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EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK, REGISTERED NURSE.

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EDITORIAL.

NURSING TECHNIC.

The art of Nursing is based on theory and practice, and both are equally important, for without a proper understanding of the principles underlying her craft a nurse works in the dark. She may attain a certain amount of mechanical skill, but she can never become perfect practically; for, in dealing with the human body, mechanical skill may desert her at a critical moment, and if she cannot fall back upon broad principles, and apply them intelligently to her actions, she may fail to make good in a crisis.

Further than this, a nurse who has pride of craft desires not only to perform her practical work efficiently, but to perfect technic; and by technic we mean "any act of skill due to two factors—form and execution."

Mrs. Higgins, R.N., in "The Psychology of Nursing," rightly tells us that long, long practice is necessary for a nurse in perfecting technic, "through repetition her nursing touch instinctively adjusts itself. It is some time, however, before her movements take care of themselves, leaving her free to attend to the particular needs of the situation as she should. If her nursing form is correct, as it should be, she always knows the right way to do things. She makes no guesses. Her movements, though they may be awkward at first, are not confused. As she develops her technic she gradually makes her movements without thinking. There is, finally, no conscious decision as to how she shall hold the hypodermic needle, or how she shall insert it; how she shall stand in lifting a patient, and so on. All the movements connected with nursing practice become

so familiar that her execution bears the finished stamp of experience."

The guiding points in acquiring a good technic are (1) to set up a correct routine of movement and to train oneself to carry it out rigidly at all times; (2) to perform one's duties as rapidly as is consistent with careful work; (3) to eliminate all useless movements; (4) deftness and sureness must go with quickness; (5) the nurse can never work to the best advantage if she is "on a tension." She can work quickly without the least strain if she will train herself to do so. Poise and confidence added to deftness add to the nurse's efficiency a hundred-fold; (6) absolute control of the muscles is necessary in acquiring nursing technic. If engaged in a nursing procedure there should be no change of movement "under fire" or other trying circumstances. Nurses who have trained themselves to such control prove the most satisfactory not only in emergency work, but in the sort of nursing which is a test of endurance.

Unless the body is moving in harmony with the laws governing perfect bodily control the nurse can never achieve good technic. With her body out of harmony with these indispensable laws, she adds immeasurably to the fatigue of nursing. (7) Good technic is achieved by exquisite and infinite care. Without it the nurse can never make caring for the sick "one of the fine arts." We commend this wise advice to the attention of those who wish to perfect themselves in the practice of their art, remembering that the essential factor in good nursing is to make the patient comfortable, and that pride in the manner of execution of nursing duties is an important means to this end.

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