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DIVINE PURPOSE

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DIVINE PURPOSE

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*For those who believe, no explanation is necessary
For those who don't, an explanation is useless.*

A hospital need not be large to be great, but it must have a quality that makes kindly care natural, teaching so inspired that learning is possible and a service that is earnest and honest.

The quality of service is based on the intelligence of those who serve. Habit, ritual and ignorance as a basis for judgment must be avoided. Those who serve patients intelligently are recognized by their spirit of hospitality, the elegance and refinement of care, and a respect for the human beings they serve with graciousness and dignity.

Intelligence is the basis for understanding. Education frequently supplies only knowledge and in some begets arrogance akin to that engendered by ignorance. The individual who is educated but soured by disappointment in accomplishment often seeks vengeance on his fellow man, while the person who is intelligent bears his disappointment with fortitude, grace and humility. Education acquired at school or informally through experience and meaningful application must be directed by intelligence if it is to serve a useful purpose.

An injury to the mind is just as detrimental to the patient as is an injury to the body. The response to mental trauma occasioned by rudeness, unkind remarks, slovenly care, and pain-provoking actions can delay recovery or result in physical and mental changes which may destroy the patient.

The injured or sick patient has a sensitivity which sets him apart from those in a condition of health and well-being. This sensitivity is shared by relatives and friends, who with the patient, come into contact to a greater or lesser degree with all of the hospital personnel, from the admitting office on entrance to the hospital, to the business office on departure.

Much is said about our moral and ethical deterioration. Each day the press, radio, and TV provide their quotas of evidence to substantiate our flight from dignity, kindly consideration for others, and a common belief in the sanctity of the human being. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, found in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, and THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, cover every phase of moral and ethical conduct in a civilized community.

DIVINE PURPOSE (continued)

In a hospital these precepts should serve as a guide to the care of patients.

No patient should have his suffering increased or his life placed in jeopardy by those with intolerant, malicious and uneducated minds. Truly, the flower of human resources is most urgently required in the care of the patient. Each act is significant. The employment of sterile technique (even when no one is watching), the correct dose of the prescribed drug, the prompt attention, the kind word, the smile and gentle touch, the skillful use of the precision instruments and the potent drugs available for therapy must be as natural as breathing. The patient should not be denied the miracles wrought in our time by the grace of God through the medical profession, nor should these be misused to take advantage of the innocent.

In an age of automation there is danger that the human element may be neglected or forgotten. The quality of work is debased to the point where the mediocre is the average, the superior is demoted or discarded, and the inferior is automated.

In a hospital, the greatest asset is the human quality of the personnel. Both the feeling, which it radiates, and the reaction, which it engenders in those who seek the services of the hospital, are implied in the term "personality".

As with people, the personality may be sour or sweet, antagonistic or cooperative, depressing or elevating, coldly impersonal or warmly compassionate. The edifice itself may be imposing, but only a veneer of elegance surrounding a hollow core; or it may be most unpretentious with a solid core of kindness and a warm quality of love for people. The patient may sense the "personality" of the hospital when he arrives and is confirmed in his initial impression by further contact with the nurses, the house staff, the attending staff, laboratory technicians, those who serve his food, and the administrative staff. When the patient leaves, the manner of attention seals the impression and makes him and his relatives, too, either enthusiastic friends or disgruntled critics.

These are the intangibles. They come with the package, they do not appear on the ledger as an item of expense. They are part and parcel of the hospital.

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