

The Challenge to Nursing in Nepal

By

Martha Garst

Public Health Nursing Adviser, USOM, Nepal

Professional nursing service is very new to Nepal. As nearly as can be ascertained, there were only two practising graduate nurses in 1952. Now, the expanding Services within His Majesty's Government and those in the Mission Field, there are about 25.

Several agencies are involved in the present impetus. The World Health Organisation is working with a School of Nursing which now has its second group of students. The first class will be graduated in 1959. The International Cooperation Administration is assisting His Majesty's Government with the development of public health nursing services within the Ministry of Health. Various mission groups have established hospital and dispensary services in several areas of the country. All these services play an important part in demonstrating and interpreting just what professional services are and what they can mean to the people.

This year, Nepal is committed to a staggering programme in nursing which involves :

(a) The establishment of a public health nursing service in the Rapti Valley (part of the Terai),

(b) the establishment of a training centre for women auxiliary workers in public health nursing,

(c) the establishment of two rural hospital-health centres,

(d) continued development of the School of Nursing,

(e) reorganization of the Bir Hospital at Kathmandu so that it will more nearly meet the needs of a Medical Teaching Centre and provide sound clinical practice for students at the School of Nursing.

The public health nursing service pro-

vides a true challenge to those who are privileged to participate in its development. The term "nurse" is relatively unknown outside of professional circles. The people will come to know the meaning of the term through the services they receive—through the example demonstrated by the nursing personnel with whom they come in contact. The people will experience new and strange concepts in the care of the sick, cleanliness, sanitation and health practices in general. The various workers in these fields carry a tremendous responsibility in that the examples they give will be the impressions which will define for the future the meaning of modern public health practices. The approach used by the workers in their relationships with the people will define the measure of success of the programme—it's acceptance by the people and the effectiveness of the services offered.

Thus, it is impressively obvious that each and every nurse in Nepal carries the banners for the profession. She is one of the members of the health team who has the closest relationships with the patient in the hospital, in the village, with the family and its members. She is an important liaison between the people and the medical services. Upon her shoulders rests the greater responsibility of the acceptance of the services by the people.

It isn't that one has the opportunity to participate in a truly pioneering programme. In most countries, nursing has developed over the years in a step-by-step effort to provide care for the sick. Historically, nursing has experienced terrific struggles to progress out of the sub-professional recognition. In Nepal, nursing may be established, once and for all, and from the beginning, as a professional service. The calibre and conscience of those who accept this challenge today will serve posterity in

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