

THE
BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 928.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1906.

Vol. XXXVI.

Editorial.

JOIE DE VIVRE.

"The world is so full of beautiful things
I think we should all be as happy as kings."

So wrote Robert Louis Stevenson, and if we consider the matter we shall find that our happiness or unhappiness depends not so much upon our surroundings as upon our outlook.

For instance, a nurse's lot is laid in the midst of suffering, disease, and death, surroundings which to the outsider appear depressing and dreary. Yet nurses are notoriously happy people, and why? Because they have seized upon the dreariness and so transformed it by the magic touch of their personal outlook that there is no one more sincerely to be envied than the hospital nurse or Sister.

The ward of a hospital is a pleasant place, and in it the highest type of woman may find scope for all her attributes. Only to the one without a nursing vocation is it dreary and terrible.

To others it affords a most satisfying and absorbing life. So absorbing, indeed, that in her deep interest in it the average nurse is in danger of becoming narrow, inasmuch as her interests tend to be bounded by its four walls, and she loses touch with the outer world and its many wonders and beauties, to the loss not only of herself, but her patients. Such a nurse needs to maintain her balance, for to develop one side of one's nature and to starve all the others is not good.

In the ward, therefore, let the enthusiast give her whole attention to its welfare. As its Sister she will find ample scope for her powers of organisation in its domestic management, of teaching in the education of its probationers, of human sympathy and

technical skill in the care of the patients, of any scientific taste she may possess in the study of their diseases, of tact in her intercourse with the many varieties of people with whom she comes in contact.

She will find satisfaction and happiness in its varied and human interests, in the honourable and responsible position she holds; she will appreciate, as every woman must, the courtesy and deference with which she is treated. But let her not think she has done her duty until she has gone outside her ward to refresh her mind by contact with the beauties of the outer world. Nature, art, music, whatever appeals most to her, let her seek them out, and if she but possesses those most precious gifts, elasticity of mind and *joie de vivre*, she will return to her patients, ready to share her joys with them, and to contribute to their cheerfulness and happiness, thus making a very solid contribution to their progress towards health, for the influence of the mind upon the physical condition is becoming increasingly recognised. A nurse as a part of her professional duty owes it to her patients to be bright and happy.

The truth that happiness depends largely on the personal outlook is one capable of indefinite proof. Take a nurse recently appointed to a position in the country. If her mind is of a cramped type she will say "how dull" and measure everything by the standard of the large hospital she has left. If she is of a nature to find pleasure in everything she will appreciate the homeliness of the smaller place, while the country surroundings will be a constant delight for leisure hours. Happy she who can extract the honey, while rejecting what is worthless, from every flower. "Si on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a."

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