

comes increasingly responsible. There is wide scope for the expansion of the Public Health services in the field of school nursing, industrial nursing, tuberculosis nursing etc. As the Public Health Services of the country expands, so will the workers' opportunities.

In the post war period there is splendid scope in the branch of preventive medicine and Health Visitors are likely to turn up as a regular and important part of the staff of every Public Health Organisation. As in every profession, the one with better and higher quali-

cations has a better chance for a higher post, nurses also will stand a very good chance in their own capacity as Health Visitors. This does not mean a discouragement to those Health Visitors without general nursing. Merit and ability will always be counted. For those having human touch especially for children Health Visiting offers a noble profession. In this new age of changes and opportunities, it is for everybody to show readiness. The nation's call comes to each and every one and is to be spontaneously responded to.

M. K.

Student Nurses Page

We have pleasure in welcoming another Unit into the S.N. Association.

R. M. Hospital, Tanjore. 34 members.

We publish the essay on Nursing

which received the 2nd, class prize at the Exhibition, and congratulate the winner Mr Pritam Prabhu of the Stanley Hospital, Madras.

Awarded 2nd Prize in Essay Competition S.N.A. October, 1945.

The Nursing Profession in India And Its Future Possible Developments

The great desire to serve humanity inspires one to take up the nursing profession. The world's richest man is poor if he is not healthy. Existence is a burden to an unhealthy individual.

"Health is Wealth." How perfectly true that sounds!

Nursing is not merely an occupation, temporary and superficial in its scope. It is a great vocation. It is so well known to be difficult that it is seldom undertaken by any woman or man who has not in the depths of her or his consciousness, an earnest purpose to serve humanity. When we learn of the hard and bitter struggles our pioneer nurses had to face in order to bring nursing on the path of progress, one not only appreciates their efforts but is urged to shoulder the task with greater alacrity and more hopefulness. The act of nursing has still marvellous undeveloped possibilities, especially the more difficult in the delicate act of nursing sick minds and spirits. When we look through the nursing journals of the foreign lands we have enough cause to be thoroughly ashamed of ourselves here in India because if to-day we are so backward in our nursing achievements we have ourselves to blame for

not coming forward to give our full and ardent support to this great and humanitarian service. When the service of nursing is going by leaps and bounds all over the world here it is still in its infancy though perhaps India can boast of having had fine well equipped hospitals even in the very early days as far back as the reign of KING ASOKA.

Come on daughters and sons of India, wake up to the clarion call! Service of man is service of God. We have here before us the great task of perfecting our art and building up our knowledge. Radiating health is the keynote to all wealth and happiness and how joyfully happy we nurses must be to think that here at last we are given the longed for opportunity, the yearned for desire to be up and doing, doing something simple yet great, something common yet novel, something trying yet superb and meritorious. Here is your opportunity, strike hard and fast. Stir up your deep and broad sympathies and your intense and pent up feelings. Come forward unflinchingly to meet the needs of the millions of our people. People whose lives are shattered and torn with anxiety and despair, whose minds are closed to the

knowledge of light, wisdom and truth, whose hearts are frozen, frozen because of sheer neglect.

Here is an eye opener to many of us. Have you ever paused to think that India is a country with an area of 15,81,410 sq. miles with a population of 38,89,97,955 and so far has produced only 7,000 nurses approximately. To be more accurate one nurse for 225 sq. miles, that is, one nurse for 55,570 people. And who do you think is responsible for this? I leave it to each individual to answer this query. An estimate of 1944 in India gives 1 nurse to every 10 doctors whereas in England they have 2 nurses to every doctor. 8 lakhs of nurses are required if it should be 1 to 3 patients according to international requirements.

In the past few years, no doubt nursing in India has been in rapid progress and making great efforts towards advancement. But there is so much more to be done. So many improvements have to be made and how can one possibly venture on the great schemes that are in vogue if women of education and culture just sit on and gaze not making the slightest effort whatsoever to offer themselves or their services to the common cause, the noblest of MISSIONS one could ever undertake-- that of nursing the sick minds and bodies.

