

the sick paupers, and this is confirmed by the fact that the demand on the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association for competent Nurses to take the charge of small country Union Hospitals is greater than they can meet. The very best women are needed for these small posts; the morally, mentally and physically strong. They must be able to possess their souls in patience—aye, patience without limit, and it must be patience combined with great tenacity of purpose. Without it no Nurse in such a position can keep the cheerful courage required to fight the varied difficulties she has to contend with. There is the inelasticity of the Poor Law with its red-tapeism which meets her at every turn, and which often ties her hands. There is the ignorance and narrow views of the Guardians, shown in false economies and waste of labour.

The want of proper appliances for the work, the deep-rooted abuses of pauper help, the jealousy and officialism of the Master and Matron, and the depressing nature of the work, coupled with the isolation of her own position; very often also the personal discomforts of it.

The Nurse who goes from the training school of a general Hospital to work under the Poor Law, finds herself constantly brought up sharply against the wall of its regulation which surrounds her. If she wishes to prevent the waste of bread in the wards, she is met by the information that such and such are the rations each pauper is legally entitled to, and, whether they eat it or not, she must serve it out. A patient must be kept on No. 3 diet, although he uses none of it except the butter and milk; and the formalities which have to be gone through before rice pudding can be secured for some toothless grannie, are enough to try the patience of the most persevering. The Nurse is very apt to say to herself, "I am willing to take any trouble to get proper food for a really bad case, but I cannot go through all these little worries to get variety for the old people." If you do so say and act, dear Nurse, you are wrong! You are as much bound to do all that you can for the comfort—yes, and pleasure, too—of every decrepit old tramp in your ward, as you are for the rare (and, I will acknowledge, more interesting) "acute case" that may be under your care for a short time. One of the advantages of training Probationers for the work in Infirmarys is that they are taught from the first what to expect under the Poor Law, and how best to make the most of its regulations.

With regard to a Nurse's relation to the Guardians, a little tact on both sides is needed; above all things the Nurse must never fail to believe that they are not only as desirous as she is to do the best possible for the sick they have placed under her care, but also wish to be considerate of her in her work. She has it in her power to be of very real help to them, by simply pointing out cause and effect; and by again and again calling their attention to the practical working of things in her department. This she can perfectly well do, if she has tact, without the appearance of trying to dictate to them! At the same time she must be most careful not to give the impression that she is complaining or grumbling. This result is best achieved, I think, by those who honestly try to make the best of things, and show how well they can apply their practical knowledge in so doing. Their effort must not be directed to get things arranged and altered to make the work easier and better according to their

ideas, but rather first to dispose their own ideas and actions, so as to get the best possible result out of existing arrangements, till such time as the Guardians see their imperfections, and make fresh ones. When this is honestly done with a cheerful spirit, the Guardians are generally very ready to support any application the Nurse may make, that is, for real utility. For instance, in a small country Union, where the Hospital Laundry was under the Nurse's control, the water taps were six or eight yards away from the tubs, and the only waste pipe was in a yard outside; the Nurse asked leave to utilize some india-rubber pipe to save carrying the water; pointing out to the visiting Guardian that the existing arrangement was putting a premium on using little water, and resulted in badly washed, unclean, and therefore insanitary linen. At the end of six weeks a waste drain was opened under the tubs, and before two months were over the taps were brought round above them. Had the Nurse gone to the Guardians with a great complaint as to the condition of the laundry, and demanded pipes, and taps, and drains all at once, she would have given the impression that she was a person of extravagant notions, and they would, in all probability, have set to work to consider how *little* of what she asked could be done with, or answered her with that most hopeless of all answers, "We have never had any complaint before, and Nurse seemed always to manage very well." The "you must do the same," may not always be expressed, but the Nurse feels it is meant. But when the Guardians see that in their Nurse they have a fellow worker in trying to turn everything to the best account and careful and economical of every detail, they quickly shew their confidence in her, and their appreciation of the help she is to them. This confidence will not, of course, be gained at once, and when the trained Nurse first takes her place in a Workhouse Infirmary, she must quietly and patiently wait, till little by little, it is given her. In all beginnings, "long patience" is needed, and sooner or later is sure to win its reward.

To meet the want of all the ready-to-hand appliances, which a Nurse has in a large Hospital, taxes to its utmost the resource of the Infirmary Nurse. When she finds her little Hospital full of all kinds of sores and ulcers, she looks round for her absorbent dressings, a roll of lint, protective bandages. Where are they? What does she find? A bundle of rather smelly old calico clothing, labelled "Surgical Rags," possibly some carbolized tow. The draper's commonest unbleached wadding is generally to be had, but nothing is less absorbent. I know of one case in which the Nurse had a large burnt surface, or rather a large ulcer, resulting from a neglected burn, to dress. She found it very offensive, covered with an oily rag, and skin of wadding. All the discharge, which was profuse, kept in, and there was little sign of healing. Her plan was first to wash, in a disinfectant, the rags sent her from the Matron's store of old clothing, then, having spread a piece with ointment, to cut tiny holes all over, which allowed the discharge to escape into a large pad of carefully pulled-out tow, which she placed over the whole. Not an ideal dressing certainly, but so far successful, that the doctor, satisfied that she would make the most of anything she had, very soon allowed her better material. Here, again, we see that the spirit in which difficulties arising from the deficiency of appliances must be met, is

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