

"A COMPLETE SYSTEM OF NURSING."*

The title of this book makes a large claim, but the author, Miss Millicent Ashdown, goes far to justify it, for she has compressed an extraordinary amount of information into its pages, and the nurse who turns to it in any difficulty will find it a veritable encyclopædia in regard to all that concerns her work, if we except anatomy and physiology, information on which subjects should be sought in appropriate text books.

Miss Ashdown holds the certificate of King's College Hospital, and the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital, Moorfields. She is examiner in nurses' practical work at Guy's Hospital, and the West London Hospital, and was formerly lecturer on bandaging to the nurses at King's College Hospital, so that she has had a sound and varied experience.

In her preface she writes:—"My aim has been to place before the nurse a short account of the different diseases—as without an elementary knowledge of such, intelligent nursing cannot be carried out—their prominent symptoms and chief points of distinction, their possible complication, the nursing attention required, and the treatment likely to be given by the physician and the surgeon in order that suitable preparation may be made by the nurse. I have endeavoured to supply such information as will instruct the nurse how to carry out any and every nursing duty, and to meet the various emergencies that are likely to arise, but I wish most emphatically to point out that it is not intended to suggest that the nurse should act upon her own responsibility, prescribe or omit drugs, &c., or in any way alter or order treatment except under circumstances of extreme urgency."

The book contains no less than 251 illustrations, most of which have been specially prepared for it, the original diagrams by Miss T. Sadler, and the photographs by Miss Wilks. They add very materially to the clearness and therefore the value of the text.

It is quite impossible to refer systematically within

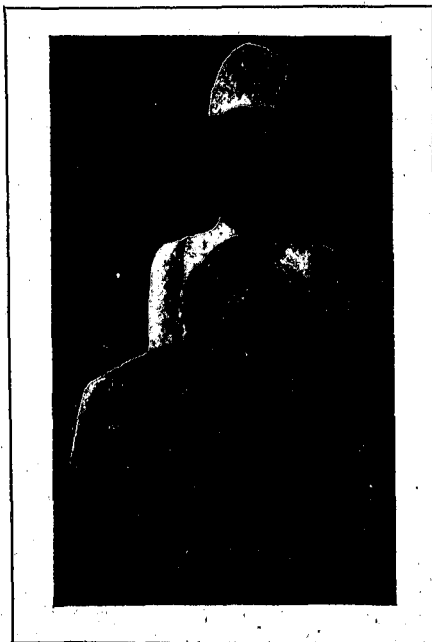
the limits of a short review to all the features of a book already condensed. Miss Ashdown defines the three following qualifications as essential to the making of a good nurse. (1) A real love of attending to the sick and helpless, (2) A strong constitution, (3) an equable temperament. One

chapter is given up to "general nursing duties," and the next to "particular methods of treatment." Take as an example of the latter, "artificial feeding." We read: "Artificial feeding may be administered through the following orifices: 1. the mouth, by spoon, suction, or tube (oesophageal feeding); 2, the nose (nasal feeding); 3, Artificial openings (gastrostomy, jejunostomy, oesophagostomy); 4, the rectum, by enemata and suppositories. The methods of administration in these different cases are then given in detail.

The chapter on "the application of bandages, extension and splints" is most useful, while that on "General observation of symptoms" will go far towards the making of a good nurse if carefully studied and absorbed. Symptoms are divided into objective and subjective, and described in detail. Considerable space is devoted to the pulse, of which nurses are, as a rule, expected to know so much and are taught so little. The method of taking the pulse, and how to observe its frequency, regularity (including force and rhythm), a description of irregular pulse, whether intermittent, irregular, or dicrotic, is then given, and the quality is discussed under (a) the volume, and (b) the tension. The condition of the artery which, normally, should feel soft and elastic to the touch, is then dwelt upon, and the functions of the sphygmomanometer and the sphygmograph are explained. Posture, facial expression, observation of the eyes, sleep, appetite, strength, restlessness, delirium, coma, the typhoid state, and unusual cries all receive attention in connection with objective symptoms, while pain, nausea, giddiness, bad



Method of holding a child during examination of the nose and throat.



Method of supporting the head during examination of the nose and throat.

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[previous page](#)

[next page](#)