Each Province thus far has Training Schools for nurses, both General and Maternity training, also Child Welfare Centres. First Aid and Home Nursing lectures are perhaps periodically given to the lay people but this is not enough. Diplomed Schools and Post-graduate courses have been introduced in certain provinces and Central Preliminary Training Schools will soon be started in most of the provinces, but that is not all. There is so much more to be done. How and when are the questions we leave to the authorities concerned.

A brief note of criticism before I go into the future developments of nursing in India. Sister Tutors are in great demand in the hospitals all over India. It is all very well to have a Sister Tutor who is the hub of all teaching, but what about the spokes? The hub without the spokes is not of much use, is it? The best place for a nurse to learn her work

and perform it to perfection is at the patient's bedside. How often we hear the staff and senior nurses exclaim "My ward is so heavy, there is no time to teach the nurses." If there is really no time in which to teach the nurses, the ward in question is understaffed. Ward Sisters are the best teachers of practical nursing, and while the work may be augmented by practical classes in the nursing schools, such teaching cannot take the place of the constant bedside instruction which a ward sister will give to her nurses day by day.

The Sister Tutor may take classes round the wards and give lecture demonstrations at the bedside. These bedside lectures have been organised and given with success in some hospitals but their scope is limited. You cannot possibly take a class of eager young nurses to the bedside of a very ill patient without causing him disturbance and distress, but the ward sisters can point out quietly the outstanding features of his case to two or three of her own ward nurses, without any teaching being noticeable by her patient. We must not forget that hospitals, of all sorts, are primarily places to which sick people come to be cured if possible, in any case to be made more comfortable. As a secondary consideration, they are places where doctors and nurses come to learn the science and art of Medicine, Surgery and nursing. So the number of ward sisters in the hospital must be definitely increased not merely to be policemen on parade but to teach by word and example the best way for a nurse to fulfil her everyday duties.

Secondly, in a large nursing school, at least Two Sister Tutors will be required to organise and control the education of the student nurses. The Senior Sister must be one who ranks with the assistant matron. A large well fitted lecture room with one or two demonstration rooms, a quiet study room and library and Sister Tutor's office room, an epidiascope together with other equipment must be provided for.

It would be a wise plan to have a nurses' representative council in order to give the nurses some power of self-expression. Of course, the activities of the council are confined within certain limits.

A National Health Insurance should be started and every nurse at the end of her preliminary training school should be made to join this insurance for her own benefit. A Nurses' Convalescent Home by the sea side on in the country to receive convalescent nurses free of charge or at moderate charges would be an ideal thing for each Province. A Central Recreation Club in large cities where nurses of different institutes could freely mix and thus feel more at home with each other than as perfect strangers would be necessary. The staff and senior nurses, as far as possible should be provided with single rooms. Nurses under training could share rooms, but all to go to the common sleeping porch which should be mosquito proof. A separate night block for nurses on night duty is essential.

Nurses should be trained not just for hospital routine work but to give wayside clinics; rural health teaching, district nurses, school nurses, social workers. Nurses should be trained as Dietitians, Masseuses and last but not least why should not the Provinces pick out a deserving Indian candidate and send her abroad to visit foreign hospitals and if possible take a further course in studies? Won't it also be a brilliant idea to have nurse Inspectresses who can make a survey of the various hospitals in the provinces periodically and thus assist the Nursing Assistant or the Principal Matrons of the Provinces keeping her enlightened from time to time of the existing conditions.

