of the Local Government Board its Guardians subscribed 5s. weekly to three local nursing associations, who, in consequence, undertook the nursing of outdoor relief cases when necessary. In point of fact, Boards of Guardians may appoint a nurse but not a midwife. Nevertheless, in rural districts, a midwife could render considerable assistance to the Poor Law Medical Officer, who may be summoned in quite different directions at the same time.

Hitherto the terms nurse and midwife have too often been regarded as interchangeable. Although a knowledge of midwifery is desirable for a nurse and a knowledge of nursing for a midwife, there is an essential difference in the functions of the two. The former is engaged in attendance on the sick, the latter in rendering skilled assistance to women in normal health during a perfectly natural process. It is time this difference was understood,

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