

Registration

Early this month the Registrar of Madras asked us to return a list of members who were registered nurses and eligible to vote for representatives on the Nursing Council.

Out of 172, we found that only 104 had registered in Madras. We know that registration fees are high, but if only members realized the importance of registering in the Provinces in which they are working, we are sure they would make every possible attempt to do so.

The object of the Association is to further the interests and improve the status of nurses, but without a strong body of registered nurses behind us it is hardly possible to push forward.

Railway Concessions

We should be very grateful if members would kindly remember to enclose an addressed envelope with an anna stamp attached, to stamp their letters with a 1 anna 3 pie stamp and fill in their forms as accurately and clearly as possible, as changing of date and station after one form has been issued involves much trouble and expense.

The Secretary's Movements

After the Conference the Secretary hopes to go to Jhansi on the 17th, Lucknow on the 20th, Cawnpore on the 24th, Agra on the 26th. Reaching Brundabun on December 1st and Delhi on December 3rd. Mrs. Carman, the District Secretary at the Thomason Hospital, Agra, has kindly arranged this tour for her.

If there are any members who would like her to visit them *en route*, she would be most grateful if they will kindly write to her or Mrs. Carman as soon as possible.

Members are asked not to write to the office for railway concessions if they can possibly avoid doing so, after the 5th of November as while the Secretary is on tour, they are likely to be delayed.

RED CROSS HELP FOR PILGRIMS IN INDIA

BY RAI BAHADUR DR. K. L. CHAUDHRI

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The religious festival known as 'Dikhauti Fair' is attended each year in April by some 30,000 pilgrims. Their number is greatly increased at the time of the Kumbh and Adkumbh fairs at Hardwar, which recur every twelve and six years respectively. After attending the Fair at Hardwar, the pilgrims proceed to the holy shrines of Kedar-nath and Badrinath.

The pilgrimage demands a remarkable degree of endurance, for the faithful must cover 315 miles on foot over rough tracks, there being no roads in that part of the country. Water is scarce and a night's lodging even more difficult to come by. In places, the track leads over high and desolate mountain passes, and coolies being practically unobtainable, most of the pilgrims must perforce carry their own packs. Matters are

not improved by the presence of innumerable flies whose venomous bites cause intense irritation and frequently give rise to ulcers.

Many holy places are visited on the way, and, after prostrating themselves before the shrines in each of these places, the pilgrims hurry on to fulfil the ultimate aim of their journey, which is to worship Siva at Kedarnath and Vishnu at Badrinath.

Before starting out on their long trek, the pilgrims are subjected to a thorough medical examination by the public health staff at Rishikesh, and those showing symptoms of cholera are detained and treated at the Infectious Diseases Hospital. An anti-cholera inoculation centre is kept open at this hospital for the convenience of the pilgrims.

The sharp variations of climate at different altitudes, combined with the fatigues of the journey, expose the pilgrims to pneumonia, cholera and hill diarrhoea. Minor ailments such as sprains, sore eyes, ringworm and ulcers, are common occurrences. Fortunately for the pilgrims, there are a number of Red Cross dispensaries along their route where they may find relief from their sufferings; in addition, two medical officers patrol the itinerary giving anti-cholera injections and rendering medical aid when needed.

To minimize the nuisance to shopkeepers and to the pilgrims themselves arising out of the excessive breeding of flies, certain areas have been assigned for the sanitary convenience of the pilgrims. These areas can be recognized at a distance by the red flag on a bamboo pole which marks the approach to them. There are separate entrances for men and women, distinguished by pictures for the benefit of the illiterate.

During his tour of India at the end of last year, Mr. Ernest J. Swift, Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies, visited Lucknow in company with Sardar Bahadur Balwant Singh Puri, a high official of the Indian Red Cross Society. There he inspected the activities of the Red Cross in that region and saw a film entitled 'A pilgrimage to Badrinath and Kedarnath' produced by the United Provinces Branch of the Indian Red Cross.

The Hygiene Publicity Bureau has produced films relating to the Kumbh Fair and to the Kedarnath and Badrinath pilgrimages, the object of which is to enlighten the public in regard to the health and preventive measures adopted. The films show:

(a) How the breeding of flies can be prevented by carefully burying the night soil in trenches and covering it with earth.

(b) The importance of making use of the specified areas, so as to facilitate the collection of the night soil within a circumscribed space.

(c) The necessity of drinking only the water supplied by the Public Works Department or pure spring water, and the consequences of drinking water from open channels which have passed through manured fields.

(d) The importance of submitting to anti-cholera inoculation, and the immunity thus afforded.

(e) How medical aid can be obtained at the dispensaries along the pilgrims' route.

(f) Why shopkeepers should keep halting places in their shops clean and attractive for the pilgrims, and cover their wares in order to avert the risk of epidemic from food pollution.

(g) The importance of reporting all cases of infectious disease to the public health authorities ; this duty is incumbent not only on the pilgrims themselves, but also on the police, on the employees of the sanitation department, and on all public-minded citizens.

*(Communicated by the Secretariat of
the League of Red Cross Societies,
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BABBLINGS BY BROWNIE

By

MISS LETA MAY BROWN, R.N. (*Damoh, C. P. India.*)

The next card on the desk was for a new patient. Her name was called but she did not respond. The card was put aside and the next patient called. Later we came to Phula Bai's card again and again we called. Looking them over I knew that of the new ones who had come that day just one was left, and rightly conjectured that that was Phula Bai. She was deep in animated conversation with the mother of Roshan. Summoning my Union-Station-Train-Announcer voice I called her again. She straightened up and looked around.

'Come', I said, 'it is your turn'.

She came, but in a different guise than that of the animated woman who had been reeling off the lingo to Roshan's mother. Now, pain and distress was registered on her face and every line of her body. She moaned ; she limped ; she groaned ; she halted in her coming. After much difficulty I managed to gather this information . . . her pain was in her abdomen. She pulled aside her sari and revealed a yard or two of cloth bound tight around her middle, so tight that I wondered how she lived and ceased to wonder that she moaned and groaned. Nor was that all, for under her tightly constricting band she had inserted an earthen plate, about the size of an ordinary saucer which brought further pressure to bear upon the offending organ (whatever it was). She loosened her bonds and removed the saucer. Our doctor was not there that day so I began tentative pokings to discover the tender areas. None was found.

Question upon question brought to light no sign or symptom upon which to hang even the sketchiest diagnosis. It was only evident she needed a bath, very, very badly. She said she was the blacksmith's official bellows pumper. And I readily believed her. But I was non-plussed. In desperation I asked, 'But Bai, what is your trouble?'

'Why, there', she cried and pressed her fingers down deep into the centre of her abdomen, 'there. Can't you feel that? It is jumping'.

I felt and could scarcely restrain an impulse to laugh.

At sometime or other she had made a sudden discovery. 'If you press your fingers down deep into your anatomy right there you can feel something jumping. And no matter how tight you bind it nor how great the pressure you put on it you cannot stop it'.