

## Nurses and Home Nursing Lectures.

Many and varied are the posts which offer careers for trained nurses during the past few years—*i.e.*, School Nurses, Health Visitors, Factory Nurses, etc., and now another has opened out this year, 1911.

The "British Red Cross Society" has formed, and is still forming, "voluntary aid detachments" for men and women in all parts of England.

Each member of the "Women's Detachment" must have satisfactorily passed an examination in "first aid" and "home nursing," and be in possession of the certificates. The training or coaching for the latter certificate consists of a series of six or more lectures, and until this year these had to be delivered by a qualified medical person. This season, however, the Society are allowing fully-trained hospital nurses to deliver the lectures instead of the medical man or woman.

The lectures embrace many subjects bearing on the care and attention necessary to the invalid.

In Lecture I. the students should be given a brief outline of the functions of the living body—*i.e.*, circulation, respiration, digestion, absorption, oxidation, regulation of temperature, and how the vital processes are controlled.

Lecture II.—Selection of the sick room, furnishing, decoration, warming, ventilating, and cleaning of the same; the bed and bedding most suitable for each case.

Lecture III.—Infection and disinfection, contagion and infection, division of fevers, stages of fevers, what happens to the tissues during fever, and the course each specific fever runs. How to disinfect, and the strength required, and method of using the different disinfectants. The particular points to be noticed in infectious cases should be emphasised, *viz.*, whether the patient has been exposed to infection, the length of incubation, the nature of the invasion, symptoms and when they begin, whether there is a rash, and, if so, where, and of what nature; also temperature, pulse, and respiration.

Lecture IV. — Washing and dressing patients, bed-making, changing sheets and draw-sheets, bed rests, bed cradles, moving helpless patients, food, sick-room dietary, and cookery; stimulants, administration of medicines, regulation of visitors, management of the nurses' health, her dress, etc.

Lecture V.—Observation of the sick, rigors,

sleep, pain, posture, the condition of the skin, tongue, appetite, thirst, and the nature of the vomit; expectoration, cough, the effects of remedies, the rate of the pulse, and respirations; the condition of temperature, bed sores, hot, tepid, and cold baths; the different forms of delirium, and how to prepare for the medical man's visit.

Lecture VI.—Application of local remedies. The making and application of poultices and fomentations; dry heat, blisters, ointment, leeches, etc. The proper way to inhale, the padding of splints, management of convalescents, and a few remarks on personal and family hygiene.

Lecture VII.—General rules for roller bandaging, the method of applying the roller bandage to the forefinger, thumb, hand, forearm, the elbow, breast, foot, ankle, leg, and a spica for the groin, shoulder, and thumb; also the capeline bandage.

Each lecture should last about an hour and a half, and each student must attend four of the lectures before she is eligible for the examination. The fees paid to the lecturer vary very much, the maximum being £5. Much depends on the position and locality of the candidates, but it is another opening for nurses, and who is more competent to teach the people how to wash a patient and make her bed than a nurse who has been trained in the art for at least three years?

The district in which I delivered my lectures was not a particularly poor one, so I charged three guineas and travelling expenses for a course of six lectures. I also found it was quite an advertisement for myself, for as soon as the lectures were over I received various invitations to deliver the separate lectures to different societies—*i.e.*, girls' friendly societies, girls' clubs, and mothers' meetings.

Wherever I went I found that the audience were really most attentive and interested, and very glad of the opportunity to learn how to make a bed with the patient in it, and how to put clean sheets in a bed when nursing a helpless patient.

I found that hardly any of them knew how to make a poultice or to put on a fomentation, and their only method of giving something to stimulate a collapsed or fainting patient was to rush off for spirits, in the form of brandy or whiskey.

When they learned that hot bottles, hot blankets, hot milk, strong coffee, and fresh-made tea were all useful, they were most surprised.

Some of them said: "If only I'd known these things before So-and-so was ill how much easier and better I should have nursed him."

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