

observation are absolutely necessary, combined with great accuracy. Without presence of mind in a marked degree, she is apt to fail in inspiring confidence. A wise reticence in speech cannot be too strongly insisted on; unselfish tact, and a quiet gentleness of manner; and not of manner only, but gentleness of heart, for you need something deeper-rooted than a "manner" which may be put on at the sick-room door; we want there a woman of a gentle heart and a quiet soul. She is the truly restful and helpful Nurse. These qualifications must be brought to bear on all the relationships of your work, and will influence the performance of your duty to your patient, your patient's friends, the doctor, yourself, and the Association to which you belong. I am sure you are ready to allow that a Nurse's first duty is to her patient; but there is more in this admission than at first appears. You are there, for the patient's good, under the doctor; his is the chief responsibility; therefore, unswerving obedience to his orders becomes your duty to your patient. Remember you have no right to put your own construction on his orders, but you must bring all your intelligence to bear on them, and try to enter into the spirit as well as the letter of the treatment. To do so may require you to exercise a great deal of firmness towards your patient, but do not worry them about trifles. It is possible for a most devoted Nurse to be very selfish over the details of her work; and when a person is sick, they are, as a rule, very sensitive about details. When you can, do your work in the way your patient likes best; you may think your own way easiest, but the "best" is to save your patient all avoidable little irritations. This is a small point too often neglected, because in Hospital wards, where everything goes by clockwork, it is not always possible to consider the little fancies of each patient, and the methodical Ward-Nurse is apt to ride roughshod over her private patients in a way that is as objectionable as it is unnecessary. Try to grasp what your patient's position is—has been; use your powers of observation to discover what have been their habits and ways of looking at things; try to put yourself in their place, and shape your behaviour accordingly.

The friends of the patient must also have your consideration, and here great tact and gentleness are needed. Do not allow yourself to look on your patient as a mere "case"; to the members of their household they are father, mother, son, daughter or child, as the case may be, dearly loved, and, till you arrived, as tenderly cared for as was possible. Make them feel you are there to help and supplement, not to supersede, their care and effort. Win your way into their confidence gently. For your patient's good be inflexible; but, if without injury to your patient, let the daughter minister, in some way, to her mother, the wife to her husband, or the

mother to her child; never make them feel you have turned them out of the sick-room, though there are, certainly, cases when you will have the doctor's order to keep all friends away; even then, there are two ways of doing it, and I beg you to do your very trying duty in the way you would wish it done to yourself.

The servants in the house are often a source of difficulty to a Nurse. Be very careful from the first to treat them with politeness; feel grateful to them for all they do for you; they will be quick to see it. Be very particular not to make work for them in small things. Leave everything tidy behind you when you have any work to do in kitchen or pantry. They will then soon recognize that "the Nurse" is not an extra person giving them more trouble, but a real help to them, as well as to the sick in the house; and in your dealings with the servants there is great need of the quality of reticence. To every one and at all times be wisely reticent. Do not talk about the patient or yourself, and certainly avoid telling the former of other patients and Hospital life. Much concerning the most private affairs of the family may come to your knowledge, and such must be kept to yourself as a sacred confidence. Remember it is not enough not to speak of the household you are or have been working in; you must also avoid having the air of knowing anything special about them—a much more difficult thing.

Your duty to the doctor is a very serious one, and on your right understanding of the relative positions a great deal depends. Your attitude of mind should be one of absolute and unquestioning obedience. Obedience is a qualification which a Nurse must acquire very early in her professional life, and if you did not learn it when you were a Probationer, I fear the want of it will have proved to you the root of many failures, whether or not you are conscious of them. If you do not understand a doctor's order, never be afraid to ask directions, and never pretend to know, or to have done anything you have not done. In speaking, say what you have to say as clearly and shortly as you can, and then be silent. Never enter into long explanations, or rambling tales. Think clearly and speak shortly.

You have a duty to yourself in which your patient is much concerned. You are bound, for their sake as well as your own, to keep yourself in good health, good spirits, and steady nerves. For all these, I would advise your attention to *diet*, *fresh air*, and *sleep*. Perhaps you think these are the very things most difficult for a Nurse to control in her own interest; but you will find, that with self-denial and common-sense much may be done. Never drink tea that has stood long, and take very little. Do not eat things which you know will disagree with you, however much you may like them.

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