

SOME NURSES I HAVE MET.

If it takes all kinds of people to make a crowd, one certainly finds all kinds in a crowd of nurses.

When I was in hospital we had a nurse who said she loved every nurse in the place, and it was her ambition to be loved by everyone. She was a dear little woman, and when she had finished her training she carried her love and loving ways to a leper station as a missionary. I have not heard the sequel.

We had her contrast in a Sister who prided herself on being the most-hated person in the hospital. I do not know if she were entitled to that elevated position, but I think the majority of the nurses would have allowed her claim to pass unchallenged.

And I remember one Sister being very angry with me because I had not given a sleeping draught which had been ordered, my reason for not doing so being that the patient went to sleep before I went on duty and did not wake up for eight hours. It is possible that she would not have been pleased if I had given it; she had a happy way of telling me that I was not fit to be left in charge of a ward at least twice a week. A few years later she asked me to be Night Sister in the hospital of which she was then the Matron. I declined with thanks, and at the time took her request as a compliment, but now I think it was only because she found it difficult to get a Night Sister for £30 per annum.

I have never been able to understand the nurse who only likes nursing really bad cases. I remember one of that class who was a most devoted nurse as long as her patient was dangerously ill; but for an ordinary patient with nothing dreadful the matter she had no liking. She told me once she was green with envy because I had a patient with a temperature of 107.8, whereas the highest she had ever nursed was 106.4. "But," I said, "my patient will die." She answered: "Of course she will; but consider! what a temperature!" She envied me again later on when I had a most appalling brain case, and thought that I and several others were favoured, while she had only uninteresting cases. I am told she was a very good nurse; she may have been, but I for one should not like to be her patient.

I have never had the good fortune to meet a trained male nurse, though I have met several who were not. The last—a man named Lee—was a most interesting character.

Lee's patient was an old man with an incurable wound in his leg. I was nursing another member of the family, and frequently saw Lee's patient. One day he asked me to look at his leg, which Lee was just going to dress, so I waited with interest, curious to see how Lee would do the dressing. He first brought in a basin holding quite two quarts of lotion—carbolic—in which were two sponges. Over his arm he carried a very dirty towel; he placed these on the floor, splashing the lotion on the carpet, which he mopped up with one of the sponges, returning it to the lotion. Then he put some dressings on a table beside the bed; the table had tobacco ashes on it and was also dusty. He took off the old dressings and put them on the fire, poking the fire to make it burn up quickly. Then the dirty towel was placed under the leg, the wound sponged with the lotion and dabbed dry with the dirty towel, and the fresh dressing put on. I was asked what I thought of it, and was able to answer truthfully that I was surprised to see it looking so well. Another day I was in the room when the patient was washed. Lee brought in a huge sponge, mopped his patient's face, then held the sponge between his knees while he dried it; he next sponged both hands, returned the sponge to the knee position while he dried them. I suggested that he should have a basin, because he—Lee—might get damp and perhaps have rheumatism in his knees.

"I don't make the sponge wet enough for that, and he does not like a lot of fuss, so I never bring a basin in," said he. I sometimes met Lee in the garden, when he would talk about his patients. This one he had been with over two years; he had been confined to his room for nearly three years. "Seems a useless sort of life, but it is not if you look into it; because you see it keeps me in very good board and lodgings and £100 a year, so you see he is doing some good. And I think if you look for it you can find good in most things. Now take this war; even that is doing some good in ways you would never dream of. I have a sister who has tried most things in her time: she tried dressmaking, but could not do that; then she was cashier in a shop, but only stopped two days; she could not count correctly if she were worried, and if there were two people at the cash desk at one time she always gave them wrong change: she could manage if they came one at a time all right.

"Then she went out as a mother's help and as housekeeper, and I think she has tried about everything and failed at them all. Then this war came along, and she went to the Red Cross

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