

as daintily adorned and hospitably supplied. She had three bridesmaids—Phillis, Laura, and Lucy; her white satin dress fitted her to perfection.

But—rain fell in torrents; a drip from a wet umbrella spotted the bridal robe; invited guests failed to appear; the newly-married Hyltons met them with the bridegroom's party at the church, but neither Miss Pringle, nor Mr. John Crossley, nor his wife came to do them honour. Indeed, the blinds at Pilgrim Place were drawn closely down, as though there had been a funeral, not a wedding in the family, and the sorrowing

relative had shut out the sight. People were there who have no place in this history, and presents were many, but when the display came a small box was found marked "A present from Phillis Penelope Pringle to the bride." Within it lay, coiled upon cotton wool, a necklace of mock pearls, labelled clearly, "False as fair."

Yet that was not all. Whilst Mrs. Arthur Rivers was dressing for her honeymoon trip to London, there was an altercation going on between Arthur and his father, which boded ill for all parties concerned.

Stephen Heathfield had promised to give with Mabel four thousand pounds. It turned out one-half the sum had been already advanced to James Rivers, for investment in his business on Arthur's account, and had been otherwise employed; in fact, had gone to make up the sum cautiously settled upon Maud. The handing over by Stephen of his cheque for two thousand only had provoked an explanation, and a final rupture between father and son.

Not a promising beginning for the new year or the newly-married pair

(To be continued.)



THE IMMORTAL ROSE.

By EDITH PRINCE.

WHEN the infant eyes awakened
Mother slept; her silent hand
Might not clasp the tiny fingers,
But they thought among God's band
She was chosen as the angel
O'er her baby watch to keep,
And in dreams her love to whisper,
For the child smiled in her sleep.

Crimson roses sweet they planted
To the mother's fond heart near,
And with baby's growth the flowers
Blossomed fresh each dawning year.
Sometimes when the maiden pondered,
Wondrous deep her blue eyes grew,
As she pictured clear the mother
That her waking never knew.

Then she said, "Dear God, the flowers
Planted here bloom in my heart.
Sometimes, dreaming of their beauty,
Of my life they seem a part.
Oh, then as their fragrance mounting
On fair angels' wings to Thee,
Grant my prayers their fullest pleading,
Sending down Thy love on me:

"So when soft my evening cometh,
And my hair is tinged with snow,
May the crimson rose immortal
Still in summer beauty glow,
Filling all my life with music,
And the light of grace divine,
Till I stand before Thy portals
With my mother's hand in mine."



THE UNVARNISHED SIDE OF HOSPITAL NURSING.



My article will be no grand intellectual study—merely a few plain facts; but if it should encourage any to work on more bravely in some daily routine, or inspire them with a desire to help their fellow-men in a more

practical form, it will not be in vain.

Most people will agree with me in considering that nursing to a large extent comes under woman's work. Though some men are in every way thoroughly good nurses, as a rule women may find a useful work in attending on the sick, and are appreciated by them. Almost everyone thinks herself capable of nursing, except perhaps some few, who shrink from it

with a kind of horror, and imagine they could never bear to see or do all that would be required of them.

I am aware that the market, so to speak, is already overstocked with women who have taken up the work of nursing; but are they nurses?

At a course of lectures attended when beginning hospital life, we were informed of the necessary qualifications for a nurse. I will enumerate some of them. Obedience, cheerfulness, patience, conscientiousness, observation, sympathy, judgment, neatness, and order.

Hospital nurses are about as mixed a class as you could well conceive; daughters of men in almost every trade or profession, from a general's daughter to the poorly educated lady's maid or servant girl; and if you ask their reasons for becoming nurses, you will find here, too, a strange variety. Young widows

and women of good education who are in trouble, imagine (and often find) that caring for others will lighten their own woe. Some from conscientious motives desire to devote their lives to good works; others take to nursing because they must gain a livelihood, and they think it sounds better to be a nurse than a companion, shopwoman, or servant. Some take to it because they think to wear a uniform and be called a sister lends a romance to their lives; and some giddy, thoughtless ones appear to have become nurses for the sake of amusement. It is needless to say these last two do not have quite as easy a time as they expect; but the amount of harm they do to the nursing work is incalculable. Some join because, whilst wishing to earn a livelihood, they truly choose nursing from a love to it; and with such the love for it grows very strong.

