

A Matron, who has lately started a small and well-planned library, tells me that the most popular of all the books on the shelves of her Nurses' library has so far been the "Life of Cardinal Newman."

Poetry should be introduced but sparsely, and then only of the best. Interest in our old writers is more fashionable just now than it was some years ago, when fourpenny Chaucers, shilling Spensers, ninepenny Miltons were unknown, and the host of other songsters, whose poems we purchase for pence to-day, were rare and costly. Many of our Nurses of to-day are young ladies of culture, and quite at home with these old favourites. But here again our modern writers ought not to be forgotten. Those among the Nurses who care for poetry at all, will be sure to turn gladly from time to time to Tennyson's "Idylls," Longfellow's songs, Mathew or Edwin Arnold, Browning, and Russell Lowell.

Works on botany, astronomy, zoology, and allied subjects should always be of a popular nature, as not one woman in a hundred among Nurses has sufficient leisure, or a sufficiently mathematical mind to grapple with the subject from its purely scientific point of view. Popular works on light, geology, botany, etc., are sure to find readers, and many of our cleverest scientists feign to give us information in a palatable form. Popularity need by no means be synonymous with frivolity; in fact, so many excellent and pleasingly-written science booklets have appeared that choice is difficult. Experience shows that the general public has instinctively correct judgment in selecting its authorities. "Flowers of the Field," by Johns, F.L.S., has recently published its twenty-fifth edition. Professor Geike's "World's Birthday," and Kingsley's "Madam How and Lady Why," are familiar as household words. There are numbers of similar books that base their teaching on simple love of Nature and faithful study that are interesting and wholesome in tone, and quite free from pomposity or cut-and-dried nomenclature.

With regard to essays, the rule applied to poetry will answer for them: *Quality* rather than *quantity*.

The theological, novel-reading, poetical, scientific, social-economical, and matter-of-fact Nurse are types that exist, and their special tastes should be considered where their recreation is concerned. *Something for everybody*, and that something the best of its kind, is what the organizer should keep in mind. Carlyle is the Mighty, the Thunderer, to those essay-readers who happen to be passing the "Carlyle stage," but he pales in the estimation of others before Arnold, Lowell, Macaulay, Emerson, or Ruskin. Catholic consideration for difference of

opinion should guide the choice of books of this class.

However literary and serious-minded the librarian may be, *she* (I purposely mark the pronoun) must be careful not to starve that large class of readers to whom essays of any kind are an "awful bore."

The arrangement of the Nurses' library will necessarily vary in every class of hospital, and the management will largely depend on its size, importance and the character of those in authority.

We all acknowledge the value of order and regulations, but numerous bye-laws hinder rather than help, and are fatal to the popularity of the object they profess to promote.

1. Books in the Nurses' library are for the Nurses, and should be thus marked.

2. The books are for use off duty.

These two rules, judiciously enforced, will go a long way.

As far as possible, the Nurses should manage their library themselves, viz.: Take regular turns at entering the books given out, with their press mark or number, and co-operate in protecting their common property.

No Nurses' library is complete without a selection of monthly and weekly magazines and daily papers. The more the funds permit, the better.

Speaking of funds, I suppose I need scarcely say that collections for the general expenses of a hospital should have nothing to do with such an undertaking as the one I am speaking of. Contributors must clearly understand what they are asked to support.

Experience has shown that people like to aid in forming a Nurses' library. Nurses are popular to-day, and efforts for their comfort are warmly advocated by the general public.

Careful account should be kept of the investment of contributions.

Tact, foresight, and sympathy with all sorts and conditions of readers must govern the choice of books.

If the Nurses are sufficiently interested themselves to enlist the co-operation of friends, acquaintances, and the outer circle these again are in touch with, so much the better. If they themselves can have a voice and a hand in settling matters to their own taste, their wishes and interests will be likely to be gratified. Where such a system of organization cannot, for some reason or other, be put into practice, the manager must identify herself with those whom she wishes to benefit.

She will not forget the Nurse whose idea of perfect literary delight is to go "shopping" *mentally*, and to whom the endless columns of

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