

very possible that they may be advanced to the Matronship of some small provincial Hospital, with a salary of £40, or thereabouts.

Women bringing with them higher qualifications of education, refinement, and knowledge of the world, after having undergone a precisely similar training to other Nurses, are employed as "Sisters" of Wards, Matrons, or Sub-Matrons of various Nursing institutions, and some eventually arrive at the Superintendence of important Hospitals. A Ward Sister's salary commences at about £35, and does not exceed £60, and that of a Superintendent is not often more than £80 or £100. It is possible that these salaries may be, by-and-by, greatly increased, but at the same time it is not likely that any change will take place for some years yet. In addition to the sterling qualities and accomplishments of a good Nurse, a Hospital Superintendent requires administrative power, firmness (combined with good temper), ready discernment of character, and a facility of dealing with the varied natures with which she is brought into daily contact.

Her life is a very trying one, and in it there are, generally speaking, few opportunities for the personal attention to, and charge of, the sick, which form so strong an attraction to women imbued with the true Nursing spirit.

There is little doubt that in the somewhat similar posts of Head or Staff Nurse and Ward Sister there is, in spite of very hard work and small pay, much true happiness to be found.

I will now attempt some explanation of what may seem a confusion of terms in the titles of Ward Sister and Staff Nurse.

The Wards of most of our large Hospitals are each superintended by a Sister, on whom the whole responsibility of its well-being, as far as regards Nursing and management, rests. She attends the Doctors during their visits, gives her report to them night and morning, receives their orders, and in her turn directs and assists the Nurses under her in their treatment of the patients.

The Sister of a Ward has under her direction a staff consisting of a Head Nurse, a Night Nurse, and a variable number of Probationers, whose practical training she is to superintend. The Night Nurse receives her orders from the Sister in whose Ward she is placed, but the practical supervision of her work is carried out by the Night Superintendent, who is responsible for the Nursing throughout the Hospital, from the hours of ten p.m. to seven a.m.

To be either a good Sister or Head Nurse requires all the qualifications it is possible for a Nurse to have; she should, in fact, be the very highest type of Nurse—I may go further, and say the very highest type of woman.

Whether she intends remaining in Hospital service or not, or whatever may be the special branch of Nursing a woman intends to take up, it is unquestionably necessary that before undertaking any superior situation, she should qualify herself by not less than two or even three years' training in a Hospital. Nowhere else can she see such an infinite variety of cases, or obtain such thorough insight into her duties, or such a practical familiarity with the requirements of the sick.

An intending Probationer must not shut her eyes to the fact that these years' Hospital training requires a very great outlay of health and strength; it also exacts almost all her time, and her undivided attention. During the period of Probationership, all outside cares should, as far as is possible, be laid on one side, though a little light reading, such as a newspaper, or pleasant book, in the very brief period allotted for recreation, is a wholesome relaxation, and one not sufficiently indulged in by any class of Nurse. A Probationer is nearly ten hours on duty, the greater portion of which is of a most fatiguing and trying character. Some of the work—such as bed-making, cleaning Wards, &c.—to be gone through, it must be remembered, indiscriminately by all classes—is a great trial to the courage and physical endurance of many, whilst attendance on death-beds, operations, and other painful scenes, requires continuous efforts of self-command hardly to be over-estimated.

Besides good health and healthy habits, which are of almost equal importance, nerve and constitutional cheerfulness are very valuable qualities in a Nurse.

If with these essentials she combines unselfishness, and a strong resolution not to be conquered by difficulties, she will find none in her professional career so great but that they may be overcome by patience.

Of course, there are some women whose quickness of eye and delicacy of touch especially fits them for surgical Nurses; but it has been often remarked by those well competent to judge, that to be a thoroughly good Medical Nurse, requires natural qualifications of quite as high, though perhaps not so showy, an order.

In large Hospitals, where many Probationers are trained, these have constant opportunities afforded them of hearing lectures on subjects connected with their profession, notes of which they are expected to take. Examinations are held which form a good test of the use the Pupil Nurses have made of their advantages, and prizes are awarded accordingly. The subjects of these examinations are Elementary Physiology and Anatomy, the commoner scientific terms used in Medicine, Bandaging, and the essentials of Medical and Surgical Nursing.

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