Whilst speaking of hospital work, please

remember that the many details—such as salary, hours, and various duties, differ in different hospitals. On an average, I think, a sister will have charge of about thirty-three beds, with two day-nurses, a probationer, and a night-nurse under her; also a woman who comes daily to polish or scrub the floors, clean the grates and windows, carry away the soiled linen, and wash the breakfast and dinner things.

When you think of your one invalid at home, and his many requirements, and remember that these six pairs of hands must supply everything needed for the occupants of these thirty-three beds, besides keeping the wards and all the utensils therein clean, you will see that a nurse cannot have much time to spare.

On first becoming a nurse, it is customary, in most hospitals, to sign an agreement for two or three years. The salary of a nurse (or rather a probationer, as she is at first called) is from £10 to £14 the first year, £14 to £16 the second year, and from £16 to £20 the third year, with board, washing, and uniform found. A probationer goes on trial for one month. Some leave then because they feel themselves, or are thought to be, physically or otherwise unfitted for the work; others, however, stay on, really unfitted, because they do not care for it, and have not their hearts in it.

At the end of one year, and often much sooner, a probationer is given charge of a ward, under a sister, when she is called nurse; then as a vacancy arises, and she shows herself competent, she is given the post of sister. A regular nurse, after the first two or three years, gets from £20 to £30 yearly; a sister from £30 to £50 yearly. The first year there is a good deal of hard work: scrubbing, sweeping, cleaning, obeying orders (clumsily enough), and being scolded by the nurse, sister, or doctor, and made to do things over and over again. There is, too, the witnessing of suffering and death; very trying to a young nurse, but with which she soon becomes so strangely familiar. Accidents of almost every kind, heartrending stories of cruelty and wrong, friends coming to spend the last few hours with a beloved one, or perhaps arriving too late, when the spirit has returned to its Maker. These are sad scenes, but they come as part of her day's work and her training. A nurse breakfasts at 6.30 a.m., summer and winter, and begins work at 7 a.m., with perhaps eight or ten beds to make, patients to wash, the ward to sweep and dust, besides tables to scour, dressing-trays to be cleaned, and all utensils belonging to the ward to be seen to, medicines and other treatment to be attended to, and all to be in readiness for the doctor's visit at 9 a.m. or 9.30 a.m. From him, through the sister, the nurse receives her daily orders for the treatment of the patients, which, on his leaving the ward, have at once to be carried out. Milk and beef tea must be warmed for luncheon, medicine bottles taken to the surgery to be refilled, fresh prescriptions made up, and fresh diets shown to the cook. In its own turn each ward receives the fresh admissions, and there are patients to be washed and put to bed (not with nice clean hands and faces that a sponge would restore, but with the dirt of hard work, squalor, and misery, that often takes more than hot water, soap, flannel, and a good rub to bring clean); and all this time there are the constant wants on all sides to be supplied.

About 12.30 the dinners come up, and they must be served round, and the helpless ones fed; then the nurse gets her own dinner, which, I am sorry to say, in some hospitals is not very tempting; after which she returns to her ward.

The floor must again be swept, and the dinner things cleared away, the beds tidied,

and all put in order for the visiting surgeon or physician, when she may have to stand for the next two hours, going with the doctors and students round the ward; or if there are any operations from her ward, she will be wanted to assist.

Or it may be it is the day for patients to see their friends; and for two hours nurse must act the part of a vigilant detective, and try to stop the intended kindness of ignorant relatives in giving fruits, stimulants, puddings or cakes to her patients.

At 4, or soon after, she must make the tea, cut bread and butter and serve it round, and then she is free to go and get her own. Some nurses get out for an hour and a half once or twice a week, in the afternoon, others from 6 to 8.

Extra hours are often given when asked for, but it must entail a double share of work for some one, and therefore a nurse does not like to be often absent from her ward.

After tea, when she has washed up once more, swept and tidied the ward, there is sometimes an interval in which she can talk and read to her patients before the evening work of dressings, suppers, and preparations for the night begins.

These are supposed to be concluded at 8.30 p.m., when the nurse reads prayers, lowers the lights, and leaves each patient as comfortable as possible, and (even though she loves her work) gladly awaits the coming of the night sister, to whom she must report all the cases before leaving the ward. She then goes to her supper, after which she is free. Do not judge her too hardly, gentle reader, when you hear that instead of improving her mind by reading, she often goes straight to bed, foot-sore and weary.

