The Nurse in the Good Old Days
(Job description of a Bedside Nurse in an American Hospital in 1887.)

For each of the following statements identify whether they reflect the work or the identity of the nurse and how things are different now.

In addition to caring for your 50 patients each bedside nurse will follow these regulations:

1. Any nurse who smokes, uses liquor in any form, gets her hair done at a beauty shop, or frequents dance halls will give the director of nurses good reason to suspect her worth, intentions, and integrity.

2. Daily sweep and mop the floors of your ward, dust the patients' furniture and window sills.

3. Maintain an even temperature in your ward by bringing in a scuttle of coal for the day's business.

4. Graduate nurses in good standing with the director of nurses will be given an evening off each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if you go regularly to church.

5. Each nurse on day duty will report every day at 7:00 A.M. and leave at 8 P.M. except on the Sabbath on which day you will be off from 12 Noon to 2:00 P.

6. Light is important to observe the patient's condition. Therefore, each day fill kerosene lamps, clean chimneys, and trim wicks. Wash the windows once a week.

7. The nurse's notes are important in aiding the physician's work. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to your individual taste.

8. Each nurse should lay aside from each pay day a goodly sum of her earnings for her benefits during her declining years, so that she will not become a burden. For example, if you earn $30 a month you should set aside $15.

9. The nurse who performs her labors, serves her patients and doctors faithfully and without fault for a period of five years will be given an increase by the hospital administrator of five cents a day providing there are no hospital debts that are outstanding.

Note:
Identity - how nurses were viewed.

Work/technology of nursing – the tasks that nurse performed and the equipment they may have used
Instructors Copy

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