

that of cheerful determination to make the most of what is to be had, and hope for better.

In no department of her work does a Nurse need more cheerful patience than in that of dealing with pauper help. It is so very difficult not to expect that these men and women are like ourselves, or even like the paid attendants, ward-maids, and scrubbers of the General Hospital we were trained in! The only way to get any good out of their work, is to keep them under constant supervision. Nothing but the certainty that Nurse may be at their side at any moment will keep them to their duties, and not always that. As a rule, you can believe nothing they say, and trust nothing they have done. Never expect, that because they have done something twice or three times the way you taught them, that they will do it correctly the fourth time. No, the Nurse has to remember that she is surrounded by the incompetent. Now and then a deaf girl, or an epileptic, will prove quite a good servant to her, and for a week or two she will have the luxury of having her meals cooked for her with some measure of comfort and regularity; but just as she is congratulating herself on such a happy state of affairs, either the woman will tire of being 'in,' or the Matron will find she has to remove her to some other sphere of usefulness. Even the best of pauper workers are, in some degree, mentally or morally deficient, and, therefore, quite unreliable. If the Nurse expects anything else, and worries over the disappointment her helpers are certain to be to her, she will soon find them a source of irritation as well; but if from the first she makes up her mind to regard her pauper helpers as mere unavoidable incidents of her work, mere extra hands and feet for her own head to regulate, she will be able to deal with them much better, and keep her own equanimity through all the trouble they will inevitably be to her.

Where the Infirmary wards are in the Workhouse, the Nurse's position with regard to the Master and Matron is sometimes very trying, but that is fortunately becoming more and more uncommon. Still, in many places where the Infirmary is in quite a separate building, the Matron has supreme control of all the arrangements except the actual handling of the sick. The Nurse is responsible to her for the cleanliness of the building, etc., and all stores have to be got through her. Between two sensible women in such a position, things ought to go smoothly; but, unfortunately, the reverse is often the case. One or other stands too much on her dignity, and is too tenacious of her rights and her authority, and constant friction is the result. Perhaps both are to blame. If the fault lies with the Matron, and there is more excuse for her than for the Nurse, the latter must, as in other things, make the best of it. Let her be markedly punctual in sending to the store; clear and methodical in all her lists and returns, so as to give no occasion for the Matron to found a complaint against her. Let her hold her own position with a quiet, firm dignity, and with as much dignity punctiliously give the Matron hers. If the Matron were to become aggressive—which is unlikely if the Nurse has taken the position I have indicated—the point at issue should be settled by application to the Visiting Guardians; but in no case should it ever come to "words" between the Nurse and Matron. I have always observed great readiness on the part of the

Guardians to put the Matron back in her own place, if, in her dealing with the Infirmary Department, she steps out of it. *Prevention* is better than cure, and it is well that all possible sources of friction should be removed. Generally Guardians are quick to see this, and willing to do their part; but in any case the Nurse must not allow herself to feel unduly ruffled—I grant it is easier said than done!—but she is certain to weaken her own cause if she gives way to her annoyance. It is better just to smile at the self-importance displayed, laying to heart the lesson of the unloveliness of such a spirit, and quietly going on with her own work.

In the small world of a country Union it is very necessary that the Nurse should keep clear of all the petty quarrels and jealousies of the other officers. Being mistress in the Hospital, she should have no difficulty in "keeping herself to herself," even at the risk of being thought "stiff." No doubt it accentuates the trial of isolation, but that is, along with the depressing character of the work, one of the great trials of Infirmary Nursing. The Infirmary Nurse *must* be cheerful, and should look on depression as a temptation to be resisted by every possible means. It is a good plan always to have something interesting to read. A subscription to a good circulating library, though it be at a distance, and really require some self-denial in other things to enable her to meet the expense of a box of books, is well worth both the self-denial and trouble; it is also a good plan to take in some paper like the *Spectator*, where the reviews of books are interesting, and the articles on the questions of the day thoughtful. She thereby provides herself with a world and society outside her daily, often very monotonous, round of duty. Let no Nurse say, "I have so little time, it is not worth while." Even half-an-hour a day of entire escape from the Workhouse, combined with rest of body, will do wonders for her evenness of temper. But above and beyond all things, the spirit which looks for no reward here, the heart which gives out abundantly for love of the Heavenly Master, the eyes which see in the poorest of the poor His legacy, are the best guides to untiring service. It is when work is done for Love's sake—the highest love—that the worker is upheld in cheerful courage to face the trial of isolation and depressing surroundings even now the reward is often very great, hereafter will come the greatest. "Ye did it unto Me."

In conclusion, I would quote some most wise and true words from the report of the Visitor of the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association (Miss C. J. Wood), for 1892:—"The work is full of interest to the Nurse when she fully realizes its importance; when she identifies herself with her patients, seeing their entire dependence on her, then she learns wherein lies the reality of her mission. If she has only succeeded in making a few old people comfortable it means a great deal to them; but she may have done more than this; she may have helped them on to recovery, by bringing their surroundings more into harmony with their condition. Her work is essentially that of a pioneer; and if the way is long, the ground rough and perplexing, that is just why she is there; behind her is the great army of Nurses, who in the future will tend the sick poor in the Workhouse Infirmaries."

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