

Instruction in the science of ethics and the rules of etiquette should be commenced with a nurse from the moment she enters a hospital, and from the very beginning of her term of probation. Such instruction should be practical and systematic, beginning with the moral laws and rules she will need first to put in practice and progressively leading up to an appreciation of her greater and higher obligations to herself, her profession, and to humanity. And no rule laid down, or law required or taught, but should bear with it the reason why, set forth simply and clearly. But this systematic instruction should come from the superintendent herself, and should never be relegated to any of the various members of her staff of head-nurses or assistants. Such teaching should have the extra force and purity that it would receive coming from the fountain-head with her broader knowledge and experience. It seems to me we have in days gone by thought too lightly of the importance of this form of instruction in the making of nurses. For women engaged in almost any other class of work this special teaching might not seem so necessary; but to the nurse it is all important, for although she may be most thorough and skilful in all that pertains to the practical part of nursing, let her once go into a family and omit or transgress some tittle of professional or social etiquette, and all her practical knowledge will be of little value to her. But given a nurse equipped with the tactful and common sense knowledge of the ethics and etiquette of her work added to a thorough practical knowledge of nursing, and her future success is assured. The question will never be asked of her, why cannot she get and keep patients? for she will always be in demand. Heretofore, I fear we have done as much harm as good in the little we have tried to teach by the manner of teaching. Relegated to the head-nurse or her successive assistants, the senior or junior nurses, for instruction on these all-important points, the probationer has had rules and forms, sometimes contradictory, thrown at her head, so to speak, at divers times. What wonder then if she comes to regard all as rules to be avoided or broken, to be observed as little as possible, and furthermore, what wonder if our nurses leave us with no higher ideals or standards than those which we too often find among them, to be sure the argument is plausible that we are dealing with grown women, with habits already formed; nevertheless, it would seem that two, or better still, three years of systematic reasoning over and observing, and testing certain forms of conduct must have a stronger influence for good than our hitherto unsystematic methods have given us. With good instruction in this subject, when a nurse leaves her school she will be ready to accept the more definitely formulated code of ethics and etiquette

that are to henceforth govern her, and if she then errs she does it wilfully. To digress for one moment—this point again emphasizes the importance of special instruction and qualifications for those nurses who look forward to becoming teachers and principals in training schools. Without certain definite and uniform requirements for our teachers we can no more hope for uniformity in our ethics and etiquettes than we can hope to attain it in our methods of teaching.

Perhaps at the first glance we might think that after all this subject would require not more than two or three lectures or talks at the most, and then we should have done our full duty. Let us briefly consider what are some of these subjects that come under the heads of ethics and etiquette, and then see what time they should cover. In the first place we have hospital etiquette, with its various subdivisions as to duties, forms to be observed, manners, discipline and kindred subjects; the similarities and distinctions between etiquette as suited to the hospital and to private practice. Then the ethical subjects, as, for example, the importance and duty of systematically acquiring knowledge pertaining to our work and the methods to be employed; the care of the nurse's own health as a factor in doing good work and benefitting her patients, and how this should be done; the scope and limitation of her professional authority; her personality as to cleanliness, manners, politeness; the significance and importance of her uniform, etc.

The consideration of the application of the various selfs—self-reliance, self-restraint, self-possession, and many others—would by themselves occupy one lecture. Then come such kindred topics as tact, the proper manner of employing sympathy, sentiment, conversation, etc., and the cultivation of the character-building virtues—discipline, patience, gentleness, cheerfulness, temper and their effort. Not a few hours might be occupied with the cultivation of habits of exactness, truthfulness, method, and order, vigilance and observation; the questions dealing with remuneration and professional engagements and responsibilities. All such subjects as these should be dealt with by the teacher for the instruction of her pupils and as a help to them in realising the practical application of the ethical principles involved in nursing.

Briefly mentioned, and touched upon only in outline, I trust we may at some future time have an opportunity of considering each in detail, so finally we may evolve such a code of nursing ethics as will be of a very practical nature, one that we may be able to carry into our every-day lives and work, stimulating us to live for what is noble and best in each of us, and developing a strength of character upon which a sick world may lean

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