

## II.

Dear Editor: So much has been said, for and against the Nurse's Aide, that it may be of interest to some readers of the JOURNAL to look at the matter from the standpoint of the aide, herself. I, like so many others, took advantage of the nursing courses provided for us by the Government, through the channel of the Red Cross. Up to the time when I responded to the call for Aides, by the Emergency Hospital, the only experience I could boast of, was one month in the Surgical Clinic of the Out-Patient Department of our General Hospital. The Emergency Hospital at the Y. W. C. A. Building was called into being, practically, in twenty-four hours. By five o'clock on Saturday afternoon of the same day, forty-seven beds had been equipped, and we notified the Health Officer that we were ready to receive patients. This rapid but efficient work, reflects immense credit upon the head nurse in charge. Two other trained nurses of wide experience and two aides comprised the working force at that time. Later, the number was increased as the victims of influenza poured in, until one hundred beds were filled. I would like to say right here, that to their surprise, the nurses' aides found more appreciation of, and more sympathy with, their efforts among the trained nurses, than among any others they came in contact with, which was an inspiration to them. Through the inimitable leadership of the head nurse, perfect harmony prevailed. Each fitted into her own place, and it is an important fact to realize in discussing this subject that each has a place of her own to fill. If the nurse's aide will only recognize her lawful limitations, she will always find herself an important adjunct to the fully trained nurse. The aides were carefully watched and just as soon as they showed themselves equal to more responsibility, they were allowed to assume it. All these problems go back to the matter of character, after all. If an aide is presumptuous, and takes upon herself more than her limited knowledge admits, she is a menace to society, but if she will modestly keep in mind the fact that fifteen lessons and a month of experience in acquiring knowledge is very little in comparison with three years of hospital training, she will become a blessing and not an obstacle, in the eyes of the trained nurse. I shall always feel that it was an inestimable privilege to work for ten days, from seven in the morning until seven at night, beside those trained nurses, doing all I could of the common duties, in order to leave them free, in that crowded room of sufferers, to administer the higher things. For instance, take the matter of giving strychnia, when the doctor prescribed it, he expected the nurse to know by the condition and the appearance of the patient at what moment to discontinue it. What aide has that knowledge? Not one, I am sure. It was a strange, never-to-be-forgotten sight,—that long deep room, the old, the young, the sick, the dying, and those who had passed beyond, all lying there together. Later, when a lower floor was opened for the convalescents, the strain in that respect was very much lessened. The nurse's aide will, I believe, continue to exist, long after the events which called her forth have ceased, for in simple cases and directly under the supervision of a doctor or a trained nurse, she will do sincere work.

New York

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