

But they do get ill, and at this time the mental nurse needs more patience and fortitude than in regular hospital work, and her reward is in proportion, for she gains the childlike faith of the patient. They love and trust her and the joy felt by the nurse when one of her patients (perhaps a tiresome one) recovers and leaves for her own home, is beyond description. One must have experienced it to understand.

The secret of good mental nursing is unlimited patience and the ability to forget how to be angry, no matter howsoever a patient may try one. The nurse must remember always that the patient, most likely, cannot help being trying and is being tormented by the ideas present in the mind. As day succeeds day, so the nurse, if suitable, gets to love her work and enjoy it and sees friends in most of the patients and they in her.

As this branch of nursing is not sufficiently known in India, it is a service not popular among nurses, or so it appears, from the difficulty experienced in recruiting for mental hospitals, yet it requires some of the best of us to come forward for the good of humanity.

To help the doctors to cure those who are curable, and to make the remaining years of life of the incurable, as easy and happy as possible, will nurses and others interested in this branch of the service, discuss the subject in the Journal, with the hope that both nurses and the public may realise the necessity of endeavouring to further the good nursing of mental patients.

"DAIS" EXAMINATION AT S. BARNABAS HOSPITAL,
RANCHI, AUGUST 13TH, 1925.

BY EDITH D. McDONALD.

We were eleven women, not all strictly dais, but women who are often called in at confinement times for help and advice. Questions were asked in ganwari (the village talk) by "Elisabeth," a medical student who kindly helps me each week with the lectures, and all were made to do something practical, being helped by my own nurses—contents of a dai's bag to be explained, a patient's sheet to be changed, and of course the *proper* washing of hands had to be done.

It was quite pleasing to see Mochan briskly taking off her bangles, and arranging her sari, so that it should not interfere with her work! The patient in bed (little Nurse Ruth) had strict injunctions from me not to move an inch without being told to do so. The nurses only helped when asked to do so, such as in the picture we see Nurse Maryam ready to pour water over Mochan's hands, but this was not to be done unless the dai gave instructions to do so.

Of course one dai washed her hands so slowly, and with such pompous ceremony, that I should think that any confinement (if not a first!) would be well over before she started to do a thing!! Mrs. Weston (a trained nurse) was surprised to find how gentle and skilful some of the dais were, especially in changing the patient's sheet. All tried nicely, and the top ones came out equal in marks, so they had to be asked some deciding questions which they answered equally well, so we said the two prizes should be "First" Prizes.

Mrs. Weston said she would like to give them a special prize later when we are having an examination again—they all seemed eager to persevere and to continue the classes.

THE MAKING OF A GARDEN.

AN ADDRESS TO NURSES BY MISS RUTH DARBYSHIRE.

(From *The Nursing Mirror and Midwives' Journal* for August 29th.)

On the occasion of her recent visit to the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital, when she presented the prizes to the successful candidates, Miss Ruth Darbyshire, matron of University College Hospital, gave an address which should prove of value not only to the nurses in question, but to our readers generally.

"Just let me tell you," she said, "how very glad I am to have the opportunity of coming to you to-day, and to see your beautiful hospital. You certainly have some very great advantages over nurses trained in London, for here you are set in the midst of country and gardens, while nurses trained in London usually cherish a plot of sickly grass a few yards square, which they fondly hope can be called a garden.

In thinking over what I should say to you to-day, it came into my mind that the work in any school for nurses can be compared very easily to the making of a garden. First, there is the digging and the hoeing and laying out the paths and beds, which can be compared to the work of a new probationer, who enters upon her career with a very vague idea of what is before her, except that she knows she must dig deep for knowledge, and acquire order in her mind and work, and make her paths straight and plain. She must tend the seeds of knowledge she has sown in her garden with care, and watch warily to see that weeds of carelessness, discontent, and indifference to the importance of the smallest details of her work do not rise up and choke the flowers of the small, and possibly rather unimportant, part of the garden entrusted to her. She must learn to keep it in spotless order so that the plants and flowers may grow strong and well. Then, as she becomes more experienced in her profession, she will see the seeds of knowledge she has sown in her first year coming up as healthy plants of experience and ability, to be useful and helpful to her fellow creatures, especially to the sick and suffering. How like our training is to the cultivation of a garden, even to the growing of the herbs and seeds that give us medicine for our treatment, which may be compared to the knowledge of a nurse in the cultivation of her art in nursing of the sick, and to the flowers of sympathy, courtesy, and love which give pleasure and comfort to our patients, like sweet blossoms.

HER GARDEN IN FLOWER.

Later on in her career the nurse sees her whole garden coming into flower, for she begins in her third year of training to realise that the digging and delving she did in her first year, the anxious care she expended in her second year, the small seedlings of knowledge she acquired, and the gradual growth of her ability and skill have enabled her—if she has made good use of her time—to teach others how to work in their gardens and to grow straight and hardy plants of order, skill, loving care, and responsibility. If she has been a good gardener in her field of knowledge, she will even then realise full well that she must not relax her watchful care, and that she must continually plant new seeds of knowledge and eradicate the weeds of complacency. She must keep a sharp look-out that the garden of her mind is kept fresh and ready for new impressions,

new thoughts, new hopes, new responsibilities, and must realise that her profession of all others needs care and the constant acquisition of knowledge, just as a garden needs continual renewal of life.

TO FIRST AND SECOND YEAR NURSES.

To those of you who are just starting in your nursing life I would say most earnestly, try to set out with a high ideal of your chosen work and realise that, however small a part you are playing in the daily life of your hospital, it is a very important part, for it is one of the small pieces of a composite whole, and no chain can be stronger than its weakest link. Strive to keep the fact that nursing is a vocation ever before you, and that no woman can make a really good nurse who does not realise that she is doing, however humbly, a holy work. Do not let the rush of the daily life crowd out the happy thought of doing good to others, and learn with every bit of your hearts and minds and hands how to do your work as it should be done.

To those of you who are in your second year I would ask you to realise how important it is to learn in every possible way both the scientific side of a nurse's work and the simple, practical side of giving comfort and ease to your patients. Try with all your might and main to do to others as you would be done by, and never forget how you would wish those near and dear to you to be treated when in hospital. Try also to gain a larger vision of what you are going to do with your knowledge when you have finished your training. Do not be content with being "just passable," but model yourselves on one of your most admired seniors and take your steps with watchful and prayerful thought.

To those finishing their training I would like to say how fortunate they are to have been trained in these modern days, when the scientific side of our work is being so rapidly developed and so well set before us. No longer do nurses have to acquire their own knowledge painfully and by "fits and starts," just how and when they can. At the same time we should not let the vastly superior education we now receive deter us for one minute from gaining that proficiency in nursing which is so all important. Keep, when you leave the hospital with your certificate, the spirit of your training school. Although much is written and said about the modern girl being unwilling to sacrifice her own pleasure and comfort, I firmly believe, and I am thankful to feel, that human sorrow and suffering still have the power to touch a woman's heart and that the vast majority of nurses enter the profession because they want to do something to help others. Think, too, in what many various ways we can help others, and how wonderfully the certificate from a good hospital is the golden key which unlocks the gate of almost every country in the world. What other profession will take a woman so far afield, feeling all the time that she is needed and that she can do good wherever she goes? Whether you remain in your own country or go abroad—and I sincerely hope some of you will do that, for it is a marvellous experience—whether you elect to do hospital work, district work, private nursing, public health, or any other activity open to our profession, do not lose what you have learnt at your training school—a spirit of devotion and of self-sacrifice and that love of nursing which alone can give you true happiness.