Every special department of a hospital must also be provided with a nurse supervisor who has specially trained for the purpose. So far we have not had any nurses here in India who have specialized themselves in one particular branch of nursing and it is of vital importance that we are encouraged to take such courses and given the facilities necessary for it. There must be nurses trained for special work such as children's nurse, mental nurse, tuberculosis nurse etc. These three branches of nursing are being sadly neglected and I should say they are of the utmost importance. One can give a basic education to the millions of the unkempt people of India because they are very suggestible and can be

easily re-educated by teaching them the simple underlying principles of sanitation, the laws of health the prevention of disease which is decidedly better than cure. Tuberculosis in India is spreading like wild fire. What is it due to but the unhygienic conditions, poor living and malnutrition. The nurses interested in social work may be trained as District Nurses and posted to various health centres where they can play a very active part in teaching the ignorant people the simple ways of leading a normal healthy life. Where they have the chance of really getting deep into the hearts and problems of the people, helping them out of their little difficulties which seem so trivial to us but quite a problem to these poor untrained minds. How to choose a well balanced diet, how to preserve the purity of drinking water. Personal hygiene—the healthy ways of bringing up children, the value of education in fact, compulsory education must be enforced in India as well as Nursery schools. The value and economy of time is another factor. How much good work can be turned out by those poor urchins who keep loitering about the roads, doing nothing. How much corruption could be stopped. What pleasing healthy atmosphere can be turned out of the existing dirty and degrading slums. What a different India we can have if only every woman and man could be a little more selfless, thinking more of their neighbours than her or himself. How much of this catchy disease could be stopped. How many children could be spared to their dear parents and how many parents to the poor destitute children? Leprosy is another scourge in India; and why? Same reasons over again—children robbed of their health and vigour, adults with their vitality all sapped and hopes frustrated on the brink of despair and all because there have not been enough people interested in them. Those poor victims are left day in and day out in the abyss of darkness and to think they are mortals just as you and I. Oh! where is our charity? The charity and love which is so renowned of the sons and daughters of India. Charles IX, King France, once asked the Poet Tasso, who in his estimation was happiest. Tasso replied without hesitation "God". "Everybody

knows that" continued the King "but who is next?" And Tasso answered "He who becomes most like to God." Remember then the highest, the best, the most permanent pleasures are those which come from the faithful fulfilment of life's duties and obligations. Selfishness and enjoyment may dwell together for a brief season, but the latter will soon wither away under the absorbing influence of the former. Nursing requires abundant energy that gives ambition, endurance and a firm determination to get over wordly obstacles. By helping one another we shall be serving our motherland. Let us then prove ourselves true daughters and sons of the soil; here is the test. Florence Nightingale has said, "Nursing is an art, requiring as hard a preparation, as exclusive a devotion as any painter's or sculptor's work." Who can deny this fact? It is not true that Nursing is really a scientific art?

Both women and men are required in this world wide field of service. The service rendered by the male nurses these few years has been very remarkable indeed and should not be passed without paying these brave sons of India the praises due. In spite of ridicule and scorn, they unflinchingly shoulder the burden side by side with their sister nurses. Never a murmur nor a sigh of discontent escapes their lips, though one can see that life is not too smooth for them. But they still keep plodding on because they know they are doing it for a noble cause, fulfilling a sacred mission, obeying a divine call, the call to serve one another, to nurse the sick minds and bodies to rejuvenate the shattered bodies and to rekindle into the hearts of all people a new light the light of knowledge and love and the hope of future happiness. Should it not be emphasised then that they ought to be given the same status as the lady nurses? Are not their services of equal importance especially in the men's wards, in the preparation of rooms or in the venereal departments? Of course their number could be limited, but once taken on they must be given the same facilities as the lady nurses and treated on equal rights. Ancient India could boast of a highly developed Nursing Art. Particularly a high code set up for hygiene and also for personal qualities but a period of

decadence resulted, so much so that the art of nursing was extinct for so many hundreds of years. Superstition predominated the land. It was with so much of effort and perseverance on the part of our pioneer nurses that the barriers were slowly broken down making room for science to creep in.

In this new era, Nursing in India is faced with a tremendous problem. Our numbers are few but our task is great. Nursing is in such great demand now but there will be a greater demand at the end of this brutal war and more capable nursing heads must be at hand to help in tackling the problems in the present day crisis. More of the well educated ladies must come forward to do their bit for their own kith and kin.

