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EDITORIAL.

FORETHOUGHT AND SKILL.

In our last issue we showed the paramount importance of the trained, sensitized hand in the equipment of the nurse for the sick. But a nurse must assume many responsibilities, probably no woman worker, except the woman doctor, shoulders so many, and the trained hand will not suffice her unless it is guided by the clear and logical brain. When trained, a nurse must be prepared to meet emergencies of all kinds, calmly, quickly and effectively, to prove herself resourceful, and to inspire confidence and trust. While undergoing her training, therefore she must cultivate these qualities, besides which divers personages have to be considered.

First the Matron, the nurse's chief officer, whose duty is to maintain the efficiency of the nursing staff, and to this end to guide, supervise, teach, and admonish its individual members, dealing out even handed justice, but tempering justice with mercy. Happy the nurse who has an enthusiastic belief in the Matron under whom she works, is a first-rate nurse, a wise administrator, a just ruler, and in case of need a kind friend. Happy also the Matron who is able to inspire this trust.

The nurse must further render to the medical staff unreserved loyalty, carrying out all directions with minute accuracy, and being quick to note and report any symptoms, and changes in the condition of the patients to which the attention of the medical attendant should be directed.

Again, when she has attained the position of staff nurse, she must be competent to take the Sister's place in her absence. She must assume control and give directions, or relinquish it, and take them, as circumstances require, and, under the Sister's supervision,

must be able to manage a ward of serious cases.

The patients must be treated by her with a wise discretion, and her manner should combine sympathy and kindness with a certain remoteness, showing no favouritism, and her chief attention should be given to those who most need it, whether or no they are personally attractive or unattractive.

In all these things the nurse needs to exercise a wise discretion, and to keep in the back of her mind a plan of the order of her work, for the smoothness and regularity with which everything goes apparently by clockwork in a hospital is only achieved by forethought, regularity, and method on the part of all concerned.

And if a nurse needs a clear head while in hospital much more is it necessary if she takes up private nursing. In a hospital she is surrounded by those to whom she can appeal in case of need, in a private house she is usually the person to whom everyone turns in a time of stress and anxiety. She enters a disorganised household, and it is her part to introduce the method and system which, under its altered conditions, will make the wheels work smoothly. There is, perhaps, no greater test of a nurse's capacity than the manner in which she reduces chaos to order, and gains confidence as a competent and self-reliant person upon whom an anxious household can rely.

The successful private nurse is the one who best achieves this, but no one knows at what cost to herself. Perhaps miles from the medical attendant, in sole charge in his absence of a critical case, she must still find time to be the standby of the household. It takes a very level headed, clear thinking woman, as well as one who is deft handed to meet all the demands made upon the trained nurse.

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