

taking a share, and many hands making light work. In the women's and children's Wards, this is, of course, a more lengthy matter than in the male Wards, as the long hair takes time, to keep in nice and cleanly order, and should be combed with the *small tooth comb* daily, and from time to time slightly carbolised. All Nurses know the difficulty, and I hope are beginning to realise the necessity, of paying scrupulous attention to the hair of sick children. It is now eight a.m. Prayers will be read by Sister, and the next hour will be devoted to the sweeping, dusting, and cleaning of the Ward.

Division of labour is only just, but all the time and strength of the Staff Nurse, combined with the skill gained by practice in the actual Nursing of the sick, should be as far as possible expended on the patients, and not wasted upon those more laborious duties in connection with the cleaning of the Ward. Such duties which are not included in the work of the Ward-maid (and it is well to bear in mind that this little person has but one pair of hands) must be performed in equal shares by the Probationers. After prayers, the two Senior Probationers will start from one end of the Ward and quietly sweep it from top to bottom, side by side, the Ward-maid meanwhile following in their wake, with the weighted polishing brush and flannel. By this means the floors can be kept in perfect order, only requiring the application of wax and turpentine once a week. A share will now be taken by the Probationers in dusting the Ward, special attention being paid to the *inside* of the lockers; the Ward-maid meanwhile going round with her pail and carefully washing the white tiled tops of lockers and tables; and then into the lavatory, for the whole cleaning of which she will be responsible, with the exception of the Ward utensils and the disinfecting of the closets; these will be left in perfect order by the Night Nurses at eight a.m., and by the Day Nurses at nine p.m.

As soon after prayers as possible, it will be the Staff Nurse's duty to prepare the patients' lunch and direct its distribution by 8.45. It is important, especially in a Medical Ward, that this should be done by an experienced person, so as to prevent all mistakes and dissatisfaction, which are otherwise sure to arise if the food is apportioned by an ignorant Nurse, who may not be sure of the diseases and complications from which each patient may be suffering. No. 1 may be suffering from an attack of diarrhoea; his milk, usually given hot, must therefore be served cold. No. 2 is a case of rheumatism, and is strictly forbidden beef tea. Again, No. 3 may be a convalescent typhoid, but as yet forbidden to swallow solid food; whereas, No. 4 (poor bony man, in spite of his enormous appetite) is a case of diabetes, and will probably be on gluten bread or some other equally un-

palatable food, and strictly forbidden to touch the tempting bread and butter, which he follows round the Ward with such hungry eyes.

Before nine a.m., the Nurses will have partaken of a *slight* lunch, consisting of milk, coffee, or cocoa, bread and butter or jam; this small but necessary meal should not be postponed till later, as it then interferes with important duties, and spoils the appetite for dinner at 12.30. We should hear many less complaints of the food provided in the refectory, if Nurses did not indulge in so many unwholesome snacks between meals.

Each Ward being supplied with five Nurses, or, rather, five pairs of hands, the Staff Nurse and two Probationers will leave the Ward to dress from 9 to 9.30, when the two Probationers left on duty will go round the Ward and put the finishing touches. All patients requiring special attention must now be waited upon before the influx of students at half-past nine. The flowers and plants dusted and watered must be brought in from the bath-room, and put in their places, lunch mugs and plates removed from the Ward, and a share of the dressings prepared.

At 9.30, when the Staff Nurse and Probationers return, they will perform such special duties with regard to the nursing of the sick as have been allotted to their share, until the arrival of the Resident Medical Staff. In the Medical Wards, Sister, Nurse, and Probationer will attend the House Physician from bed to bed. In the Surgical Wards each one will have her special duty, the Sister and Nurse helping to undress the patient and dress the wound, the Probationer following after, carefully redressing the patient, and making his bed tidy, and *at once* removing the soiled dressings from the Ward, into the disinfecting rounder, for which a special zinc-lined perforated cupboard will be found in the lavatory, alongside those provided for soiled linen, and for all excretions which have to be kept for the Doctors' inspection.

At twelve, all the patients having been seen by the Resident Staff and Students, the Ward is quickly tidied—under no circumstances should the remains of dressings, lotions, &c., be permitted to remain in the Ward during meal times—and the patients' dinners are served, the Probationers, who have been off duty since ten, returning for dinner duty. Each patient should have placed before him his wooden table—made to rest safely on the bed, and which can be made to fix on the back of his locker, and thus take very little room—upon which a napkin should be laid; also a *clean* knife, fork, spoon, and a piece of bread. All five Nurses being on duty for the next half hour, they will be able to attend to, and feed each helpless patient whilst his food is hot and palatable. Dinner at an end, all plates, &c., will be removed

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)