

PRIVATE NURSING.

Writing very sympathetically on "Private Duty Nursing" in the *Pacific Coast Journal of Nursing*, Miss Betty Sheerin makes points. "We should not forget" she says "that the nurse has to do with persons whose nerves are morbidly sensitive as the result of disease, pain and suffering. Few people realise the importance of a good speaking voice in the equipment of a successful nurse. Every other qualification is subjected to the strictest scrutiny, but strangely enough, the voice is not thought to have any place in her training. The fact is, however, that a soft, gentle, sweet voice is one of the most valuable assets in the nurse's equipment for service in the sick chamber. The quality of the nurse's voice is to some extent a gift of nature, but whatever it may be, it can be improved. . . ."

"The nurse must have good health as a foundation, in order to endure the long hours of hard work, together with arduous duties. She must possess an inexhaustible store of patience, together with a sense of humour as well as an unlimited supply of tact because each problem varies with the individual or family. She must also be sincere in things both great and small. The ideals for which she strives must be high, while, at the same time, she must be eminently practical, because she must be able to face and capably handle any and all problems which may arise. In general the private duty nurse must be a 'good mixer.' I do not think there is any one qualification so necessary for certainly there is not a nurse in any line of work who meets more different classes and kinds of people with such kaleidoscopic rapidity.

"Private duty nursing makes its appeal because of the deep interest one cannot but feel when realising the helplessness of the patient who is entrusted to the care of the nurse. The feeling of being necessary to another human being spurs one on to greater effort. The young nurse when placed on her own responsibility for the first time will, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, measure up to the best that is in her. She is proud of the trust, suffering, too, has its appeal and she desires to have her Alma Mater feel pride in her ability. The young nurse dreams of future successes, building up ideals of what constitutes a useful life. These dreams she hopes to make real through the medium of private duty nursing. There is a certain zest about it, the charm, fascination, the steady grip and pull, with all the satisfaction of nursing the suffering back to health and strength. It is like a game in which the nurse's scientific knowledge and ability is matched against the onslaught of disease. Placing her patient at ease is a true test of skill and ingenuity. Of course, some patients are much more difficult to nurse than others but this only stimulates the nurse to greater effort and slowly but surely she wins out, thus justifying her training.

Like any other career, private duty nursing demands intelligence, insight, imagination, concentration, industry, uprightness in life and conduct. But of all the qualities, the one which is especially needed, more in private duty nursing than in any other pursuit or profession, is courage. All life demands courage but there is no vocation which makes a more constant demand on courage—every kind of courage—moral courage, prompt courage; but most of all the kind of courage that rises above discouragement. The life of a private duty nurse is many times full of disappointments and hurts. She is the most beloved and yet at the same time very often the most misunderstood worker in any branch of any profession. By the public, she is sometimes considered cold and even heartless and mercenary; by the hospital nursing staff a necessary evil, perhaps, and the public workers are inclined to think of her as a liability whose days of usefulness may be passing. However, in

spite of criticism and intolerance, she, by patient toil, has made good and has demonstrated her efficiency in meeting a real need, rendering herself indispensable as a health factor in her community."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

The *Information Bulletin*, a fortnightly publication of the League of Red Cross Societies, has usually items of very interesting news. From March 1st issue we learn that:—"The plan of the Albanian Red Cross for the establishment in collaboration with the League of Red Cross Societies, of a training school for nurses at Tirana, is about to be realised. Through the co-operation of the French Red Cross, Mlle. Lavergne, a nurse holding the State Diploma for hospital and public health nursing with considerable teaching experience, has been secured to undertake the direction of the school.

Mlle. Lavergne left for Albania last month, and was to immediately begin the organisation of the school on the French system. In a building put at her disposal by the Red Cross, which will serve both as a home for the nurses and as a teaching centre, she will install lecture and demonstration rooms. With the assistance of the medical corps attached to the Albanian Red Cross she will draw up the preliminary course which will cover a period of five months.

In October the regular training of the pupils will begin. The course will be of three years' duration, theory and practice, the practical work being carried on under the direction of an instructress in local hospitals and health centres.

In October, the two students who have shown the greatest promise of becoming not only good nurses, but educators as well, will be sent to France for a complete three years' training in the school of the *Société de Secours aux Blessés militaires* of the French Red Cross. Here they will not only receive hospital training but will study public health work in all its branches, preparing themselves to continue the work of Mlle. Lavergne upon their return to Albania. It will be their ultimate duty to direct the training school at Tirana and to ensure a supply of highly trained nurses for the hospitals and health centres of Albania."

Our memory of Albania recalls exquisite amethystine mountains as seen from the sea, and her handsome men in very gorgeous garments, in which highly ornamental dirks and daggers were appropriately exposed to view in the market place in Patras. Sickness appeared the most remote of contingencies where these fine creatures were concerned, but alas! as birth and death are the lot of all men, the ministrations of the skilled nurse is no doubt required in the wake of civilization.

"Information has been received by the League Secretariat as to the methods employed by the Junior Red Cross in Japan for raising the necessary funds for its various activities. The following is a list of the ways and means which have been found most successful in raising money:—

- (1) Juniors hire themselves out as hay-makers; (2) Destroying harmful insects in the rice-fields; (3) Destroying locusts which are afterwards sold for eating; (4) Sale of flowers grown in school gardens; (5) Sale of vegetables from school gardens; (6) Sale of vegetables grown in the farm attached to a school; (7) Sale of work done by Juniors; (8) Sale of wild fruits, mushrooms, dried leaves, &c., gathered by Juniors in the forests; (9) Sale of shell fish gathered on the sea-shore; (10) Giving paid lessons.

This list shows that the Juniors of Japan put a great deal of ingenuity and enthusiasm into the search for new methods of raising money for their groups."

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