

NURSE, AS A CITIZEN

Vice President (West & Central)
Miss E. Paul.

*Members elected by the Annual
General Meeting:*

Miss T. Neudoerffer.

Mr. T. R. Gade.

Branch Secretary for Orissa:
Miss D. Coggins.

*Branch Secretary for Madhya
Pradesh:* Mrs. D. Joshi (Temporary)

A good deal of time went in the meetings of various groups.

The following met for discussions:

The Nurses Auxillary: 'Old Internationals'; College of Nursing Alumnae; Members of Mysore and Coorg; Men Nurses; the HVL and MU; The Matrons and Sister Tutors; and Ward Sisters and Staff-Nurses.

One hundred and sixty-four students registered for the Conference. The Silver Jubilee of the Student

Nurses Association was celebrated by holding a two-day meeting that included business, addresses, presentation of papers and a demonstration by Bowring and Curzon Hospital students. The SNA was At Home on the 16th when a beautiful three tier cake was cut.

The SNA Exhibition was a centre of attraction and contained a record number of entries. The quality of the exhibits continues to be good and the student nurses deserve congratulating.

The next Conference is to be held at Patna, Bihar, sometime in November 1955.

The Conference adjourned with a hearty Vote of Thanks to all who contributed to the success of the Conference.

A happy finish to five busy days was a concert by the Christie Minstrels.

Second Prize Essay

Nurse, as a Citizen

By

V. Ashirvadam

It is being recognised more and more that, besides the routine medical and nursing attention, a patient needs a great deal of sympathy, love and kindness which a nurse can give in an abundant measure. And often, careful attention to his psychological mal-adjustments will hasten his ultimate recovery. The role of the nurse in this process is also being recognised but what is not recognised as widely, is that a nurse is essentially a citizen and what exactly is her role as a citizen, a citizen of the India of 1954?

We know that the main character-

istic of a citizen is to have a sense of civic responsibility. A citizen has his own rights and duties, rights of protection, education, justice, holding private properties, duties to obey law and order, serve the country and humanity, and try to help the poor and afflicted.

A nurse as a true citizen is playing an important role in society. In the vast field of service to humanity a nurse occupies a responsible place. Many in our country think that nursing is simply a job to earn money, thereby missing the very essence of nursing—that is, the ideal

What pity, when we many saying "Oh let us go to India, Africa, where we can earn a lot of money and enjoy life". No it is our duty to go to far off lands and serve when the call comes, but if our motive is just to earn money then the very foundation of nursing is at stake. Here we can recall the selfless devotion to duty of Nurse Genevieve de Galard Terraupe, who in the grim battle at Dienbienphu along with the soldiers faced the stark realities of a modern war. Her tireless work, her courage, her tender care of sick and dying earned her the name "The Angel of Dienbienphu".

My own conviction is that there are no more effective planning groups than our own nurses' associations and that nurses have much to contribute as citizens to community living. We read, we hear and we talk about Community projects, Community planning, Community living and so on. And what is it that a nurse has to do in this connection? What role can she play in these Community activities? If we think over these points for a few moments we will come to the conclusion that a nurse can do a great deal as a citizen in these community activities.

The community projects are part of our Five Year Plan and we know their objectives and how Prime Minister Nehru and other leaders are stressing the importance of them. The main objective of this is to make the rural people understand that they also have to play their part in the work of uplifting their country and raising the standard of living. I feel that a nurse, specially in rural areas, has a great duty to perform. There are many rural welfare centres where the need for nurses is very great. For instance, in the Baby Welfare Centres, we come across many children in a most distressing condition and much can be done to improve their lot. We have started a Baby Welfare Centre recently in our

Sanatorium which provides amenities for little children who are left there by their parents when they go out for work. It is a pleasure to be with them for a couple of hours and give them a bath, teach them a few songs and serve them a cup of kanjee and milk. Children are the future statesmen, administrators and citizens. This is the reason why Pandit Nehru often stresses the importance of taking care of the children. A nurse can be a link between home and school.

It is said "In the public health field she the Nurse, is the messenger for the gospel of healthy living and the liaison between the forces of light and knowledge and those of ignorance and disease. She functions as an administrator in hospitals and organisations keeping the wheels of nursing services running. In the field of nursing education she functions as the teacher moulding hundreds of young women into the profession where mercy reigns".

The work of a nurse is not confined to hospital nursing only. In public health, nursing extends its service to the families outside, both nationally and internationally, overcoming the barriers of colour, caste and creed. "The public health nurse in a village is the 'Encyclopedia of knowledge' in health problems even to the point of predicting the sex of the next birth in the house! She is the teacher of public hygiene and sanitation". Mahatma Gandhi said that a true citizen is one who practices the doctrine of nursing. In fact he himself nursed and cared for many who needed nursing care.

A nurse should participate in and share the responsibilities with other citizens and organisations in promoting health.

It is easy to conclude that what is needed most in nurse is a personality that manifests interest in people, is willing to sacrifice self for others, can meet changing situations effectively recognising the spiritual as well as cultural and professional responsibilities.