

*The Student Nurses Page**An auspicious day at the Irwin Hospital. New Delhi*

Some days previous, a notice warned us of a coming event—the presentation of the RIGGS MEDAL and ABRAM-SOHAN SINGH MEDAL. As a consequence, this information brought a feeling of tension and excitement everywhere, as all the Probationer Nurses were extremely anxious to know which two Nurses were to be the lucky ones.

The day came and we found ourselves waiting impatiently in the Drawing Room for the Members of the Committee to arrive. They were Colonel Dargan, Colonel and Mrs. Nat, Miss Abram and Dr. Sohan Singh and Mrs. Hance who had kindly accepted the invitation to present the Medals.

At 5-30 p.m. all had arrived, and our Matron, Miss Jenkins began by reading out the Rules for these Medals which were to be awarded to

1. The best ALL ROUND NURSE OF THE YEAR (Riggs Medal)

2. The best PRACTICAL NURSE, (Abram Sohan-Singh Medal)

the third year Probationer receiving the former

*Public Health Page***PUBLIC HEALTH ASSISTANTS.***Interim Scheme*

While we are waiting for public opinion in India to approve of the nursing profession as a suitable career for well educated and cultured Indian women, we should not refuse to explore other avenues along which a higher standard of health for India's population may be reached.

A good deal may be done towards this goal by preventative measures. Many Indian girls of good family and cultural background may readily take up such work, although not yet willing to undergo the full nursing and midwifery training.

In 1938 I laid a proposal before the Delhi Health School authorities for training Special Health Assistants. The candidates should be of good education, and cultured background, so as to ensure high prestige and status in the district where they may afterwards work.

Training would be given in Public Health, Physical Training, Guiding, Nursing, Child Care, Psychology, Teaching methods, social Problems and Economics, etc.

The work entrusted to such Public

and the second year Probationer the latter.

Colonel Dargan thanked Mrs. Hance for coming on behalf of all the Nursing Staff and referred to the honour of being presented with a Medal. Then Mrs. Hance rose and said how pleased she was to be able to present us the Medals, and that she would not keep us in any more suspense, as she knew fully well how eager we were to learn the names of the Winners of the Medals.

Well, the Riggs Medal was presented to Nurse K. Singh and the other to me, though I could not believe my ears when I heard my name called out, and it was not before I was pushed out of my chair that it became a reality.

What a honour to be chosen! May it be a good inspiration for the most Junior Nurses, and an urge for others to work harder.

The evening ended happily for all, specially for us who had been so fortunate in winning the awards—SO GO AHEAD NURSES. Nurse D. Finch.

Health Assistants would centre in Health Institutes and would be carried on by means of lectures, demonstrations, in invalid cookery etc. etc. Home nursing and First Aid classes, organised games for women, girls and children at the Institute or in parks or School playgrounds, organised fresh air outings, mothercraft courses etc. as well as by visits to the homes in the district. Anti T.B. and Hospital after care visiting could also be carried on from these Health Institutes.

All over India most of the work for Public Health is administered by men, but success will only be achieved when the women of Indian homes whole heartedly co-operate. This scheme for Public Health Assistants would bring health ideas right into the homes, in a friendly, helpful *personal* way which should ensure success. The present Health Visitors have too much to do with their midwifery cases and the hospitals are also too busy, really to devote as much time as is necessary to preventative work. The proposed Public Health Assistants would fill this urgent need.

J.C.