

Interested inquiries, are coming from many sources and we feel that we are on the eve of a great awakening of public interest in this important branch of nursing.

It is gratifying to know that in some hospitals, such as the American Presbyterian Mission Hospital, Miraj, men and women are already working together and that both men and women are full of zeal, and ready to come forward and be of service to their country. We call upon all men nurses to join the Trained Nurses' Association of India, in order to further the great work of nursing, to prevent illness, to supply better care for the sick and suffering, to provide the best and most efficient assistance for the physicians and surgeons. To counteract our difficulties and raise the standard and status of our profession.

MEN NURSES IN INDIA

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The year 1937 is the landmark in the nursing history of India. Hitherto a layman understands especially in India the word nurse is associated with women. Perhaps he thinks that tenderness and other qualities of nursing are the monopoly of the other sex. But now it is proved that with proper training men can also even at times excel women in nursing. To educate the public on this point an association is quite essential which will not only help in advancing the profession but will also fetch lasting benefits to the votaries. Certainly the Trained Nurses' Association of India that assembled in New Delhi is just the type of association that is required. We all wish God-speed for the Association and congratulate the President, offering at the same time our fullest co-operation.

The interests of the members of the Association can be best served only when it is made a living one. Now as the T. N. A. I. is affiliated with the International Council of Nurses it is easy to agitate and secure all the privileges. As for the men nurses, at present no encouragement is shown by the Government except giving out a certificate and registering their names. Few hospitals other than Mission ones train and employ men nurses. This is not the fault of employers but due to ourselves. It is up to us to demonstrate our capacity in nursing and bringing to the authorities concerned, how useful it will prove if they employ men nurses. The hospitals where men are trained should do everything possible to better the prospects of their nurses, at the same time men nurses should attempt to improve themselves.

Now as for the training of the men nurses the process is hardly suitable to the need of the time. Only certain Mission hospitals undertake the training of men nurses. But I would suggest that the Government itself start training and employing men nurses in all hospitals wherever it is found feasible. They can be employed in Railway hospitals, where they may be more useful in emergencies, also in military hospitals, and in hospitals attached to mills and mines. Another place where men can be employed is mental hospitals where most of the nursing is done by untrained hands. At present there is a fertile field for us to work; the villages in India. Sanitation is neglected in almost all rural parts and we can certainly contribute our little mite in helping the poor. A nurse can be of great help to the public health department where there are outbreaks of epidemics such as cholera, small-pox, plague and such other diseases which make death-toll heavy.

Naturally ours is a thankless job but a noble one in which we feel proud. In helping the villagers we not only serve ourselves but also the nation. It is with a spirit of sacrifice and service that we should approach our duty. In my humble opinion it is high time for the authorities to appoint more trained hands to the rural areas.

The above suggestion does not mean that men nurses should not be trained and employed in Mission hospitals. I fully believe that every male nurse should be grateful to the institution where he was trained, though the status and standard of men nurses have not come to a satisfactory level due to so many reasons.

It is highly essential to have some post-graduate courses especially in advanced surgical and medical nursing, children and fever nursing, operation theatre technique, ward managing, linen supply, kitchen management and on so many other useful subjects. At present there is no place where men can get such training. It may be advisable that a nurse from one hospital goes to another hospital for such training as it would give him a wider knowledge in profession. Other training besides nursing such as compounding and anaesthesia are given almost in all hospitals. It is advisable to have some knowledge in laboratory technique as it would ease the work of the doctor.

From the opinion of the nursing superintendents of the respective schools about men nurses it is clearly shown that they all favour the training of men nurses and none has recorded that their (men nurses) standard is in any way inferior to women nurses except one or two who have recorded that men are lacking in gentleness and sympathy. At the same time they have found some better qualities which they have not found in women nurses. Though I do not admit that all men nurses lack in gentleness and sympathy, I do confess the above defect as a fact in some and I hope it can be corrected by better leadership, more refined training and also by admitting more educated candidates and encouraging those who are interested in profession for advanced studies.

Thanks to the work done by the 'Trained Nurses' Association of India for the improvement of nursing in India and I think there are much more things to be done. It is the best medium for men nurses to work for further advance in their cause. I do believe that the T.N.A.I. will do its best in that respect. So may I request all men nurses who have not become members of T.N.A.I. to become members and strengthen the Association. Our future depends upon how far we have worked for it. "If you work in a profession, in Heaven's name work for it. If you live by a profession, live for it. Help and advance your co-worker. Respect the great power that surrounds you with the advantages of organization, and that makes it possible for you to achieve results. Speak well for it and stand for it. Stand for its professional supremacy. If you must obstruct or decry those who strive to help why—quit the profession. But as long as you are a part of a profession, do not belittle it. If you do you are loosening the tendrils that hold you to it, and with the first high wind that comes along you will be uprooted and blown away and probably you will never know why."¹

May I take this opportunity to thank all those nursing superintendents who were good enough to answer my questions and in giving their sincere opinion about men nurses.

¹ From the *Trained Nurse and Hospital Review*, New York.