

and discomfort on both sides. And in all probability the result would be that the greater skill of the new comer would be entirely neutralised by the mental uneasiness of the patient, conscious of the fact that her attendant would not, for example, understand what her husband wanted for his dinner, nor what the pigs and the poultry needed for their daily sustenance.

Everyone admits in a general way that "circumstances alter cases"; all professional people are aware that in a Nurse adaptability to her surroundings is a potent factor in her success. But to settle an educated gentlewoman suddenly down in a country village, and expect her to learn in a week, or a month, or even a year, the habits and customs of each family in the hamlet, or expect her without that knowledge—however skilful she may be in the technicality of her calling—to win the confidence of her patients, and therefore really assist them in their hour of need, is simply absurd, because it is impossible of fulfilment. We consider that the lately-proposed scheme cannot be successful because it cannot be satisfactory either to Nurse or to patient, for the reasons we have stated.

On the other hand, it is probable that the system of village Nursing initiated, we believe, by Miss Broadwood will succeed, and will in time be the means of doing immense good as it becomes more generally adopted. In brief this scheme consists in taking village girls, and giving them a short period of training in the essentials of Nursing work, then sending them back to help their own kith and kin. In the consideration which we devoted to the matter, we made divers suggestions as to the methods in which this principle could be more widely and efficiently carried into practical effect.

So much, then, is all we need say at present as to District Nursing so far as country villages are concerned. In every respect it is as dissimilar as the poles, from the same work in large towns. In the latter, therefore, the character and position of the worker, and the training which she should have received, are, and should be, entirely different from those upon which we have just laid so much stress. In the first place, it may be said without hesitation that the better educated and more refined the Nurse, the more successful will she be amongst our town poor; the more her personality as a "lady" is felt by her patients, the more willing will they be to admit that her views as to cleanliness and fresh air, for instance, are probably correct, and the more ready will they be to adopt them, and carry them out in future for themselves.

We remember well that many years ago two things were prophesied. Firstly, that very few

ladies would ever undertake District Nursing in towns, whatever they might do in an amateurish kind of way in the country villages; and secondly, that the poor were so proud that they would resent gentlewomen attempting to dictate to them in sanitary matters. Both these predictions have already been signally falsified. Again and again gentlewomen, who to their chagrin found that their excellent nursing was not appreciated in the cottage, discovered that it was welcomed, and was most gratefully received, and bore lasting fruit in hygienic improvements, in the cellars and garrets of a London slum.

The Metropolitan and National Nursing Association has conclusively proved that ladies not only will take up District work, but will be most successful in its performance. It is within our own knowledge that many Hospital Physicians and Surgeons, and gentlemen in general medical practice, constantly advise their poorer patients to seek assistance from this Association, as its workers are recognised to be so markedly popular and powerful for good with those upon whom they attend. And the example of the Association is constantly bringing new recruits of the same calibre into the field. Quite recently we were able in these columns to congratulate the East London Nursing Society upon its good fortune in securing the services of a gentlewoman who has already gained distinction in the profession, and who is reported to have given up the position which she had won for herself as the Matron of a County Hospital, in order to devote her strength and talents to the more congenial work of tending the poor in their own homes.

In general terms, then, two propositions may be distinctly stated. That gentlewomen make by far the best District Nurses, and that the work demands for its efficient fulfilment the most thorough preliminary training. The moral influence which an educated and refined woman easily gains over patients of the class with which the District Nurse comes in contact, is not only vastly important for the observance of sanitary rules and Medical directions, but bears fruit oftentimes in the patient's increased self-respect in the future, as well as her more rapid return to health in the present. It is a matter of common observation that the poor will willingly accept advice in matters which they do not understand from those whose social standing and mental education they tacitly admit to be greater than their own, while they would doubt or dispute, and probably in any case decline, the same advice from another person of the same rank of life as themselves, and whose greater knowledge they are, therefore, loth to allow. And as with advice and influence, so is it naturally with obedience in

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