

care, and "mothering" that would fidget the sick man. A child, especially an infant, requires to be someone's especial charge, and it is also essential that the Nurse should know all about the child—its whims and fancies, its idiosyncracies—all those numerous little details that are summed up in the childish nature. It would only lead to failure to try and level down the little patients to one rule and line—many opportunities of coaxing them back to health would be lost. Of course the Ward would look orderly, and business-like, but it would not be the most favourable place for each child. In the General Hospital, the Sister and the Staff Nurse divide the responsibility; the patients are their charge, and they assign certain duties, either about the Ward, or the patients, to the Assistant Nurses and Probationers; any very serious case is taken under the care of the Staff Nurse. The Sister and Staff Nurse go round with the Visiting Staff, receive their orders, make their reports, and thus have to bear in their minds the concerns of the Ward; but as adults cannot be treated like children, they have much to say about themselves, and naturally take an interest in their own case. It is thus no impossible task for a Nurse to bear in her mind all that is necessary about her patients, nor, with the Assistant Staff, to tend them thoroughly. The case with children, however, is different. In the Hospital for Sick Children, in Great Ormond Street, (the parent Hospital), and doubtless in others, it is the rule to assign a certain defined number of patients to each Nurse, for whom she is immediately responsible to the Sister of the Ward. The Nurse has the entire care of these patients—she does everything for them, knows all about them—their diet and appetite, state of internal organs, progress of the disease—as though she were their mother; and this she is, for the time being. The Nurse accompanies the Sister and Doctor to her charges, and is expected to give an intelligent account of their state and progress. As the child can give no reliable account of itself and ailments, someone's memory must be charged with the burden; and it can be easily understood that it is more within the compass of the average intellect to remember the minute details of, say, eight children, than twenty-four; and this effort of memory is necessary, as it is easy to mix up the patients, and their affairs.

Then, much vigilance is required among sick children. Changes come on so quickly, symptoms crowd so rapidly one upon the other, little shadows come creeping up, precursors of serious complications, that the eye must not range over the children in a mass, but deal with them one by one, study each, give to everything its meaning, have each child in the mind's eye. No detail is

too minute where there is a sick child, no point beneath observation.

Then, in the training of the Nurses—they have to be dealt with in quite a different manner for sick children; the motherly instinct must be developed, the sense of responsibility impressed on them—the patience and exactitude of the Nurse with the forethought and gentleness of the mother. Whilst learning the method and discipline of the Hospital, they must be taught more to *individualize* than *generalize*; they must be taught that all the nursery details are most essential in the Ward, and no time or exertion must be spared, where the good of their charge is at stake. No training will so develop this in the Probationer, as giving her the sole charge of some patients for whom she is to care entirely; and especially if some most miserable babe, neglected and forsaken by its mother, can be placed in her arms, with instructions how to feed, wash and clothe it; and if it begins to thrive under her care, she has learnt a lesson on the value of rational feeding, and obedience to Nature's laws, that is worth all the theory in the world.

Perhaps two young Nurses may enter into friendly competition, with their cases, to the manifest gain of all parties; anyhow, the Nurse's energies are aroused, and by degrees, if those responsible for her training teach her what to observe, and how to observe, they have given her a good start on the road to becoming a sick children's Nurse. If on the contrary the Probationer's training has been, perhaps, to give all the medicines round, or to feed all the helpless ones, or to take the temperatures, or to assist in washing some, unless she be especially observant, she would not have grappled any individual case, she would have no data from which to reason, the Ward would be to her full of sick children; but there would be no individual child in her mind, and she would feel no responsibility for one entire child. Such a Nurse, when placed in a position of responsibility, either in private Nursing, or on special duty, would be more like a machine than an intelligent Nurse, and would not be all the assistance that she ought to be to the Doctor in charge of the case.

There is another marked difference between adult, and children's Nursing, to be borne in mind: the latter can never be left alone, nor be trusted to do anything for themselves, or take any individual responsibility; they must always be on the mind of their Nurse when on duty, and she ought to have them so on her mind, that they are *in* her mind. Naturally, their incessant restlessness and energy will make them ever present to the Nurse, and for this reason the Nursing of sick children is more trying, physically and mentally, than that of adults, and the hours of recreation need to be taken quite away from the Ward.

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