

## Notes on the Methods of Lifting and Moving Helpless Patients.

By Mrs. E. E. WEST.

"Must be a good lifter." How often this qualification is made a *sine qua non* when a nurse is chosen, and how often, again, the fact of a nurse being able to easily and quickly raise a patient or change his position strikes those around as a sure proof that she is thoroughly

He can, when being lifted, perhaps, draw up the knees, pressing the heels on the bed, or he can raise his head slightly off the pillow, and throw one arm round the nurse's shoulder.

A very important point with a helpless patient is to impress upon him not to stiffen himself. Tell him, above all, to "let himself go" at the moment of lifting; if he will do this it is a great help to his nurse. A nervous patient, with every muscle set like steel, clutching at the clothes, or clinging to the bed, is



NURSE CHANGING THE DRAW SHEET ALONE.

capable in every respect, and at once raises her in their opinion. Yet we hear of many nurses who say they "cannot lift," and many, too, who have overstrained themselves in performing this important part of their work.

An average amount of strength is of course needed, but this can do a great deal if guided by a skilful will-power. Suppose we have a patient who can help himself just a very little, even that feeble effort can, by being guided in the right direction, do much to effect his own comfort, and to help his nurse's movements.

almost double the weight to move or lift as one whose muscles are relaxed and pliable. In the latter case he goes with the lifter, and can be raised with comparative ease, even by one of only moderate strength if possessed of skill.

It is this skill which is so invaluable, adding immensely to the comfort and welfare of the sick person. If we have a long heavy case, if the patient can still use the arms and hands, a pulley from the ceiling should be arranged. It should hang conveniently from a screw-ring fastened firmly in a joist. A firm hassock at

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)