

water. Utter cleanliness must be considered as natural and essential as breathing; fresh air as food.

In an interesting and amusing book published in 1800, "The Hospital Student," by James Parkinson, a surgeon of some note and a paleontologist not quite forgotten, he speaks (p. 26) of "the vulgar (i.e. common) observation, that a physician seldom obtains bread by his profession, until he has no teeth left to eat it"; and he adds, "I have myself known a physician above fifty years of age objected to for his youth."

Matters are not quite so bad in this age and country, but still the young physician is not considered to be entitled to charge quite so much as the old and experienced—much less is the young surgeon expected to receive so much as the leaders in the profession. So, too, the young lawyer just starting cannot charge a counsel fee which the noted K.C. would expect as of course.

In your profession, however, the recent graduate expects to receive and does receive the same fee as the more experienced. Sometimes that is explained by the suggestion that the science and art of nursing is advancing and the latest graduate has the latest improvements. Perhaps so; but as the Germans say: "Change and betterment are different things," and in any event, the same argument should apply to the young surgeon. I may be permitted to doubt that in either profession the extra science and knowledge can take the place of the extra knack and dexterity acquired and acquirable only by experience. Experience is the best teacher, even if the school fees are high.

The real reason for this equality of nurses' fees lies deeper. A physician should be as good at sixty as at thirty, or better—a lawyer does not lose efficiency by advancing years, and until he becomes practically helpless his practice generally increases; but a nurse has not more than fifteen or twenty years of really efficient and remunerative service. She must make hay while the sun shines and cannot wait till October to do it either.

True, the nurse is still a woman. Most of you are destined for the slow march down the long aisle to the favorite air from Lohengrin, but there are exceptions. Some are born old maids, some achieve old maidhood, and some have old maidhood thrust upon them; and it requires reasonably generous pay, and careful and economical management for a nurse to make enough during her years of active service to support her in after life.

And that brings me back to a most important—some would say—the most important matter. Many have not yet got rid of the idea that a nurse is a kind of Sister of Charity; that she ought to attend a