

In planning the arrangements for the Nursing of sick children, whether in a separate Ward, or in their own Hospital, the authorities must be prepared for a larger number of attendants, because everything has to be done for the child. No Nurse can attend properly to more than *eight* sick children at a time; this does not refer to a Ward in which there is a fair admixture of convalescents—as in some Hospitals the convalescents are not sent into a separate Ward or house—but to a Ward intended for acute and chronic cases, and, in some cases, when the Ward is heavy, this may be more than she can do thoroughly. Then it may be that a young Probationer would be of use; but it is of no use multiplying these individuals *ad libitum*, as sick children do not thrive with a frequent change of attendants; the Nurse must get to know them and their ways, before she can hope to be successful with them; therefore it is of importance that in dividing the Ward among the Nurses, only that number of beds be assigned to each Nurse that she can undertake to Nurse properly.

The Nursing of sick children must of necessity cost more than adults, and it is not wise to compare the two; but the individual Nurse has much left in her hands that may reduce the expenditure, if she is careful, saving, and conscientious, and this she will be, if she has grappled the dignity and beauty of her work.

A Nurse trained under this system, will be very valuable when entrusted with a case in private, where so much must depend upon her knowledge; because, being left to act upon her own responsibility, she will require to know thoroughly what she is about, and be able to give a reason for her actions.

PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION.—III.

“DESCRIBE, IN FULL DETAIL, A SCHEME OF DIETS FOR THE NURSING STAFF OF A HOSPITAL.”

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THIS is an exhaustive subject, and one that may be treated in a variety of ways, varying as much from the number of the Staff, and the arrangements of the Hospital, as from its situation, whether in town or country, near the sea, or inland; but, whatever the nature of the food supply, it should always be good of its kind, plentiful, and well cooked. The latter is a point on which it would be well to dwell, especially as the best food can be rendered uneatable by care-

lessness and inattention in this particular; and nothing ensures the well-being of a Hospital more than attention to the feeding of its Nursing Staff. Indigestion is one of the most common ills from which Nurses suffer on first entering a Hospital, and when on night duty, some are never free from it. It would be superfluous to enumerate the many serious evils arising, too often, from this apparently trivial cause; but, it would be well for Committees of Hospitals to remember that it is true economy to feed their Nurses well, and to help to keep them off the sick list. This is almost more essential in Hospitals than other institutions, as in towns they are generally situated in poor and densely populated quarters, where it is often impossible to procure a supply of fresh air; and if the blood is neither properly renewed by a wholesome food supply, or purified by a sufficient amount of oxygen, the Nurses become anæmic, easily fatigued, and much more prone to infection.

It is generally found satisfactory to give the Nurses a weekly supply of groceries—tea, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb.; sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; and butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., as provisions for breakfast and tea. This each keeps in her own possession, and makes her tea in her own small tea-pot, an arrangement which is more appreciated than having the tea infused in one large urn. The same amount is granted to all, Sisters, Staff Nurses, and Probationers; but an extra supply of other things must be given to Sisters and Staff Nurses, who take supper in their own rooms, or the Ward kitchen, viz., either cheese, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; jam, 1 lb. pot; eggs, seven; or bacon, 1 lb. Dried fish may be substituted occasionally. These, or other variations, may be made, without giving much trouble, by each writing down one week what she wishes for, the following one. The names are given to the Home Sister or Housekeeper, as the case may be, and they receive their chosen eatables, labelled with their own names. So much for the weekly supply, necessary for those who only partake of one meal, namely, dinner, in the Home dining hall.

We shall now consider the meals of the Probationers, who assemble there, usually four or five times a day. Seven o'clock being the hour at which they commence their Ward work, 6.30 is the breakfast hour. The tea and toast (if they like the trouble of making it) must be ready by this time, when the Home Superintendent, or “Home Sister,” as she is called in some Hospitals, appears to read prayers, and preside at the breakfast table. It is sometimes usual to provide eggs, meat, or fish, for breakfast; but, as a rule, Nurses are more hungry for these afterwards, when the hard morning work is over, and they return to the Home between nine and 10.30 a.m. for lunch. Lunch may consist of cold meat, eggs, mince,

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