

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

a spirit of mutual understanding, justice and humanitarian love, armed combat and wars would no longer have any *raison d'être*. But for that to come about, it would be necessary, on the one hand, for the strong to be aware of the duty of moral and material solidarity with others and to give the weak a possibility of improving their living conditions; and, on the other hand, for the weak, aware of the duty of self-respect and responsibility towards their own dignity, to contribute, within their small means, to improving their condition and thus diminishing the gap between themselves and the strong.

Harmony in human society, and hence peace in the broad acceptance of the word, depends on the humanization of social relations, in every field of communal life ”.

J.-G. L.

The Nurse and Health Education, by Ruth E. Grout and Julia D. Watkins, *International Nursing Review*, Basle 1971, No. 3.

... As a nurse engages in health education activities she is constantly concerned with what is being accomplished. On the one hand, she hopes for evidence that the teaching-learning experiences are bringing about the desired changes in health behaviour. On the other hand, she wants assurance that she is following sound principles of education and is employing educational procedures which will contribute to the desired results. Both approaches to evaluation are important and both need to be used in on-going health education endeavours.

Evaluation should be built into a health education activity from its very beginning and continue periodically throughout the relationship. Whenever feasible, it should be a joint undertaking of the nurse and the individuals or groups with whom she is working. The initial stages of a teaching-learning situation, in which the participants state, define, and clarify problems and establish objectives, provide not only the foundations for determining how to proceed with the educational activities themselves but also the bases for evaluation.

As a teaching-learning situation progresses, the nurse and the individual she is counselling, or the group she is teaching, need to pause now and then to consider what has been accomplished so far and what more

needs to be done. Such periodic stock-taking can instill a sense of progress and encourage further movement toward goals. At times it may result in a shifting of goals and of steps leading to them.

In her efforts at evaluation, a nurse cannot always find clear evidence of progress or of achievements attributable to her teaching. Effects of educational activities are often not readily discernible. Sometimes this is because the nurse is not on hand when the learner has a chance to put into practice what he has learned. Sometimes a number of forces contribute to a change in behaviour so that a nurse cannot know whether her particular efforts have had an effect. Moreover, in many people's lives changes come slowly and are cumulative, often extending over many years. Nevertheless, through observation and listening, through interviews and conferences, through records and reports, and in informal daily contacts with patients and their families and friends, a nurse can learn much that will throw light on the effectiveness of her teaching in terms of progress toward reaching objectives. Then, too, through such contacts she can encourage self-evaluation on the part of the learners.

The second approach to evaluation, that is, examining the educational efforts themselves, can be very helpful to a nurse who is concerned with improving her teaching. Though no attempt is made here to set up criteria for such evaluation, it is suggested that points discussed in previous sections of this paper may provide useful guides. If a nurse bases her teaching on needs, if she involves the participants in defining needs and determining objectives, if she creates a favourable climate for learning and selects methods of instruction that are appropriate for objectives, if she carries on these and other practices according to best known principles of education, then it can be assumed that her effectiveness is likely to be greater than were she to follow traditional patterns of teaching with emphasis primarily on transmission of knowledge.
