

How to Succeed as a Private Nurse.

(Continued from page 49.)

We agree with Miss A. Rose, who says:—
Embrace the golden rule. Kindness, warm and hearty, surely carries a private nurse along the road to success. Be a comfort.

Miss L. M. Griffin writes:—

What a theme when one considers all that private nursing involves. A nurse in a private house will find she needs to be a good deal more than a trained nurse, so much is required beyond the actual nursing—a knowledge of books, music, games, fancy work, and with children what a blessing to be able to tell a few fairy tales! To be successful in this branch of her profession a woman must needs be well educated, highly trained, sympathetic, and conscientious, and if she possesses a sense of humour so much the better for the people she comes in contact with.

Miss Mabel Foster says:—

To be successful as a private nurse let a woman realise "all the reciprocity must be on one side." She must give all and expect nothing. She makes great gains, however. She gains control of herself and the rest comes easy.

Miss Mary Harvey advises:—

1. Put yourself in your patient's place, think how you would feel if you were afflicted as he or she is, or even as afflicted as they think they are, and never make light of their afflictions, real or imaginary.

2. Do not have any rules or regulations; for example, to tell some people that they must be washed by a certain time is quite enough to put them in a bad temper for the rest of the day. Ask if they would like to be washed, but let them understand that it really does not matter, you don't mind if they wash at 2 a.m. or 4 p.m. There are some things such as the giving of medicines, taking temperatures, etc., that should approximate to regularity. Get all important things done to time if you can, and other things when you can. I remember being the third night nurse in one week to a dear old man, whose relations were in despair about the constant change of nurses; they hoped he would let me stay a week. I stayed three months, all because I washed him and made his bed just when he felt inclined, some nights both would be done at 10 p.m., but just as often it was 4 a.m., and sometimes he would not be washed at all, but, as he said, "My

body is my own, and if I don't want it washed it shall not be washed."

3. Be careful to learn your patient's views on politics before you air your own. I had a patient once who told me if he had his way he would have all Socialists boiled in oil, but I found before I left that he was practically a Socialist in everything but the name without knowing it, and a violent anti-Suffragist I nursed last year was as keen over most of the reforms for which the Suffragists are working as any militant could wish, so it is just as well to go slowly where politics are concerned.

Never, if you can help it, give a servant an order; say rather "Mrs. Blank would like this, that, or the other done," or words to that effect, and if you must ask for something for yourself, ask as nicely as you can, and go out of your way to thank them for anything they have done for you, save them as much as you can, and 90 per cent. will be only too willing to serve you to the utmost.

5. Relations. "As far as lieth in you live peaceably with all men."

6. I take it for granted that every trained nurse will do her utmost to carry out the doctor's orders and be loyal to him.

7. In conclusion, remember that there are pigmies in character as well as in stature. It is not given to everyone to bear pain nobly. The pigmies may try very hard, but succeed very badly, and we must be as patient with them and as sympathetic as with those brave and noble ones it is sometimes our privilege to meet. Knowing that "they all are being tried and refined even as gold is tried," let us see to it that we do not hinder the Master's work.

Miss M. Ethel Ragg says a word in season in reference to relations:—

Don't find fault with the efforts made by relatives before your arrival; remember they have had no training; you have. Never exclude them from the sick room. Get directions from the medical officer on this point, and by all means leave the room while relatives are there, saying where you are to be at once found if needed. This allows privacy and freedom of speech. The patient may also like to see the doctor alone sometimes if well enough. Be very quiet, especially on night duty, and do not give people needless expense by requiring a number of articles which can be done without. Never discuss your own affairs, especially your ailments, in a patient's house. Try to make the patient's interest extend beyond the sick room. Prepare all trays and food as daintily and appetisingly as possible.

(To be continued.)

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)