

"When we entered the hospital, some of us had never made a bed; did not know the difference between the coffee-pot and the tea-kettle, and had never in our lives had to 'tidy up' as we went along. Some of us had never borne a serious responsibility, had never been compelled to be on time. What easy-going habits of mind we had! Few had been trained to logical consecutive thinking. Accuracy was a sort of slavery; we resented it and loved to fall back into slipshod ways. We had all kinds of dispositions, too—were not always easily taught. It was easier sometimes to take offence than to accept a new idea.

"When our head nurses, anxious to improve us, criticised our shortcomings, we imagined that they had taken a wierd, fantastic dislike to us. By far the clearest and best thinking some of us did was on the subject of the faults of our superior officers, and there were few occasions when we could not have given our Superintendent valuable points. How much we thought we knew, and how little we actually did know.

"In those two years, beside all our practical work we took courses of hygiene, anatomy, physiology, materia medica and cooking. We tried to absorb something of bacteriology, that vast subject to which men devote whole lives. We had to memorize somehow an entire dictionary of scientific terms in order to understand the speech of our chiefs. We had to learn something of hospital management, of household economy on a large scale.

"Can we really think that we ought also to have been taught scientific ethics. Remember, we had every example of opportunity in the elements of practical ethics. Can we complain that we were not broadened in social science? Compare the actual extent of two years' time and the size of our brains with the full extent of all we had to learn, and no other answer will be needed. But we need not feel discouraged; rather rejoice in the thought that there is more to learn and more time in which to learn it. Because we are graduates, we need not stand still, but rather carry on our post graduate class work in our graduate associations. These are not meant only to be accident insurance companies (I mean no disrespect to sick benefit funds, which are among the first practical duties of our alumnæ), but also schools in which the nurses' education may be continued. Was not this the leading motive of those broad-minded and far-seeing members of our craft who have worked to organize their

school associations, and have not our over-worked Superintendents of training schools, weighted with the burden of all they have to do for their pupils' education, refreshed themselves with the thought that, in encouraging these associations, they were making the best provision for their graduates' future welfare? Heretofore everything has been done for the nurse. Now let her show what she can do for herself. In her training course, instruction was carefully prepared, brought, and offered to her. Perhaps she did not always appreciate it as she might have done.

"It is said that if chickens have all their food given to them without having to scratch for it, they become unhealthy. Maybe we, like chickens, will become sturdier by having to scratch for some of our own mental nourishment. There is no teacher like voluntary association, no means of developing character greater than that offered by associated life. If nurses do not realize this, they should observe the development of the average woman's club. It begins usually with self-culture, is literary, perhaps, rather timorous and quite exclusive. Presently, it gets into the subject of general education, and before it knows where it is, it has become democratic, casts artificial social distinctions aside, and is in the thick of public school work, public amusements, municipal housekeeping, public hygiene, the housing and condition of the poor, and, in short, the whole open world of its obligations and responsibilities to all people. Marvellous practical results, marvellous ethical influences flow from this little group, not the least wonderful of which is, that women who at first asked, "What good will this club be to me? What is there in this to benefit me?" are in a short while saying, "What is there in me for this club? What good can I be to my fellow-members?"

"Of course, I do not mean that nurses can all go into public work. This is simply an illustration of what associated life can do. Have I ever been heard to say, "What good does my association do me? What do I get from it?" If so, set me down as self-convicted of being in the very first stages of ethical development. If I feel that I have nothing to get, it is because I have not tried to give anything. There are about us beautiful examples of people who are constantly giving out to others, and, strange to say, the more they give out the more they seem to possess. This is said to be the real meaning of the old Bible words, "To him that hath shall more be given."

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