

American General Hospital, Malir to speak at the next meeting. It was decided to hold the Annual General Meeting in October and to invite Lady Dow to preside.

4. The All India T.N.A.I. Conference to be held in Delhi from Nov. 19th-24th was discussed.

It was decided (a) to organise a dance or cinema show to raise funds to send three delegates to the Conference and for a purse to be presented at the Conference for the Central Funds.

(b) All the members agreed to present at the next meeting, a small gift for the T.N.A.I. sale of work in Delhi. The gifts to be ready by October 15th. All gifts to be priced.

(c) Miss Nazareth, Secretary, Students Nurses Association, Civil Hospital, Karachi was asked to arrange for an exhibit from her unit for the students' section at the Delhi Nursing Exhibition.

5. Mrs Sackett commented on the good attendance and thanked the members for the interest they were showing in T.N.A.I. activities. She hoped that it would be possible to continue holding monthly meetings with a new speaker at each meeting provided that the members co-operated by attending these meetings.

B. Sackett

Hon. Branch Secretary

Sind & Baluchistan Branch, T.N.A.I.

Children in Hospital

[By Linda Robertson]

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Many Students in our Schools of Nursing are doubtless quite familiar with the handling of children. However, there are many others who have had only the sketchiest of contacts with well youngsters and none at all with them when they are ill. In order to assist nurses in carrying out the necessary care of these children and to promote good fellowship and understanding certain fundamental psychological methods should be incorporated in the student's learning.

The basic factor which determines to a considerable extent, the child's feeling of happiness or unhappiness is his sense of security, his feeling of belonging. When he is admitted to hospital, he loses this assurance and his reaction may be demonstrated in one of a variety of patterns. The timid child becomes introverted; the bold child may kick and scream; the "babied" child will weep incessantly. These manifestations all demonstrate fear—fear of the unknown, of the strange people and surroundings. As quickly as possible efforts should be made to restore his sense of security and to establish a regular routine.

If he is at first unmanageable wait for him to become quiet, then tell him who some of the children are near him; explain what he must ask for if he wishes to go to the bathroom. Explain all procedures as they occur. It is not the pain he dreads half as much as the fear of not knowing what is going to happen to him. When a treatment is ordered which necessitates taking the child to another part of the hospital, make a game out of the trip. This helps to place the emphasis on something other than dreaded treatment.

The child who frets and fusses over a prolonged period of confinement will respond happily to some suggestion of make-believe. His bed may be the landing strip where airplanes arrive from far-away places. The wheel-chair becomes the chariot of his "Royal Highness". It need only take a few minutes each day to enlarge on this idea and make him completely reconciled by permitting him to "hold court".

When she is assigned to the children's ward, the nurse should familiarize herself with the spontaneous activities and inquiries of children at different ages. In particular, she needs to be aware of the limitations of vocabulary and adjust her conversation to the level of each patient. The health teaching which the nurse does must be based upon facts which the child understands, so presented that they appeal to him *now*. Most children love the sound of words that rhyme and when the jingle is made to apply especially to him, the child will be kept happy for hours repeating some apparently senseless combination of words which nevertheless contain the germ of the idea in health teaching the nurse was trying to instil. How much more likely she is to reach her goal if the nurse manufactures some such rhyme as :

*Potatoes have eyes
But they cannot see
That they're on my spoon
Going inside of me.*

instead of saying, "If you want to grow up to be a big man, you must eat your potatoes".

Many children have a special doll or other pet which they have been in the habit of taking to bed with them. When sickness strikes suddenly, the child may have to be whisked away to hospital and the beloved teddy bear is left behind. When she should be going to sleep, not only is the little girl all alone in a strange bed but she is lost without the teddy who always slept beside her at home. In the dark, it is easy to substitute a stuffed sock which allays the fear as the little fingers close over it. Habits, such as this, which do not interfere with the child's sleep or health should be fostered, not broken.

Children make excellent patients. It is the exception when their complaints are not justifiable. What special preparation does the nurse require to enable her to cope with any problems which may arise? Tact, intelligence, patience and good humour are essential requisites. Added to these, she must try to see things from the child's point of view. Her attitude must be friendly and sympathetic, yet firm enough that she remains in control of the situation. She must learn to speak gently and firmly, never sharply, to children. She must make up her own mind what it is she wants in the way of co-operation. Children are quick to sense confusion and ineptness and because they are great show offs, will attempt to take advantage of her. On the other hand, children are indefatigable and perpetual imitators and they will respond if only to gain approval, if the nurse knows what she wants.

To sum up, the nurse will be successful in the children's department if she :

- 1 Establishes their sense of security when admitted to the hospital
- 2 Is always truthful and remembers the need for explanation.
- 3 Tries to see the situation from the child's point of view.
- 4 Is consistent in her dealings with them.
- 5 Is calm and unperturbed no matter how much confusion there may be around her.