

I have been trying to point out that it is not the amount of work done, but the spirit in which the work is done, that is the real test.

Let us for a moment step outside our own profession for an example of this. Presume for a moment we are shopping, we need something for a present, maybe, we are not quite sure of the exact thing needed, we enter a shop, the young lady behind the counter asks the usual stereotyped question, "What can I do for you, Madam?" you say, "I need something for a present, I think a necktie." She will bring you ties and will try to sell you one, because you asked for ties, and they are there before you. Probably you cannot find quite what you want, but you get no assistance from the server, you asked for ties, there they are, and if they don't suit, she can't help it. You leave the counter or shop, and try another. You try again, asking the same question of another young lady; she, seeing the indecision, helps by suggesting this or that, often not only suggesting but showing one thing after another, until the choice is satisfactorily made; you leave her, feeling pleased with her and yourself, as well as your purchase.

She is not paid to take an *interest* in or to help her customers, but she puts her heart and mind into the work she has to do, whilst the other does only that which she is paid to do, to serve only; if her customers don't know what they want, she will not trouble to help them.

Now we will take the ideal nurse and compare her with the actual types I have given. I do not for a moment suggest that all nurses are of these types, but I'm much afraid they are in the majority.

A nurse, on going to a fresh case, has a particularly hard task, because, as a rule, the family relinquish the patient to her reluctantly, and view her and her methods often with suspicion. For it must be very bitter to have to allow a stranger to do for a dearly loved one, all that one would only too willingly do oneself, if one only knew just exactly how.

Therefore, all the tact, kindness, and sympathy the nurse possesses must be exercised to prevent or allay this suspicion, and by doing so supply the oil which shall make the new element (herself) fit in and work smoothly with the rest of the household.

Her first care and thought should, of course, always be her patient, then any little peculiarities of the family should be considered and humoured, if possible, and the servants should be always treated as human beings and not as some treat them as though they were beasts of burden, and existed only to run up and down stairs to wait on the nurse. Every effort should be made to lighten, as much as possible, the

necessarily increased work, which sickness, as well as an extra person in the house, entails. And lastly, all things such as dressings, towels, bed and body linen, should be used with care and economy, as though the cost fell upon the nurse instead of upon the family; this also applies to the nurse's personal washing.

This should be a nurse's view of her part of the contract. Now for her view of the work itself.

Being an ideal nurse, her standard of work will also be of the highest, and it can be summed up in two words, *self-sacrifice*.

Our profession, above all professions, is *the* one where the self-giving is so needed, because we deal with people during their weakest hours, the hours of sickness; therefore, the nurse must be willing to give of her best self, not only physically, but mentally.

This self-giving means, to mentally put oneself always in the patient's place, to adopt the person for the time being and to treat him or her as you would like your mother or father to be treated, or yourself, if you were in his place. This attitude of mind, with the technical skill which proper hospital training affords, goes to make the ideal nurse, and it is this tact, sympathy, love of humanity—call it what you will—which is not, as a rule, taught within the walls of the hospital.

It is generated in one's inner consciousness, in some it is wholly or partly natural, it *can be* acquired, cultivated and perfected by all. But it should be commenced from a nurse's earliest days, it is useless to think "things will be so different when I have but one patient." It is true things are different, but one patient is often far more trying and exacting than a ward full, and one has no rules or authorities at one's back to keep the patient in order, and what one does not cultivate or try to acquire in hospital, is not forthcoming just so soon as one has "but one person to look after."

One should strive to keep this attitude of mind, not only in regard to patients, but to all and sundry.

This giving of oneself and putting oneself in the others' place, makes all the difference to everything.

I think I hear many a one say, "Ah! that is all very idealistic, but it is too much to expect of a poor woman in this hard work-a-day world, just look at Sister so-and-so, see how Mrs. A. treated me, and Mrs. B., and as for Mrs. C. she was a perfect wretch."

True, but did nurse consider the condition or circumstance of Sister, or Mrs. A. B. or C., and was she herself *quite* angelic, did she never give offence? Were all the opportunities accepted to

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