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### Editorial.

#### BUSINESS HABITS.

The cultivation of business habits is a matter of considerable importance to nurses if they wish to succeed in their profession, and yet it is to be feared they frequently pay but scant attention to this point.

Take the case of a nurse who aspires to the position of Matron. An important part of a Matron's duty is the keeping of books. With her, for instance, rests the responsible duty of keeping the hospital linen list. She takes stock at stated intervals of both ward and household linen, condemns that which is past use, replaces it with new articles, and notes in her linen book the exact number of new articles issued, and the discrepancies, if any, between the lists and the stock produced for her inspection in cupboards, or in use, or accounted for at the laundry. All this requires great exactness and method if the account of the stock is to be accurately kept.

Again, the disbursement of a certain amount of petty cash is always in the Matron's hands. The weekly payments to scrubbers, for instance, and other small items, amounting frequently to several pounds a week, are usually made by her, and accurate accounts of all sums paid out must be kept. In small hospitals, where there is no regular secretary, the Matron pays the weekly bills and other minor accounts. It follows that habits of exactness in keeping books are very essential to her if she is to discharge her duties efficiently.

Neither is the need for business habits confined to those holding administrative posts. They are most necessary in private nurses also. To mention a few instances,

cheques should be promptly acknowledged, the institution or office with which the nurse is connected should be informed as soon as possible of such details as the name of the relative of the sick person to whom official correspondence should be addressed, and the name of the doctor in attendance on the case. Yet not a few nurses will write quite lengthy letters to the officials at their headquarters, and will go all round these points, without giving the requisite information, with extraordinary ingenuity. It is manifest also that nurses should report when they are leaving a case, and if, when they have placed their names on the list of those ready for work, they become indisposed, they should at once intimate this fact to their superior officer, and not wait until they are called to a case to state that they do not feel well enough to take one. All these things seem obvious enough, and yet if every nurse were exact in fulfilling her obligations in these particulars the management of her business by those responsible for it would be a much simpler matter than it is at present.

Again, not only in her official relations, but in connection with her work a private nurse needs a knowledge of business. She may be isolated with an infectious case, and be entrusted with money to pay current expenses, she may have to travel with a patient and be expected to pay hotel bills, take tickets, and make all necessary arrangements for the journey so that the patient may be relieved of all trouble in these particulars. Indeed, to fulfil all the duties required of her in the course of a year a nurse must be a very versatile person. She will do well to start on her career with a knowledge of business habits, or to acquire it with all speed.

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