Indian universities must have a Degree Course in Nursing. The student seeking admission must have worked for two years at scientific subjects in a College of good standing. She then has 30 months or 2½ years theory and practice of nursing at the end of which she will obtain the degree "Bachelor in Nursing."

Post-graduate courses, preparing students for administrative work, public health nursing, special branches of nursing and practical ward sisters must be greatly encouraged. Sister Tutors must have the B.Sc. Degree of Nursing. Otherwise they will not be a success as teachers because the teacher herself must have a wide range of knowledge if she is to impart it to others. It is high time that a nurse was selected as a member of the Legislative Council. Because it is the nurse who knows best as to the requirements of the nurses and the nursing profession.

There should be an affiliation of all the hospitals in India and this could be brought about in so many ways one of which is to have examiners selected from hospitals other than one's own. Why should not the recognised Mission Hospital Nursing Superintendents be allowed to examine the nurses in the Government hospitals and those of Govt. hospitals in the Mission Hospitals? This will only help to equalise the standard of nursing right through India. At present there is such a wide range of difference not only in the routine of work but even in the nursing procedures themselves.

And just a word before conclusion. Would the authorities concerned kindly look into the nurses' home conditions? Have you paused to think why so often people say, "Oh! these nurses, they are no good." "My daughter to be a nurse? Never."

Nurses are just as human as anybody else and not placed here merely for the give and take. They are no beasts of burden to be made to work for 10, 12 and 14 hours as does happen in certain institutions. 8 hours of work should be the maximum for every nurse whether day or night duty. The nurses should be provided for in their homes. They need to enjoy life just as much as anyone else. If enough recreative amenities are provided for them in their own homes, why need they seek for sport outside? If the nurses are instrumental in bringing health and happiness, rest and comfort to millions of people, should not these nurses themselves have radiating health and happiness so that they can carry on the great humanitarian service undeterred. At present the nurses' environment is far from the ideal atmosphere that should surround them. It is not necessary to go into the details as to the requirements of a Nurses' Home, but every Nursing Superintendent does feel that things are not up to much for the nurses and perhaps try as she might she does not meet with enough co-operation to better the home conditions of the nurses. In this connection it can be mentioned that a Home Sister who ranks as an Assistant Matron would be of invaluable help in large institutions.

To enable India to have an unique standard of nursing, it would be a wise plan to start provincial nursing leagues

and a Central Nursing Council. The Central Council could be empowered to inspect training institutions and the examinations conducted periodically thus ensuring a uniform standard not only in the training of nurses, but also in the special branches of nursing and the higher courses like the D.N., the Sister Tutor's course etc. It would also be a real benefit to have nurse registrars who will be quick enough to grasp difficult situations and thus be of help in enlightening the burden of the Principal Matrons.

With all these points in view, our next aim must be to start a real propaganda mission to attract the better class of girls and boys who are not only highly qualified but are really intelligent and industrious to come forward and join the band of nurses. Our drive must be aimed at not merely swelling the numbers but getting the real stuff. As Shakespeare says "To be nurse-like is to be so kind, so duteous, diligent so tender over his occasions, true, so feat."

The heart and mind, life and strength of a nurse must be in the work undertaken by her. Whatever she does must be done silently not calling for praises or honours not substituting words for acts. 'It is not how much but how well we do.' No single great deed is comparable to the multitudes of little kindnesses performed by those unselfish souls who forgetting their own sorrows scatter happiness on every side and strew all life with hope and good cheer. And dear readers, do remember that "Time lost returneth no more." So up, woman and man, and try, for all help is nigh.

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Nobody's Business

"As well as can be expected" "Condition unchanged." "Some improvement"—how easily these unsatisfying careful phrases come to the lips of the busy nurse, but what a chill they give to the mother or father waiting expectantly for friendly news from those who have

care of someone dear to them. An article in *The Times* of March 2, suggests the formation of 'Humanity Departments' where it would be somebody's business to establish the human contacts which mean so much in times of anxiety. The present day scientific achievements, the