

come poultices, without attention; to apply lotions and blisters, take the temperature of patients and of baths, understand the uses and the using of enemata and injections, the urinometer, the bronchitis kettle, and the care of tracheotomy cases; also preparation of simple nutriment for the sick, such as beef-tea, arrowroot, gruel, and peptonised food; feeding the helpless, and moving them. She will attend the weekly lectures, taking notes of them, and of her cases. She will be under the control and direction of Matron, Sister, and Nurse, and will perform all her work under their supervision and instruction.

Of course, she will not be expected to learn everything at once, but she will be expected to add daily to her store of knowledge, and to increase her usefulness, when her efforts will be recognised by increasing confidence. At the conclusion of two months, she will be moved to a male Medical Ward, where, though men require somewhat different management, she should find herself able to cope with her new duties: she will have learned to arrange her cleaning work, and will find how easy it becomes, with method and discipline, to keep everything in order, from patients' beds to Sister's inkstand and the glass of flowers on her table.

She will not yet be called upon to take any absolute responsibility, though the smallest occupation in Nursing is a responsible one; but she is no longer quite a novice, and must keep ears and eyes well open, neglecting no opportunity of improving her capacity for observation and deduction. She will learn the posture assumed in various phases of pain, in heart disease, peritonitis, and pleurisy, and the best position in fainting; also to count the pulse and respiration, note the symptoms of different poisoning cases and of drunkenness, the appearance of the eyes in stupor and delirium, and the signs of hysteria; she will learn to measure and test urine, to understand the diet of diabetic and of rheumatic fever patients, and to carefully guard against bed-sores.

If at any time entrusted to give medicine, she will be careful always to read the label, and look for the name or number of the patient; the importance of this rule cannot be too strictly impressed, but only in cases of necessity should this duty be entrusted to a Probationer, who will learn, as a soldier learns, the value and necessity of absolute and prompt obedience. She will remember a word of comfort for the sorrowful and cheer for the despondent, and in return she will win their confidence and affection.

After two months, she will be moved to a women's Surgical Ward, where, though the Ward cleaning will be much the same, the Nursing will be different. She will learn to remove the clothing

from an accident case, wash and prepare the patient for the Surgical manipulation, having in readiness everything likely to be required, such as strapping, splints, bandages, &c. She should note the different arrangement of beds for fractures and other injuries, and disposal of the clothing for various cases; the preparation of patients for operation, warming the bed and watching at the conclusion; the method of arresting hæmorrhage, with the different points of pressure; and of applying the dressings. She will learn to prepare various kinds of bandages, pad splints, and make antiseptic dressings; see the effects of carbolised tow, and different preparations of wool; the prevention of bed-sores, and treatment when, from disease, they are unavoidable. She will carefully watch the dressing of wounds, and may be entrusted with the care of minor ones; she will be required to change poultices, and prepare them on tow or linen, and of degrees of thickness, according to the nature of the case. She will learn how dressing tubes are syringed, and the female catheter passed; also the keeping of temperature and diet charts; and will practice recording her observations. She will occasionally be sent with her case to the Operating Theatre, where her duty will consist in the care of the sponges, and in keeping Sister and Nurse supplied with them, clean and well wrung; returning to the Ward with the patient. She will occasionally be required to wash the Theatre mackintoshes: those of the Ward, with all dressing bowls and trays, will be her regular care. She will never act upon her own responsibility, but in any case of doubt apply for direction to the Sister and Nurse, not trying their patience, however, by lapsing into careless forgetfulness.

Much practice will be needful to surmount the difficulties of bandaging, with the intricacies of spiral, reverse, and figure of eight; also the plaster of Paris bandage, and adjustment of the sling. Then there are various kinds of strapping, cut in different ways, from the hair-lip to simple strips. She will see limbs put up in extension splints, and learn the use of sand-bags, pillows, the cradle, and the shot-can. Indeed, in a limited space, it is difficult to describe the variety of cases that are found in a Ward; and it is only possible to give an outline, and a sketch of the arrangement of work, of which one week's practical experience out-values a volume of theory.

At completion of the prescribed two months, our Probationer will be moved to a male Surgical Ward, and by this time be thoroughly interested in her surgical work, and a very useful member of the Staff. Surgical Wards are of necessity the brightest, and the men are so pleased to give a little help—in the way of polishing bowls, and

*previous page*

*next page*