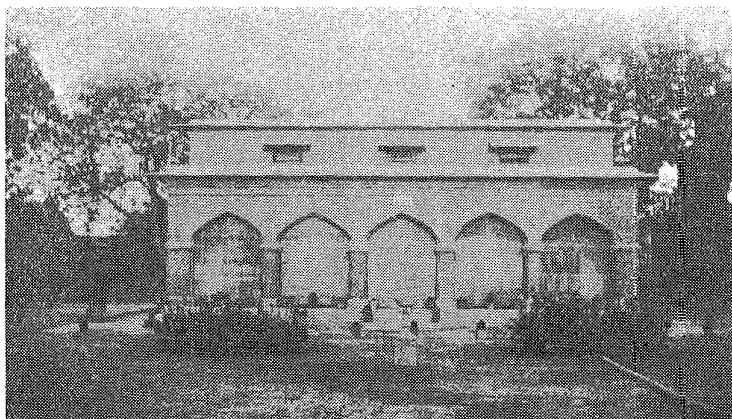




'The Lady Haig' Nurses' Club opened by H. E. Lady Haig early in 1935. Miss Quinn's efforts to raise funds for this building, which is a boon to the Nurses of the Lady Lyall and Maternity Hospitals, Agra. One of Miss Quinn's last thoughts was the installation of a lovely Radio.

After a sumptuous tea, a walk around the grounds where baboon and deer abound, and then to see the magnificent tomb of Akbar the Great, brought our evening to a close with an address to Miss Quinn wishing her bon voyage and a happy retirement in the South of England.

P. CARMAN,

Honorary District Secretary, U.P.

T.N.A.I. 19-4-1936.

IDENTIFICATION AND ITS RÔLE IN SICK NURSING

BY MARY CHADWICK, S.R.N.

Synopsis

Identification is seldom realised, nor the part it plays in the Nursing of the Sick understood.

Patient's reactions to the Health of the Nurse.

Envy and Imitation.

How the latter helps the Patient to get well.

This important psychological mechanism and its influence upon the restoration of the sick to health is realised too seldom.

By *Identification* is meant the unconscious process of imitation which continues without our being aware of it, on the part of the child

towards the parents, and those who are deeply loved, or between any two persons, when one of them likes or admires the other. We are ready enough to admit the process in childhood, no doubt, although we may not at first realise that it is by this means the child is first and most wisely brought to surrender childish ego-centric wishes, in order to conform more closely with those of the adults who are attending to its early training or education. It continues to exert the same far-reaching influence throughout our lives, especially at adolescence, and during illness.

Why should this be

At adolescence, the tendencies of childhood recapitulate before taking on their adult form, and we see the old familiar behaviour of childhood being repeated in the young person, with a new setting and often new actors taking the place of the original parents who were the first love-objects of the child.

The youthful adoration of the adolescent may serve a useful purpose in many cases, when the one adored is really fitted to serve as this model, who will thus become part of the Ego through this process of Identification or Imitation. Contrarily, it may be equally dangerous for the young person, should the object of the devotion be in no way suited for this office.

But what has this to do with Nursing

In illness, we return psychologically to various stages of adolescence, childhood or infancy, and in consequence of this regression, repeat the same psychological processes that played such an important part then. We were then enabled to give up our own wishes for those of mother or nurse because we loved her, because we wished to please her and incidentally to grow up as like her as possible. Here in our patients we find the same thing happening again. The patient who does not like the nurse is much more difficult to deal with than one who has transferred to her the affection of the child for his or her mother.

This putting the nurse in the place of the mother, the temporary restoration of that old feeling of trust and expectancy of help, will go a very long way on the weary road towards getting well.

Identification also plays another part, and for this reason one would like to see nurses chosen for their obvious good health, sunny nature and joy in life, so that their patients may imitate their model and thus get well in the process. A few might envy them and unconsciously refuse to respond, but the constant model before them would be a bridge to many from sickness to health, through this often unconscious process of identification and the love we all feel for a healthy, joyous person when we meet him or her.

I knew one Nursing Sister during the War, whom her soldier patients used to call the *Ray of Sunshine* or the *Bottle of Medicine*. They sound contradictory, but were not so actually, when one took the men's explanation of the second into consideration. 'She does us as much good as a bottle of medicine—when she comes up the ward with her smile and light step.'