

The Nurse in Private Practice.*

By D'ARCY POWER, M.A., M.B., Oxon,
F.R.C.S., Eng.

Surgical Instructor Probationary Nurses, Surgeon to and Lecturer on Surgery at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London.

(Concluded from page 498.)

3.—THE PRIVATE NURSE IN RELATION TO THE MEDICAL MAN IN ATTENDANCE.

The third point to which I wish to draw your attention is the relationship of the nurse to the medical practitioner.

Years ago, that is to say, in 1579, when Elizabeth was Queen of England, Dr. Bullein laid down rules for the relationship which ought to exist between the apothecaries and the physicians. These rules are as excellent now as when they were written, and if for apothecary we read *nurse* and for physician *medical practitioner*, many of them are still applicable.

I will not trouble you with all of them, for there are twenty-one, but listen:—

Rule 1.—Must first serve God, foresee the end, be cleanly, pity the poor.

Rule 2.—Must not be suborned for money to hurt mankind.

Rule 3.—The place of dwelling to be cleanly and please the senses withal.

Rule 4.—To have the mortars, stills, pots, filters, glasses, boxes, etc., clean and sweet.

Rule 5.—To keep the clean wares close and cast away the refuse.

Rule 17.—To meddle only in his own vocation.

Rule 18.—To remember his office is only to be the physician's cook.

Rule 20.—To use true weight and measure.

Rule 21.—To remember his end and the judgment of God, and thus I do commend him to God if he be not covetous nor crafty, seeking his own lucre before other men's health, succour, and comfort.

To these rules I may add one more in the oldest form in which it has reached us. I mean silence. Homer tells us that when Ulysses returned home after his twenty years' wanderings, Eurycleia, his old nurse, alone recognised him, and she did so by the scars on his foot and knee.

Ulysses, fearing discovery, enjoined silence upon her. But she, like the ideal nurse who has laid to heart the great maxims of the mysteries, "Audi, vide, tace"—"Hear, see, hold your tongue"—replied, "My child, what word hath escaped the door of my lips? Thou knowest how firm is my spirit and unyielding,

and I will keep me close as hard stone or iron." Homer was a consummate artist. He knew that silence was one of the most highly prized traits in a good nurse. But he knew also how difficult it is to secure it, and so it is only fair to say that when the nurse promised inviolable secrecy Ulysses had her by the throat and had sworn to strangle her if she spoke.

The first point to be brought into prominence in any discussion which deals with the nurse and the doctor is the intimate relationship which exists between the two. Both belong to the same profession, for both are associated in the attempt to relieve the sufferings of the sick, and both are working to this common end. Doctor and nurse, therefore, should understand clearly that they are practising a profession, not doing a trade or following a business. The making of money is necessary, indeed, and desirable in both occupations as the natural reward of labour, but the thought of gain and the haste to be rich by ungenerous means should never be foremost in the minds of doctors or nurses. The temptation comes to each in different ways—to the surgeon by charging outrageous fees for operations which require neither very great skill nor unusually prolonged attendance afterwards; to the proprietor of a nursing home by extravagant charges, coupled with understaffing or the provision of second-rate and insufficiently trained nurses.

It is still hard for those who have not thought much about the subject to understand how inseparable are the interests of a well-educated doctor and a first-rate nurse, and how they are really members of one undivided profession. It vexes me beyond measure to hear a doctor speak disparagingly of a nurse when I know what her training has been and how much he might learn from her if he would take the trouble. I confess, without the least shame, that I never attend a case where there is a good nurse without learning a great deal, and we ought all to understand that medical men and nurses cannot act independently of each other, and that each ought to know enough of the other's work to estimate its value. But, except people like myself, who are concerned with the teaching of nurses, there are few who realise how much goes to the making of a modern nurse, and how much she has to learn before she receives her certificate after four years' training at one of the large metropolitan or provincial hospitals.

A nurse's certificate means far more than a doctor's diploma. A medical diploma is granted after an examination which deals only with acquired knowledge; a nurse's certificate

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