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EDITORIAL.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE NURSE.

We hear much at the present day of the personality of the Nurse, and the one who can satisfy all sections of a public, often hypercritical, is fortunate indeed; for the reasons influencing antipathies and attraction appear to be in the main arbitrary, governed by no fixed principles, and often independent of merit or worth; also, a Nurse who is congenial to one patient may be quite unacceptable to another. Yet, as the success of a private Nurse depends upon her personality as well as her skill, it is wise to endeavour to discover what is the secret of those who are always in demand, and who indeed could usually be employed twice over, were they at liberty. Why is it that of two Nurses equally competent and equally conscientious, the one is continually asked for, while the other has to depend for cases upon what are known as "open calls"?

Let us consider the chief needs of the patient employing a Nurse, setting aside the purely professional qualifications, which we will assume for the moment that all Nurses possess, as also the possession of that adaptability which is so necessary in the equipment of a private Nurse, but which concerns her relations to the household more than those with the patient.

When a person is out of health the result is usually a loss of self-reliance, coincident with a need for extraneous support which is foreign to his nature, and which it frets and galls him to lack; therefore the Nurse is wise who cultivates the habit of supplying mental and moral, as well as physical, help so unobtrusively that the patient is scarcely conscious of the source of his strength, but merely realizes the comfort of the Nurse's ministrations, and his sense of greater well-being when she is present.

Again, she should be able to diffuse an atmosphere of rest, for many of the ills of humanity have their origin in restlessness, and Nurses have daily the opportunity of observing the truth of the words "in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." If only the victims of over-work, the over-anxious, the restless patients, for whom they so frequently have to care, could be induced to cultivate these qualities, they know what an extraordinary improvement in physical strength, as well as in mental vigour, would result, and it follows that Nurses should form the habit of quiet confidence. Nothing gives a patient a greater feeling of restfulness; on the other hand, nothing is more quickly communicated to him, or causes him greater discomfort, than an atmosphere of restlessness and worry, if a Nurse allows herself to be infected by them.

Again, it is important that a Nurse should herself be healthy, physically and mentally. Contact with physical vitality certainly reacts favourably upon the sick, and a healthy mental atmosphere is also necessary to their welfare.

It will, therefore, be realized that it is a Nurse's duty to take care of her own health, and, if she wishes to impart to her patients the strength, restfulness and healthfulness which should form part of her professional equipment, she should, from time to time, commune with Nature, until some of its strength and peace become incorporated in her being.

To be a really efficient Nurse means the exercise of unlimited self-control and self-sacrifice. Little wonder but few succeed, and that the few are so eagerly sought after by both doctors and patients.

We once heard a wonderful Nurse spoken of as "Balm," and it sounded to us a very sweet soubriquet.

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