

that lunatic until the doctor could get her moved to an asylum, a proceeding which took three days. During that time my friend played the piano for thirty-six hours, all told. The poor patient adored music, and would sit entranced while the nurse played. The ineptitude offered to play while she had a rest; but she played badly and made several mistakes, whereupon she had her ears boxed soundly by the music-loving patient. So in this case a knowledge of music was a blessing, both to nurse and patient.

Then geography; for some reason unknown patients and their friends expect the nurse to know about every place under the sun, how to get to it, and if the air will suit the patient. You may think this is the doctor's province. Perhaps it is, but if he orders the patient to Bournemouth she will have a wild desire to go to the Shetland Isles, and you are no good at all if you cannot set forth all the "fors" and "againsts" of the two places.

The debating society teaches you how to speak. If you have anything to say you must say that and nothing else. Nearly all patients are but children, varying from two feet to six or more, so like to be told stories; but they must be told well, with no extra padding or useless words. A good story, well told, will often tide over a difficult dressing, or send an irascible old gentleman into a fit of chuckling when he was on the verge of—well, perhaps, swearing. But a good story badly told would move an angel to tears.

At the age of seventeen you will probably leave school. You should now attend a cookery school for at least a year. It is all very well to say that you will be taught cookery for the sick in hospital. You may be, but it is doubtful. But even if you are, the diet of hospital patients is not very varied. As one London physician said: "We change the patients, and not the diet." So I advise you strongly to learn all sorts and conditions of cooking, for you will find it very useful. Then you can take twelve months at dressmaking. Be apprenticed properly, and learn as much as you can. You think that a waste of time? Not by any means. Suppose you are nursing the mother of a family. She is getting stronger, and is able to sit out on the lawn, and she feels that her hands have been idle too long. Her children's nurse is equal to mending the children's clothes, but making them is out of the question; she has not the time. So the mother thinks how well she can occupy the long hours of enforced idleness. "I can make anything, it is only the cutting out that bothers me," she thinks; and she straightway sets to work to

bother herself into a splitting headache over the cutting out. You remember your dress-making experiences and say: "I would rather you did not stoop over the table to cut out; shall I do it for you? You can watch to see that I do it as you want it done." You do it for her, and your training makes it quite easy to you. She watches, and, oh! how grateful she is. You have done in ten minutes what would have worried her for two hours; you have prevented the cutting-out headache, and we all know that prevention is better than cure. Moreover, that mother goes to bed at night happy, for she has made one little garment, and she feels sure that she would be able to make another quite easily, now that she has, for the first time in her life, seen one cut as you may say professionally; and you are glad that you learnt dress-making and cutting out. Or the doctor may ask you to cut a jacket of gamgee for a small patient. Well, any fool could do that! Perfectly true, and the result sometimes is that the jacket looks as though a very big fool had cut it. The doctor looks at it, wrinkles up his forehead, and says, "Nurse, if it had a pleat here I think it would be more comfortable." The pleat is made, and the last state of that jacket is worse than the first. In many ways you will find your dress-making as useful as your hospital training.

You are now nineteen, and you should arrange that at this time your mother should be taken ill. She need not be dangerously ill, but she should be unable to attend to her household duties, and her digestion should be more or less impaired. And so you keep house, with a large staff of servants who will require careful management. They have been accustomed to a stately lady at the head of affairs, and may resent being ruled by a mistress of nineteen. To make matters more perfect, your eldest brother who married some years ago now goes to India, and so bequeaths the children and their nurse to you. Your sister-in-law tells you that the nurse can be trusted in everything but food; you must look after that, and see that they have the right kind and amount. This will be excellent for you, if not for the children, as the children you will have to do with in hospital will be sick ones, so that you will have little opportunity of learning how to feed healthy ones. But in private nursing you must know how to do both, for a convalescent child would be furious if you fed it on the same scale as a sick one. The convalescent child in hospital cares not what it eats so long as there is plenty of it.

I should strongly advise you to have a trained nurse at intervals for your mother.

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