

## THE CAREER OF NURSING

(Continued from previous page)

skills, but also a fundamental knowledge of the sciences on which it is based.

Schools for Nurses have been established in hospitals all over the world. Here the student nurse is given basic training in the art and practice of nursing. In New Zealand this course requires three years and three months to complete, and is a sound foundation on which the student may build her future career.

The student is received into the Preliminary School, which is in charge of specially qualified women, and is given a gradual introduction to the principles and practice of nursing, receiving theoretical instruction accompanied by practice of elementary nursing procedures in the demonstration room. After a varying period (from four to twelve weeks) she is brought into contact with nursing in the wards. Thereafter she receives instruction in the basic sciences, correlating this with practice in the wards. The new methods of her education aim at providing a special "block" period each year during which period she takes the theoretical side only. This means she is fresh for her study instead of doing it after, perhaps, several hours on duty.

During her period of training the student is comfortably housed and has ample leisure for recreation and the pursuit of her own interests, and, of course, has annual leave. Her health is carefully watched, and she is taught how to protect herself from infection. She has annual examinations and finally a State examination, success in this automatically giving her State registration, and she will now be in a position to view some of the possibilities which lie before her in the field of nursing either in the hospital or the community.

### Special Courses

There are several additional courses which she may take to fit her for the particular work she desires to do. These are:

*Maternity nursing, six months' course.*

*Midwifery, twelve months' course.*

*Infant welfare, four months' course.*

*Post-graduate course, in conjunction with Victoria University, Wellington, in public health and administration, six months.*

Within the hospital she has a wide field to enter:

**Staff or Charge Nursing** to train her in ward administration first of all, a fascinating duty where the keen nurse can prove her worth, for now she has added responsibilities and can be of great assistance to her Ward Sister.

**Ward Sister:** The Ward Sister holds a very important post and should be chosen for her personality, capability, and adaptability. She is the teacher of the practical side, and has a wonderful opportunity, for here she has the living patient to nurse and her students to teach. She must be able to create the right environment for her patients, be able to work harmoniously with the medical staff, her nursing superiors, and her own staff. Surely a position to strive for? As an administrator also she has unlimited opportunities, and such is her

influence that she is the person who creates, to a large extent, the character of the hospital itself.

**Home Sister, Theatre Sister, Night Sister:** All these positions bring with them their own special responsibilities and require those who are specially suited for such work to carry it out successfully.

**Tutor Sister:** Here is a position for one, a professional expert with an aptitude for teaching. She is the instructor of the theoretical side of the students' training and assists the students in their comprehension of the lectures given by the medical staff.

Another important position for a specially qualified person is that of Dietitian. This position carries with it responsibilities in the preparation and serving of food to the sick and teaching the students the fundamentals of nutrition.

### Other Opportunities

There are other opportunities. X-ray work, dispensing, massage, exchange with other countries, post-graduate courses in England, Canada and America.

**Matron or Superintendent of Nurses** is the highest position one can attain in hospital, and is the climax of an interesting and varied career.

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