

'A DAY IN HOSPITAL'

A NURSE'S POINT OF VIEW

By D. LYS, *Junior Student Nurse, Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta*

5-30 a.m. in General Ward

After the quiet of a night a general stir is heard denoting that 'Day' has begun. Nurses quickly though quietly start on their round of sponging the patients. There is much to be done within a limited time before the Sister comes on duty for inspection of work. Incredible though it may seem, it is nearly always a cheery 'Goodmorning' with which we are greeted in spite of the fact that sleep is not far off from their eyes, nor would an 'extra five minutes turn-over' be unwelcome. Naturally now and again a grunt is heard as the basin of water is placed beside the patient, also the additional scuffle of soap and other requisites being brought out, and an 'Oh Nurse is it really time to wake up?'

Do we smile? You ask. Yes! because we are human enough to realize how much we dislike getting up early of a morning.

I'm sure it is during these early hours and again at the close of the day between 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. that we get nearest to the patients mentally, giving us an opportunity of seeing them either at their best or worst. Were we to attempt to record even the selected 'stories' with which we are acquainted, it would need not a few books to do so. Experience of 'what has been' before they were taken ill—some pathetic stories—genuine I mean—at other times forced pathos—often really good 'Howlers' which were they published would prove entertaining 'Drawing Room' stories—and here I must not forget to mention their stories of their 'love affairs' though quite often we realize they are made up for our amusement.

There now! the ward all set and the patients fed. Sister makes her usual 'Round' and we are glad everything is just so. Now the duties of dressings and other applications commence—until the Resident Surgeon arrives. Of course all patients are attentive now and feel they simply must tell doctor of all their aches and pains. It would be kinder to say they were all genuine, but alas! too truly do we find a few 'hospital birds' who must make up some story if only to prolong their stay. We nurses now put on our most professional manner and see that all required specimens of any sort are handy at a minute's notice.

At last the 'Round' is over and the patients feel that breakfast should appear and it does! the familiar rattle of the dinner waggon is very welcome indeed to the patients—and now with everybody busy, there is not much time for anything else.

Breakfast over! Nurses start settling the patients for their mid-day rest, but Hush! Here comes our Matron, and the well known phrase of 'Into bed everybody and no talking please' is heard, so that by the time Matron enters I'm sure you would even hear a pin drop. How effective and quietening an influence is Matron's over the whole hospital—not even a mere outsider could ever fail to recognise her position of authority.

Not much more could be said for the rest of the day's events. Of course it is 'Visiting hours' between 5 to 7 p.m. and we generally leave the patients to themselves at this period.

Then comes dinner, followed by the last finishing duties of making the patients comfortable for the night. It is quite often that we too feel as Nurses that we would like some one to massage our feet before we retired to rest, and to try to put something in the touch which will relieve sore and aching ones. As I already mentioned that at this hour during the few brief

minutes we spend at each bedside, many little confidences are given which would be kept from anyone but a nurse.

Last but not least comes the few minutes we spend in Prayer led by the Sister of the ward and as the words 'Lighten our Darkness' is softly chanted we bow our heads and reverently say 'Amen' so leaving those sick and weary both mentally and physically in Higher Hands than ours.



THE HEALTH VISITORS' LEAGUE SECTION

The Honorary Secretary of the League,
Miss M. E. Raynor, Indian Red Cross Society,
Egmore, Madras, will gladly receive reports
and articles for insertion in this section.

DEAR FELLOW HEALTH VISITORS,

Miss Mackenzie of the Health Centre, Dera Ismail Khan, N.-W. F. P. has sent us the following :—

'I am very sorry not to have sent you any news for the H. V. L. page of the Journal. This was due to rather a busy time following a long holiday. On my return to work the examination of dais of this school was held, and all 10 dais passed. Following this came the organization of a Health and Baby Show, the former I helped with enthusiasm as good propaganda, but the latter with reluctance, as a waste of good time, energy, and money, unless strictly limited to babies attending a Health Centre, not the case here. However, some good specimens were seen, and the efforts of several voluntary workers, both European and Indian Ladies, proved we had good friends. Health Plays, by Girl Guides and Boy Scouts, were entertaining propaganda.

Miss Simon's account of Junior Red Cross work reminds me that one of our most practical helpers at the Baby Show, Mrs. Pugh, wife of our Superintendent of Police, has been busy all last winter training school teachers for just such work, and I was glad to help by giving them talks on Infant Welfare and the care of the Toddler.

My annual tour of the Province to get more dais for the next class, was more interesting than usual, because it had to include inspection of dais subsidised by this Government last year. Some far off the beaten track in remote rural areas, where there are no Doctors or Hospitals, and where one dai seems a drop in the ocean. But as these dais are specially trained to recognise serious conditions as beyond their scope, and to get medical aid no matter the distance, one could not but feel hopeful for the future.

The next class of dais join on the 15th, and I am expecting about 10 again, unless the losses by fires, etc., suffered recently by some of the Municipalities causes them to withdraw their scholarships.'

Are there no other Health Visitors who are 'Sorry not to have sent any news for the H. V. L. page of the Journal'?!

Yours sincerely,
MURIEL E. RAYNOR.