Much to Learn from other Associations

by Mary Das

A day spent in the office of the Swedish Nurses Association was rewarding. After studying the work of the Association, I felt that there is much the TNAA can learn from other professional Associations. The Executive Secretary Miss Gunborg Bergkvist patiently answered all my questions.

The executive function of the Association is vested in the Central Board of Directors. There are two Councils, which function as Advisory Bodies to the Board, the Council of Chairman and the Confidence Council. They meet at any time according to the desire of the Central Board of Directors.

When the Swedish Nurses Association was founded in 1919 its objectives were to improve the welfare of nurses and the conditions of nursing education and nursing service. A few years later some nurses felt the Association should take up the cause of improved working conditions for nurses through the law. In 1933, the Association decided to work for the welfare of nurses.

The Board of Directors is elected by the assembly, which is held annually. The board consists of the President, the vice President, and 12 other members, representing the Swedish branches of the Association. Each branch elects one representative to the assembly.

The branch consists of the Chairman of Local Branches, Central Board of Directors, and a representative of the branch. The Chairman and the representative meet at least twice a year. The branch's annual meeting is held in March, and the branch's general meeting is held in November.

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The Central Board of Directors meets at least twice a year and acts as the highest authority of the Association.

The Central Board of Directors has the power to make decisions in between assembly meetings. The board meets every month except in July, which is the holiday month for this country.

The Council of Chairman consists of the Branch Presidents. It meets in the year in which there is no assembly meeting and function as an advisory body.

The Confidence Council which also functions as advisory body consists of the Chairman of Local Branches, Central Board of Directors, and a representative of the branch. The branch's annual report is presented at the general meeting.

The headquarters of the Swedish Nurses Association has 50 to 60 members on the staff. They include the President, the Executive Secretary, 20 registered Nurses, 3 Journalists and other staff, in addition thereto a part-time lawyer is also engaged. Visiting the large headquarters especially of the As-

Mrs. Gerd Zetterstrom Lagervall, President, Swedish Nurses Association
sociation my thoughts went back to the TNAI headquarters and I felt that we are expecting too much from the small number of staff employed there.

FINLAND

To Finland I arrived from England which was a change. But a peep into the nursing world was a contrast. While in England there is an allround effort to attract women into the nursing profession to overcome the acute shortage of nurses, in her neighbouring country, Finland, there was unemployment of qualified nurses. There nursing is the second most popular profession for women. This country had even to restrict recruitment in the nursing school because of the surplus trained nurses. Only 1/3 of the total applicants get admission to nursing schools. The Finland nurse proudly say “we have no shortage of nurses while everywhere in the world there is cry about trained nurses”. In Finland there are many avenues of employment for women. To my question a senior nurse replied “Women in our country do everything except driving the railway engine.”

I posed for a moment and wondered how there are only limited opportunities in our country for women.

Student nurses in Finland enjoy full student status. Nursing education is under the National Board of Vocational and Professional Education. The nurse teacher is responsible for the entire programme both in the nursing and in the teaching fields. She works in collaboration with the Public Health Nurses and Ward Sisters who supervise the students in the field. The Public Health Nurses and Ward Sisters are rewarded for teaching the student nurses.

Promotion as a Ward Sister depends on the qualification she possesses in the special field. Promotion as Nursing Tutor or Administrator requires further education.

The Helsinki College of Nursing imparts nursing education in basic, post-basic and advance education. Its courses are comprehensive and integrated.

The foundation of nursing education in Finland was laid by Miss Sneliman in 1944. She established the foundation with a gift she received from 3300 nurses on her 50th birthday as a token of appreciation for her work in the field of nursing education. The aim of the foundation is to promote nursing education. Its programme includes publication of professional literature, organisation of different nursing activities, grant of scholarships for nursing education and research, promotion of ideas and initiative aiming at the development of nursing education, making available professional literature to nurses and nursing students, raising of funds for the foundation, conduct-

A patient in Dialysis at the Intensive care unit of the Helsinki University Hospital.

The Matron of Helsinki University Hospital in session with Head Nurses.

(Contd. on page 386)