

is governed by a woman of courageous temperament, with its accompanying calmness and coolness of action! What a rock she is for nurses and patients to lean on! How they trust her, how they themselves gain in confidence and boldness under the influence of her example! How soon a sudden panic in the ward caused by some accident or unexpected emergency disappears when "Sister" comes, rapidly organises some arrangement, gives directions, brings her knowledge to bear on the emergency—and the flurry and fear is over, and proper action takes its place. The presence of one calm and brave person works wonders in a panic. No quality is more communicable than courage, and the sister infuses some of her own courage into her nurses by showing them what to do, and where their fear can be attacked; for every danger and trouble diminishes in importance and size if it is steadily faced, and what seemed an impossible obstacle becomes merely an ordinary piece of work if it is simply attempted.

The nurse should never allow her courage and hope for a patient to fail, but should hope against hope, and strive on through defeat, and she may yet be victorious; for all her skill and care will never have the same *animus* if hope and courage are wanting. Bad cases, that have been given up by medical men as hopeless, have often been pulled through by sheer energy and pluck on the nurse's part.

Yet, for all that, nurses need emphatically to remember and bear in mind the saying, "Be bold, be bold, be bold!—be not *too* bold." For there are two forms or shapes of courage: the courage of ignorance and the courage of knowledge: the one bearing out the proverb, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and the other, "Courage is our equality to deal with the problem before us."

The boldness of ignorance is a spurious courage—is, in fact, no courage at all, but an ignorance of, not a contempt for, danger. It is one thing to face danger and difficulty deliberately and cheerfully, with a full knowledge of its extent, and the greatness of the responsibility of the task undertaken, but with the steady certainty of possessing power and energy equal to the contest; it is quite another to enter ignorantly and rashly, and with no comprehension of its risks, upon some enterprise to which you are unequal and which is not your duty.

Nurses show no true courage when they pass out of their sphere, and boldly seize on responsibility to which they have no right, and which is not theirs—and never can nor should be. A nurse has her own most responsible position, and let her shirk no iota of her responsibility, nor allow others to take it from her—carefully and courageously let her carry through her own work, but let her beware of grasping power that is not hers, of interfering in matters for which she is *not* held responsible, of acting in such a

manner as to expose her ignorance of the risks before her and not her courage.

On the other hand, nothing is more trying than an ignorant, nervous woman in a responsible position, one who dare not carry out the duties of her office, dare not enforce obedience and discipline among her nurses and patients because she is uncertain if they are really doing wrong, who cannot reprove or find fault because she does not herself know what is right, who hardly dares to give an order because she is afraid of making a mistake; miserable are the nurses who have to work under a nervous, anxious sister who does not know her own mind, nor the scope of her own powers, who does not trust others because she cannot trust herself, who is "unequal to the problem before her," and spends her days in fearful irritability under which all around her suffer.

Physical as well as moral courage is necessary to a nurse, but it still more largely depends not so much on constitution, as on habit, custom, familiarity with certain forms of danger—in short, on experience and knowledge. Those, for instance, who are unaccustomed to the management and control of delirious patients are, not unnaturally, frightened and nervous when brought into contact with them. The very amount of force which is used to control these unfortunates by those who are ignorant testifies to their often unreasonable fear, which makes them lose all consideration or feeling for the sufferer; they fling themselves upon him, sit upon him, strike him even, anything to keep him quiet, while they start in terror if he makes the least movement. But, except in extreme cases, a trained nurse can generally manage and restrain a delirious patient by tact, patience, and courage—courage that is due to experience, to the habit of dealing with such cases, and to the knowledge of how very seldom with proper care accidents happen or nurses are hurt. A nurse should be firm with a delirious patient or lunatic, never on any account letting him see that she is afraid of him, never letting him see her shrink in alarm, but endlessly patient and *never irritable*. When anyone shows a brave, steady front to danger, people, sane or insane, generally feel there must be something behind it, and rightly so, for it requires a certain amount of courage even to *show* courage in danger. If the nurse from the first tries to be brave, pretends to be brave, puts her own personal fears on one side with however great an effort, her courage will steadily increase, each effort will be easier than the last, until she will end by laughing at her own old fears, and she will have learnt a greater lesson than the management of a delirious patient.

I class the nurse who is afraid of infection, who shrinks from running any necessary risk in the performance of her work, in the same category with the soldier who would wish to exchange into a garrison

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