

own story as accurate, the doctor's intelligence was not at home, but was away woolgathering.

I remember when studying medicine my preceptor once wrote  $\frac{3}{5}$  for  $\bar{5}$ , and gave me the prescription to fill. If I had done so, both of us would have seen the prisoner's dock—if we got our deserts.

Many difficult questions have been put—hypothetical questions generally, or, at least, the cases must be of extremely rare occurrence—as to the duty of a nurse in administering medicine in dangerous doses, when the doctor is not available to be asked. If that particular doctor is not at hand another probably will be; and, in any case of real doubt, better follow the advice given by *Punch* to those about to marry, "Don't." For you may be quite sure that if a mistake is made, you will not be able to clear your skirts by throwing everything on the doctor—you are not his slave, but his assistant, and your negligence is not his.

I know what I say is opposed to the teachings of many medical men and nurses, too, but it is law. You have no right, much less duty, to lay aside your common sense.

In what I have said, I am not to be considered as suggesting constant or open criticism of treatment—that is not your function at all. You must use due care; but the doctor is the final judge as to treatment. Yet even here to improve yourself in your art there must needs be observation, and therefore criticism, not open, indeed, or to the patient, but to your own mind. "Criticism is like champagne, nothing more execrable if bad, nothing more excellent if good," says Colton; and while in these days of temperance and prohibition, we may not all agree with him as to the excellence of good champagne, there can be no doubt of the execrableness of bad criticism. Good criticism will assist in your profession—and to be a competent critic you must know. Natural intelligence, natural good sense, is not enough; neither reading nor writing comes by nature, nor does a knowledge as distinguished from the knack of nursing. You cannot know too much; "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," and "cultivation is as necessary to the mind as food to the body," as Cicero wisely says.

Knowledge has grown from more to more and is still growing; old and time-honoured ideas are gone, newer ones taking their place. In my school days the future character of Nero was considered to be indicated by his childhood habit of killing flies. Everyone will remember in Charles Reade's "Hard Cash" how the conduct of David Dodd in preventing his mate from killing flies was held up as a model—God's creatures had a right to live. "He was killing God's creatures . . . so, ye see, to save their lives, I was obliged to throw him overboard," said David. Now, the insect has found his true place as the outlaw of creation, the Ishmael of the animal kingdom with his hands against every