

STUDENT NURSES PAGE

A Glimpse into the Future

By

Joyce Roache

(1st Year Student)

Holy Family Hospital, New Delhi

When you went to school for the first time did you feel strange, excited and filled with awe by it at all? Were you just a little scared and alone amongst so many? And yet, at the end of a term, didn't you feel pride in what you had learned, and inside, a feeling of added stature in the eyes of your parents and friends? It is the same feeling when you are a probationer in a school of nursing and there is both a capping and a graduation—your own capping and your seniors' graduation.

I felt all this one day last week. It was a day of much happiness. The sun appeared brighter and to me it seemed that even our sparrows chirped their own special chorus of congratulations.

The ceremony before a public audience began. My knees felt like unset jello. I knew I must remember each solemn word of the Nightingale Pledge, but the music of our march kept interrupting my thoughts and all I could think was, "Left, right, keep time". Somehow I passed through the blur of the audiences' faces. The procession ended—the Capping ceremony began. I was only one among 25 students but I never felt more alone. My cap was on my head, the symbol of love and faith and the many responsibilities of the profession. The burning candle in my hand signified an eternal vigil, and the pledge, my oath of allegiance. Our preliminary training days were over. If only we could live up to the ideals inculcated during those days.

The address given by Dr. Adiseshiah

stressed the vital role played by nurses everywhere today. He spoke of the varied experiences that nurses undergo, and of the responsibilities and difficulties. He emphasised that nursing is hard work, requiring strength and fortitude, tact and discretion. There is no place in the field for the idler, the dishonest and the insensitive.

I was still thinking of the many ideals I had to live up to when the graduation ceremony began. New black, velvet bands across the graduates caps seemed to stand out as the six new nurses received their diplomas from the Rt. Reverend Monsignor Burke. Only a band, a quarter of an inch wide, but meaning so much. The fact that the Director of the School of Nursing, Sister Mary Caroline placed the school pins over their hearts must have awakened new joy in these graduates and fired them with greater zeal.

I could not help but look ahead to my own future when I would participate in the same ceremony, knowing at least how these first nurses I had seen graduated from Holy Family Hospital, felt on that day when a new life started for them in the field of nursing.

The 50 minute ceremony came to an end with the distribution of awards. For highest scholastic achievement to Sister Catherine and for best bed-side nursing to Irene Joseph.

Graduation was over. But the impressions I had received, the glimpses into my own future that I was permitted so briefly—these will last for ever.