

rapidly to swell the ranks of the Association. I am much obliged to all those who have kindly answered my inquiries on the subject, and take this opportunity of thanking them.

* * *

I HEAR that it is becoming more general amongst leading London Surgeons to adopt a plan of Nursing severe operation cases, which has for long found favour with the best-known operators upon abdominal cases, such as ovariectomy for example. It has been the custom of these latter always to have one Special Sister to attend them in such cases. The advantages, of course, are great and obvious. In a very short time the Sister gets to know exactly what instruments her Surgeon requires for each case, and during the operation, if she is moderately intelligent, she soon learns what instrument he will use at each stage of the proceedings. In fact I knew a Nurse once, who, from always working with one Surgeon, so completely understood his methods that, standing behind him, and with students between her and the table, so that she could not possibly know how the operation was going on, she was yet able to hand him every instrument he required without hesitation or mistake. Again and again I have seen this gentleman, during an operation, put his hand out behind his back without a word, and without moving his head, and Nurse place in it the instrument he wanted at that juncture.

* * *

AND without going to this extreme point of ready helpfulness, it is yet quite evident how much more useful a Nurse must be to a Surgeon at an operation if she is thoroughly *au fait* with his methods—knowledge which can only be acquired by constant co-operation. But in the cases to which I am alluding, it has been the custom for the Sister to take charge of the case after the operation for the first 36 or 48 critical hours. After this, it is transferred to a Special Nurse, who then takes charge of it till the end. Once again, of course, the advantages to the patient of this are very obvious. We all realise the importance of experience, and I suppose it is more essential to have a wide experience in the nursing of these cases than in almost any others.

* * *

Of course, it may be said, on behalf of the Nurses, that much of the honour and glory of pulling a bad case through, devolves upon the one who tended it during the first few hours, and that it is not pleasant playing a secondary part, and taking up the case afterwards. Still, no one who is really proud of her profession, argues like this. The good of the patient is the first and chiefest

consideration, and, undoubtedly, the system I have described, and which bids fair to become more generally adopted in serious operation cases than it has hitherto been, offers the greatest advantages and safety to the patient. And so no Nurse, who is worthy of her calling, will do more than hope, and so work, that some day she may be selected for the honourable, though trying, post of taking "first charge" of some of these cases.

* * *

MR. EDITOR asks me to call attention, in these columns, to a fact which is of considerable importance to his own comfort, and for the satisfaction of readers of this journal. Most Nurses, it is quite evident, do not yet understand the position and duties attached to the office of Editor of a newspaper. Of course, this is probably because they are not yet accustomed to the pleasant novelty of having a periodical entirely devoted to their professional interests. There are two or three facts, therefore, which I must explain. The *Editor* has to obtain and receive, in manuscript or otherwise, matter to fill the body of the paper. He sends what he considers suitable amongst these contributions, to the printers, and from them receives the same back in print. He then has to correct all this, word by word, arrange each article in the order usually followed, and by measuring the lengths of each, just fill the space at his disposal each week.

* * *

So it is quite evident that he has a good deal of work to do, and cannot possibly attend to such matters as advertisements, or the sale of copies of the journal.

* * *

ALL letters relating to these matters are always addressed to the *Publisher*, who, in all periodicals, manages the purely business details. "Mr. Editor, therefore, specially asks our readers to write on such subjects direct to the *Publisher*, and not to him. But he also wishes it to be distinctly stated that he is not a lady! A great many letters come to him every week, beginning 'Madam,' and as some of these are inquiries of a personal nature, it can well be imagined that he is sometimes embarrassed how to answer. Finally, though he welcomes the expression of any opinion from any reader, and will always insert such letters as seem suitable, in the correspondence column, he wishes to impress upon his many fair correspondents, who ask 'for an answer at once,' that it is a physical impossibility to do so in every case, and that when a direct reply is requested, the least the writer can do is to enclose a stamped and addressed envelope."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)