

In the pouring out and giving of medicines the nurse must always observe the following rules:—

1. Never omit to read carefully the label showing the name of the patient and the quantity to be given.

2. Be sure that the medicine glass is absolutely clean and dry.

3. When pouring out the medicine hold the label side of the bottle upwards so that the last drops cannot trickle down and deface the instructions on it.

4. Measure the dose accurately and see that the patient swallows the whole.

5. Never keep medicines and poisons side by side.

The simplicity and minuteness of these rules may seem absurd but the strict observance of them would have prevented many a sad catastrophe and nurses cannot realize too deeply their responsibility in dealing with the administration of drugs.

The times at which medicines are ordered to be given must be strictly observed by the nurse who must always bear in mind that the doctor had some definite end in view when he wrote his directions and that in her loyal observance of these details he must to a very great extent depend for the success of his treatment.

For instance, in ordering *filix mas* for the treatment of tapeworm he will as a rule give the most minute instructions concerning the previous purging and feeding of the patient, his lying down in bed directly after swallowing the dose, and the subsequent purging. Inattention to the first or second of these points may make the after treatment of none effect, carelessness regarding the third will in all probability make the drug act as an emetic, and if the final directions be not carried out the head of the tapeworm will very likely be left behind to commence again the old trouble.

Again, many drugs have quite a different action if given on an empty or full stomach, and the careless nurse who remembers and administers the "before food" medicine just when her patient is finishing dinner will perhaps only aggravate the symptoms which the medicine was prescribed to alleviate.

4-hr. medicines must be given every four hours and 6-hr. medicines every six hours; under no circumstances must another period be substituted (no matter how small the variation) to suit the nurse's convenience.

In the event of medicines to be taken every so many hours, it is well to enquire of the medical attendant if he wishes the patient to be roused in the night when the dose falls due.

Nowadays, medicines are rarely very unpalatable, the drugs that were formerly the worst offenders in this respect being given in tabloids,

palatinoids, capsules, pills, or cachets, all of which are easily swallowed by the great majority of people if placed far back upon the tongue and some water drunk immediately afterwards. Cachets should be moistened in water before being administered.

If pills cannot be swallowed, they should be cut into small pieces and given in rather thick oatmeal porridge.

Castor oil is frequently a difficulty, and this is to a great extent because many people having an idea that it can be swallowed without any unpleasantness "between" two layers of liquid, forget that the two layers must have different specific gravity to the oil and each other for the plan to be successful. The best liquids for the purpose are water and brandy, the former is heavier and the latter lighter than the oil in question.

To give $\mathfrak{z}iv$. castor oil measure $\mathfrak{z}iv$ water, run it round the glass and edges, pour in the oil, being careful to keep it in one mass on the surface of the water, and finally add $\mathfrak{z}iij$ brandy, which being lighter still will cover the oil. The patient should swallow the whole quickly, and he will be surprised to find with what ease the oil has vanished.

The washing of glasses in which there has been oil of any kind is a point upon which most probationers need instruction. Hot water should not be used, it leaves behind the unpleasant taste and smell of the oil, even if the glass appears clean. Cold water and a soapy piece of tow will act like magic. Soft soap especially will remove all traces of the oil in a moment and leave the glass beautifully bright.

(To be continued.)

Calm after Storm.

WE give herewith a charming picture of Tea in the Verandah at the Kimberley Hospital, and what could look more peaceful than the group of Matron, Sisters, and maid at this impromptu meal—and to look at them now, it is hardly possible to realise that it is only a few months ago since they were all suffering the horrors of siege, when afternoon teas were a delight unknown. It is very pleasant to know that all these old friends have come safely through the war, and, with the exception of Miss Lawrence, don't look a bit the worse for it. We should opine that Miss Lawrence has had a "touch" of something, to judge from the way she is reclining on that comfortable-looking pillow; but it is good to know that these old friends are all alive—there are too many gaps in the Roll of devoted nurses in South Africa since this time last year.

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