

had been too sick to have been driven from their beds were carried in their beds, and set down in any space that could be found that was large enough to hold them. The physicians used to declare that they often lost patients suffering with pneumonia and other acute diseases owing to the disturbance occasioned by this monthly cleaning, but for a long time nothing could stop it, as the old-fashioned Philadelphian considered some such process absolutely necessary in order to make any abode of man habitable. The monthly cleaning before Manager's Day only gradually disappeared, owing to the continued protests of the physicians, and with the introduction of modern improvements in nursing. In qualification of what I have told you of the men's medical ward in the old days, and of the small force employed in it, I must add that although there were forty beds, they were seldom all filled, and that at that time we had a much less average proportion of very sick patients, and a larger number of walking cases. The convalescents were obliged to aid the nurses, and a good deal of work was done by them.

As I have now given you some idea of the administration of the men's medical ward in 1872, let me compare it with what is done in that ward to-day. It now contains only 35 beds, as against 40 in the old days. There used to be two men-nurses, a maid and a cook, and half the services of a man night-nurse. Now there are a Head Nurse of the ward, four pupil-nurses, a man-orderly, and a maid during the day; and at night, two pupil-nurses, a man-orderly, and occasional visits from the night-superintendent (a woman). In the old days, there were four and a half people employed to do the work which is now done by ten. Nowadays, as you know, almost everything that you require in the way of supplies is brought to you, instead of your being obliged to go to various parts of the Hospital and carry it to the ward, as done by the old nurses. Is it any wonder that you are able to accomplish things that were impossible under the old system, when the force of nurses was so inadequate!

Having told you something of the work they did, let me now tell you what manner of people the old-time nurses were, of their origin. Twenty-five years ago, there existed in Philadelphia only two training-schools for nurses; the old Lying-in Charity and the School of the Women's Medical College Hospital, and these schools occupied themselves mainly in the work of teaching obstetric nursing. At that time, there existed in the City, so far as I am able to remember, only three general hospitals. The Pennsylvania Hospital, the Episcopal Hospital, and the Phila-

delphia Hospital, which was then, as now, the hospital department of the City Almshouse. As the people have always considered it humiliating to enter as patients into the Almshouse Hospital, it has never come into competition on even terms with the other hospitals, and therefore, there were, for all practical purposes, only two hospitals in the City. There was no general training school for nurses in Philadelphia, and none that I know of in the United States. If there were any such, the output of finished nurses must have been very small, for we never heard of them in this City. Where then did the nurses come from? I have already told you that the convalescent patients were obliged to help the nurses in the care of the patients who were very sick and helpless. From this source was derived the greater number of nurses of the old days, more especially among the men. Patients came to the Hospital sick or injured, and as they regained health, they were forced to help in the nursing. Those who had any natural aptitude for such work soon acquired dexterity, and liking the occupation, and being liked by the nurses and doctors, because they made themselves useful and agreeable, were retained a long time after they had ceased to need the shelter of the Hospital on account of their physical condition. Meanwhile, those convalescent patients who neither liked caring for the sick nor were handy about such work, left the Hospital as soon as they were well enough to get away from it. Natural selection, as described by Darwin, was at work, and the fittest survived. It was astonishing to see what dexterous, willing and kindly people were about the wards among the convalescents. If any of the old nurses for any reason vacated a place, it could be and generally was filled from this class of the convalescent patients, who constituted almost continually a sort of waiting-list. A strange feature of all this, or at least so it always seemed to me, was that there were generally many more men who exhibited this capacity and love for nursing than there were women. It is generally accepted as a fact that women take more naturally to nursing as a vocation than do men, but what I have told you would not seem to bear this out. There were so few of the women who remained about the wards during prolonged convalescence and helped the regular nurses that there was no such supply to draw upon to fill vacant places in the nursing staff as among the men. Consequently, it not unfrequently happened that an ordinary Irish-servant woman was appointed as assistant-nurse, and perhaps, in the course of time, she rose to be head-nurse. For some reason, and I think not improbably owing to the methods of selection that I have described, the men nurses in the old

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