

rule quite satisfied to be arranged and "done for" by the Committees or Matrons, as the case may be, of the institutions to which they belong, but, to my thinking, there is no other class of working women that require more to possess practical common sense and a capacity for business than private nurses. Their work does not consist only, as many think, in simply carrying out the doctor's instructions—that a trained nurse would always do—but emergencies do arise frequently when great responsibilities are thrust upon them; then, if they happen to be capable and thoughtful women, they are able to decide what is the right thing to do and to act quickly for the welfare of the patient and to the relief of the anxious friends. It is fatal at those times for a nurse to show she has no confidence in herself—she must keep calm if no one else does.

A great deal has been said and written lately on "Nurses' Manners." "Be courteous" ought to be the motto of every woman, not only of nurses, and if, on entering a hospital, a woman fails in that, she is not fit to be a nurse, and the Matron would do well to advise her to try some other occupation where the lack of it would be less noticeable. It is enough to expect of the Matrons of training-schools to teach their probationers discipline thoroughly, and to think for themselves; not to be simply machines in the hands of whoever may be in authority, but to be able to judge for themselves the reasons of the instructions given, and so add to their store of educational experience. If a nurse at the end of her training has not sufficient confidence in herself to manage her own affairs, how can she be of use to her patients in times of illness and trouble? It so often happens in private nursing that the nurse who is a practical woman, and when required to do so can manage the household, and give help all round in an unobtrusive way, is found to be a valued friend, for it relieves the patient from mental worry, and is a great help to recovery; for if the mind is not at rest he or she, as the case may be, will not make satisfactory progress.

Many nurses think that when they have gained their certificate there is nothing more to learn, that private nursing is easy compared with the work in the wards of a hospital, and, being "up-to-date" in the latest nursing of operations, &c., they are sure of success. But, alas! they have still to learn their own ignorance. The majority of them find their first experiences as trying as their first few months in hospital. For instance, there is nothing a private patient dislikes more than to think he is considered helpless and is being managed in any way. If a nurse begins by altering all his little "fads" she is almost sure to be disliked. A nurse's first thought should always be the welfare of her patient, and to see how she can best "fit in" to do what she knows to be right and necessary without the patient realising that any changes that may be made are not his own ideas. This often takes some time to accomplish, but a nurse who possesses tact generally succeeds.

There are many suggestions a Matron could give, in a lecture to her nurses before they leave her for fresh work that would be invaluable to them, and for which they would feel grateful in after-life. This might be included in the duties of the Matron. But a woman should cultivate agreeable, courteous manners before she is twenty-three years of age, or she never will.

Yours faithfully,
JULIA HURLSTON.

Comments and Replies.

Miss Edmonds.—There is no definite standard of preliminary knowledge for probationers at present laid down. The requirements vary in each training-school. You would, however, do well to study elementary anatomy and physiology, and hygiene; also to take a course of lessons in practical cookery, and, if possible, obtain a certificate for proficiency in sick-room cookery. You should also practically acquaint yourself with the details of domestic management, and with the best methods of performing domestic duties.

Traveller.—Night-dresses of light nun's veiling are very useful for tropical wear. Some authorities recommend flannel, but all skins will not tolerate the constant use of flannel. Viyella is also a material which should be included in a tropical outfit. It is charming for blouses, and also for night-dresses and pyjamas. It must always be remembered that, whatever the nightwear is under ordinary conditions, during an attack of malaria it is essential that some absorbent material should be worn. In some stages of malaria profuse perspiration takes place, so that even flannel garments are soaked through, and have to be constantly changed.

Maternity Nurse.—It is most important that an infant's eyes should be carefully cleansed immediately after birth. Sterilised water may be used for the purpose. If any sign of discharge from the eyes subsequently occurs the child should at once be shown to a medical practitioner. Permanent blindness may result from any lack of carefulness in this particular. Purulent ophthalmia is a disease which develops with alarming rapidity, and quickly destroys the sight.

Country Matron.—The charts supplied by Messrs. Widderspoon and Co., Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C., are excellently designed, and we feel sure you would find them satisfactory in use.

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