

or flannel were always worn, there would be less rheumatism, less catching of colds, and fewer rashes. An old Doctor, who is still living, used to give this quaint advice to almost all his patients, "Fear God, and wear flannel"; and very good advice too, if only we could act up to it—but then the Doctors, and Nurses, would not have much to do!

Something may be said both for, and against, out-of-door uniform. It is less expensive, less troublesome, and less cumbersome than fashionable dress. As Nurses have not large salaries, inexpensive dress is desirable; neither have Nurses much time to spend on dress, nor much room for taking care of it. On the other hand, complete change, both of dress and scene, when Nurses are away from duty may help to refresh mind and body, unless, indeed, the poor body feel the heavier, more cumbersome dress a tiring weight. For my own part, I have often been deterred from taking a walk by the thought that I must put on a heavier dress—a thought which so added to the already weary feeling, that it acted as the last straw, and a rest on the sofa, rather than a walk, was perhaps foolishly indulged in.

The general public do not expect women who have become Nurses to care much about dress. On the whole they seem to expect the opposite: Nurses' minds are supposed to be absorbed in their work; the fact that they have "taken up Nursing," seems to say that they have done with many things that most women care about—that they have become too sober, too deeply in earnest, to care about pretty dress, amusements, friendly recreation, &c. There may be a grain of truth in this supposition, but we know that however much we are in earnest about our work—and, honestly, we think there is no better or more interesting work in the wide world—still most of us have not left hold of the outside world, and we like pretty things about us, in our rooms, in our Wards, and, after all, a pretty dress to wear sometimes; and, over and above all, we like to see green trees, pretty flowers, and the ever-changing sky. Someone—Ruskin, I think—says scarcely anyone notices the sky, or rather, I suppose, the ever-changing clouds and bright heavens. Surely, he is wrong. Why, all this is the most intensely beautiful object in Nature.

This is a digression, but the charm of writing this kind of essay is you may wander sometimes a little way from the main subject; and as I love the varying clouds in all their moods, I would draw the attention of all Nurses to this great pleasure, that they may enjoy at any and at all times, day and night. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork." In all Hospitals where the patients

are so fortunate as to be able to see the sky, Nurses do well if they draw attention to the ever-varying beauty of the moving, changing clouds!

Although the general public expect Nurses are so far different from themselves as to care little or nothing about dress, it is different sometimes with individuals. Friends do not always approve of out-of-door uniform; indeed, sometimes they decidedly dislike it. Now, if Nurses cannot visit their friends dressed in uniform, they must either not visit them—which is not to be thought of—or they must have ordinary dress as well as uniform. This is one of the chief arguments against out-of-door Hospital dress for Hospital Nurses. District Nurses, who are as much "on duty" when working in their districts, as Hospital Nurses are when on duty in Hospital, are not suitably dressed unless they are in uniform. Private Nurses, too, should, I think, wear uniform both in and out of the house when they are at Private Nursing, except at such times as when special leave is granted.

Out-of-door Hospital dress, for Nurses who work in Hospitals, is the exception rather than the rule. This fact perhaps speaks for itself, and says that, on the whole, out-of-door uniform is not desirable. Where such uniform is not provided, there is generally—and there ought to be always—a rule, saying that out-of-door dress must be plain and neat. Sometimes the contrast of a Nurse "got up regardless," and her really charming appearance in her Ward, is a shock; she is not like the same person. Perhaps she is slight and little: in uniform she looks natty and trim; in fashionable dress she is dwarfed, heavily laden, common-place—nay, sometimes ludicrous.

The rule "plain and neat" should be strictly enforced. Whenever I see anyone neatly dressed, I think, "How nice she looks! I am sure she is worth knowing." Do not think I do not like to see people prettily dressed, but I cannot think that fine dress is pretty; even when the materials are good, much trimming spoils the dress. Cheap finery is ugly; women who have a true sense of beauty never buy it. Extravagance in dress is often passed over with, "Oh! it is good for trade." Is it? This is a question for all thoughtful people. What about the other trades, arts, &c., if one trade absorbs more of the current money than its fair share?

Well, then, clothing should be suitable, not only for our station and for our work, but also for the comfort and protection of our bodies; of course clean, not heavy—for we have it all to carry—sufficiently warm to prevent small variations of temperature causing a chill. Clothes do not warm us; we have to warm them; their chief use is to keep natural warmth within us. They should be

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