

in due time enters upon her Hospital duties. She is a strong willing girl, and makes herself very useful in the Wards all round. The weeks pass on, and our young friend gets disillusionised. Nursing is not "all collars and cuffs"; in many respects it is not very different from being under housemaid at the Hall, and not half as cheerful. The girl does not feel well, gets tired, appetite wayward, food does not seem the same as it did at home. Thinks there was a good deal in what Robin, the under gardener, said the other evening as to Hospitals in general and the Dampshire in particular; so she resolves to get another place and terminate her Hospital experience. Now in all this transaction there was no harm done to anyone—a point I wish to emphasise. Martha Stout was an honest girl; she did not go out and make believe to nurse people because she had been a few weeks in the Dampshire, and helped to wash up the Ward crocks and rub up the Ward brasses—she took another place. She had incurred no expense, had sustained no loss, and done no harm.

Again, a cook in a gentleman's family has saved up a goodly sum of money. She is getting tired of cooking and meaning to take to something else, her thoughts turn towards the natural direction of a pie shop, or something in that line; but the current of her ideas is changed by an interesting domestic event, heralded by the arrival of a personage who is to play an important part in it—my lady's Nurse, and a great favourite of her ladyship's. Nurse has a pleasant, if somewhat portly presence, is handsomely dressed, and being of a sociable disposition, she is addicted to impressing upon the minds of the upper servants the manifold advantages, personal and pecuniary, that have accrued from her professional services to her ladies. Cook hears all this talk with attentive mind, and notes the course of subsequent events with an observant eye. She sees what a rare time of it Nurse has—the glories culminating at the christening festivities, when "Nurse Snowden" is arrayed in all her baptismal bravery, and becomes the recipient of bounties innumerable. On seeking for information from the fountain-head, cook learns that all these good things in the past, the present, and looming in the near future are primarily due to a magical piece of paper adorned with many flourishes and a picture, to be obtained at a cost that, regard being had to the state of cook's exchequer, is of little moment. The die is cast, the pie-shop idea abandoned, and cook resolves to be a Monthly Nurse. To this end she enters the leading London Lying-in Hospital, where Mrs. Snowden went, and commences upon her new duties. She finds them

as distasteful as they are novel. But cook perseveres with them, and in due time obtains the coveted "piece of paper" after an exhaustive course of four or five weeks' instruction (cook was not particular to a week), one-third of which period we may safely write off blank for all the good that came of it. The Pupil Nurse leaves the Institution armed with the precious document called a Certificate. *Vide note.* If truth compels us to admit that our enterprising friend could hardly be considered an accomplished Nurse, she was undoubtedly a capital woman of business. Now, what did she do with that precious document of hers? There are three things she did *not* do: she did not join a Nursing Home, attach herself to a Training Institution, or embark upon the troubled waters of Co-operative Nursing. Not she! Our erstwhile cook, who had a comely face and person and a pleasant, winsome manner, called upon some of her old mistresses with whom she had lived in her young days before she became cook at Lord A.'s, and told them she had taken to Monthly Nursing and had her certificate to that effect, and that she was now a professional ladies' Nurse, and would be grateful for any patronage in that direction. Nurse Gold, as we must now call her, succeeded in her quest, and was fortunate enough to obtain an engagement very soon after she left the Hospital. She knew enough to conceal her ignorance, and having the official good manners of the servants in a gentleman's household, and being a kind-hearted woman in the main, Nurse in a few years got together a good connection, and became almost as much in demand as Nurse Snowden herself. The London doctors were satisfied with the certificate, and the ladies were more than satisfied with their Nurse. This kind of thing went on up to about twenty years ago. It was in full force at the time of the Queen's marriage and the earlier part of Her Majesty's reign. They were rare days for the Nurse! I hope we shall see those days again,* and I believe we shall under widely different conditions.† It was the right way done wrong; but they were woful times for the Nursing, though they fell in with the Midwifery practice of the day. It did for fair-weather Nursing, but, like the house built upon the sand, when the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house (Nursing) it fell, and great (and grievous) was the fall thereof!

* A rising practitioner of those days thought himself a lucky man to get the good-will of a popular Nurse.

† We will substitute a band of competent and honourable women for a rapacious horde of incapables, absolutely unfitted for their duties; utterly unworthy of their opportunities.

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