But courage! the work gets easier as she becomes more accustomed to it, and by morning she will be rested and refreshed.

Those who enter the work thinking life would be a kind of romance; that they could shake a pillow, stroke a forehead, bring flowers, make little dainties, read and cheer the sick, and wander about in a dreamy, listless way, soon see they have got to the wrong place.

Even the giddy ones find it difficult to chatter and attend to their patients, and, discovering that they get into trouble, either reserve their mirth for odd moments or give up the work. Hospital life is not play. I fancy a nurse goes to bed at night (or in the daytime if she be night nurse) as tired as any labourer, often feeling as though she had merely scrambled through her work, and not done half that should have been done. "But only the toilers know the sweetness of rest."

Now let us turn to the bright side. Anyone will own it is a pleasure to find that what he has been at some trouble to do proves a success. So with hospital life. Patients come to be cured, and the trouble and the pains required to attain certain ends are well repaid in finding the result a success; the cripple whole, the suffering eased, the sick made well.

The doctors have a good deal to do with the happiness of a nurse, and a kind cheering word from them is most encouraging. It is one of a nurse's greatest pleasures to satisfy and please the medical man she is working under, and doctor and nurse often get to know each other well.

At the same time, if I wanted a nurse's character I would not go to a medical man for it, if I could get it instead from the patients she had nursed. Though, as I have proved, there is generally but little time for reading or talking to the patients, and, as some may think, caring for their souls, still a life of sympathy and kindness is not wasted. The patients, who are often very quiet in learning from a nurse the many little things to be done

in a ward, may learn from her life-lessons also. Certain it is they watch her and get to know her well. She is hardly allowed to let her cheerfulness vanish without a reason. Very soon comes the question, "Why are you looking so cross to-day, nurse?" and she at once rouses and remembers that little vexations and troubles that she may have must not be shown in her ward. There are many opportunities, too, for giving a word of counsel, and expressing sympathy and sorrow whilst nurse is washing her patient, making his bed, dressing wounds or applying treatment, and the bright smile that follows her after a word like this, all the time she is busy in her ward, is most cheering; proving that the little she tried to do was appreciated.

Many a one wants just some little thing done, a pillow shifted or a bandage loosened, for no other reasons than to get a few words with nurse, if he feels he is being neglected; and though she may playfully scold him for wasting her precious time, she does not grudge it, and he knows it. There are numberless little things which the patients love to do to save their nurse; helping each other when able, or, if up and well enough, glad to sweep out the ward, and await her pleasure at finding less to do when she returns.

The children, too, give to their nurse very often the trust and love which before they have so seldom found anyone to appreciate. Many of them have known no homes; the love which makes home has been wanting. They love their nurse, and sometimes shed tears at leaving the hospital.

When nurse has been out in the afternoon, and perhaps returns with a sort of feeling that it would be very pleasant to sit in an armchair and read instead of going back to work, on entering the ward she hears some weary invalid say, "Oh! nurse, I am so glad you are back; it has seemed so long since you went out," the book and the easy chair no longer seem things to be desired. Each has his own little tale to tell, and loves to tell it, and the very knowledge of the trials of the one and the sympathy of the other draw nurse and patient nearer together. Then there are the men and women leaving the hospital, and occasionally even those who are about to take a longer journey, and wish before starting to give their nurse a last farewell. Often it is a pressure of the hand and just an earnest "God bless you, nurse!" but it means a great deal, and gives nurse fresh courage and strength for the future.

I would add one word more. I think a nurse can hardly be a nurse in the highest and best sense unless she feels she is working for her Master in heaven, and realises the truth and solemnity of the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it not," and the joy and comfort of "Inasmuch as ye did it."

I have but very imperfectly set forth the bright side of hospital life. Thoughts and feelings, love and sympathy are very real, but their value cannot be told on paper. Your patients are dependent on you. You feel for their suffering, and you love them, and have their love in return. Reader, if you know what love is, can you say, even amidst its daily cares, its sorrow and pain, that there is not a bright side to our hospital work?

Do not misunderstand me; home duties must ever come first, and, well performed, are surely the truest outcome of real love.

I am far, indeed, from setting up nursing above such duties, or of attaching to it more value than to any other work; only, as we have diversities of gifts, I long that we may really use them; and for those who are free to choose, and possessed of a love for nursing, desire that they may join our ranks, and swell the number of those who may be called real nurses.