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**Editorial.**

**THOROUGHNESS.**

Anyone who has observed the average girl of the present day will admit that thoroughness is not one of her prominent characteristics. She likes "good value for her money," and good value is frequently held to imply superficial showiness rather than more sterling qualities. The point is of some importance, because it is the average girl who fills the majority of the vacancies for probationers in our hospitals, and who, consequently, becomes, in due course, a fully-trained nurse. If either before or during her training she has not learnt to appreciate the value of thoroughness, the quality of her work will suffer, and the comfort and good nursing of the patients entrusted to her care will certainly never attain the highest level. What is at the root of a lack of thoroughness? In the first place, want of conscientiousness. If a thing will pass muster, why take unnecessary trouble, argues a nurse? So, when the evening comes for polishing the window-ledges, she applies fresh polish without first washing off that put on a week before, and with a small expenditure of time and labour produces a high polish on the top of a soiled surface. It remains for the nurse on opposite duty—for we will assume that the nurse concerned does alternate day and night duty—to wash the ledges which, after a two or three months' spell, require considerable attention in this respect.

But, after all, the window-ledges are a small consideration when compared with the patients, and the nurse who is unconscientious in one respect will be so in the other. Thoroughness in the care bestowed on patients makes just the difference between good and indifferent nursing, for it implies attention to detail, and good nursing is made up of attention to small details—details which for the most part, perhaps, are unseen and unnoticed, and yet are essential to the comfort, and consequently to the well-being, of the patient.

Another factor which militates against

thoroughness is laziness. Laziness is probably one of the commonest complaints in the world. Certain it is that the most conscientious and diligent of people will aver that they are "naturally lazy," and it may be assumed with confidence that this vice is at the root of a large proportion of the indifferent and poor work in the world—a truth which is accountable for the opposite proposition that "genius is but an infinite capacity for taking pains."

Lack of concentration is also antagonistic to thoroughness. How many people concentrate their minds upon the subject in hand, to the exclusion of other interests? Yet it is the purposeful, concentrated person who performs good work. Watch her (or him) and you will see in a few exceptional cases that she is so engaged in the matter before her that distractions do not affect her; she is so absorbed in the subject in hand that she really is not conscious of them. The average worker, on the other hand, will be affected by every small distraction, simply because her mind is not really concentrated on her work. We commend to all those who wish to attain a high level of professional proficiency the cultivation of the habit of thoroughness in all they do and say. To illustrate our meaning. The question may be put to a nurse: "Can you tell me where to obtain information about nursing in Java?" "Certainly," says the off-hand person with that little knowledge which is a dangerous thing, "apply to the Colonial Nursing Association." Reflection would prove, however, that Java is not a British but a Dutch possession, and that being so, there is no reason to refer the inquirer to an Association concerned only in supplying nurses to our own colonies. To ascertain the right authority to whom to apply may possibly give a little trouble, but the advice when given will be worth having.

Instances of the necessity for thoroughness might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but we hope enough has been said to convince earnest workers of its importance.

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