Suzanne watches Miss Ramos with interest as she administers an insulin injection. Before long the little girl will be able to perform this procedure herself.

In Hawaii as in any part of the world the practical nurse who brings interest and kindliness to the patient is repaid by confidence and love.

by Rosalina Ramos, *Student, Practical Nurse Training School, Honolulu, Hawaii*

LITTLE SUZANNE

WHEN Dr. Jones asked that I care for Suzanne Kato, a six-year-old diabetic, I thought it would be a good idea to review the disease from my notes and textbook.

I already knew that diabetes mellitus is a condition that develops when the pancreas fails to supply a sufficient amount of insulin to convert sugar into energy, and that the early symptoms of this condition are excessive thirst, excessive urination, irritability, hunger, loss of weight, fatigue, itching of the skin, tendency towards skin infections, aches and pains. A special diet prescribed by the doctor, good hygiene, and insulin make up the usual treatment. Diabetes is under control when the patient is at his proper weight, has little or no sugar in the urine, has a safe level of blood sugar, and has none of the aforementioned symptoms. His environment should be pleasant and those with whom he comes in contact should understand why it is important to treat the diabetic person as a normal individual. This will help him not to resent any treatment that is prescribed and not to think of himself as different from his relatives or friends.

The next morning I carefully folded my uniform into my handbag and was off to report for 7 o'clock duty at the Kato home. Suzanne's mother welcomed me with a smile. Mr. Kato, who was about to leave for work, assured me that I wouldn't have too much trouble taking care of Suzanne. I later found out that Mr. Kato was an electrician.

Mrs. Kato took me upstairs to Suzanne's room where we found her still asleep. We gently closed the door. I asked Mrs. Kato if I could change into my uniform. She led me to her bedroom where I changed clothes while she attended to a few things downstairs.

On my way back I noted that Suzanne was no longer in her room. I found her in the kitchen with a doll in her arms, watching her mother pile the dishes in the sink. Mrs. Kato introduced me to Suzanne, and as I said "Hello" I noticed that she had a very friendly smile. Mrs. Kato explained where som

Suzanne watches the reaction that indicates her urine is negative for sugar.

To Suzanne bathing is a happy chore but Miss Ramos does not miss the opportunity to impress upon the child the importance of drying carefully between the toes.

of the household facilities and appliances were located, and handed me the doctor's orders and a skeleton diet list for the little girl's meals. Mrs. Kato was a cashier in a supermarket and she was going to leave for work at 7:45. Suzanne seemed very much interested in what we were discussing. We took her into the conversation and tried to explain to her why I was there. Her tiny face lighted up with anticipation. By now, I knew that Suzanne and I were going to get along just fine.

Mrs. Kato asked Suzanne if she had already gone to the bathroom. She said she hadn't, and I thought it would be a good idea if I could help her collect the urine specimen. Both Mrs. Kato and Suzanne agreed, and the little girl and I walked gaily upstairs. She showed me where her mother kept the equipment for the urinalyses, and I removed one of the specimen bottles. Suzanne assured me she could manage all right without any help from me, and I politely left the bathroom. After a few minutes she handed me the specimen proudly and said, "See what a big girl I am?" I complimented her and suggested we leave the specimen in the bathroom until we were ready for it, adding that if she wanted to watch me test it, I'd be glad to have her do so.

Downstairs we found Mrs. Kato getting ready to leave. She gave me last-minute information as to where Suzanne's medication and hypodermic syringe were kept, and Suzanne and I saw

Miss Ramos sets out to prove that food can be fun—even for a small diabetic. Suzanne is encouraged to join in the planning and preparation of her lunch.

her mother to the door. Now my task was to begin!

I helped Suzanne get into the play clothes she had chosen from her closet, then got the equipment ready for the urinalysis. We performed the test in the kitchen so I could use the stove to boil the specimen, and found that it was negative for sugar. I told Suzanne that it would be nice if I had some paper on which to write all the things I would be doing for her so that her doctor could see how she was progressing. She r upstairs and came down with a goc

(Continued on Page 27)

LITTLE SUZANNE

(Continued from Page 25)

sized sheet of paper. I wrote the necessary information on it and the result of the procedure I had just carried out. and put it in one of the kitchen drawers so that I wouldn't lose it.

Carrying out Dr. Jones' instructions, I got my equipment ready for Suzanne's insulin (protamine zinc) which was to be given at 8 A.M. When that was done and charted, I cleaned my equipment and returned it to its proper place. I was ready to start cooking breakfast. Suzanne enjoyed helping me prepare the meal which consisted of a pear with corn flakes, scrambled eggs and bacon, bread and butter, and milk. I must say I was enjoying myself as much as Suzanne was. It was close to 9 o'clock now and I asked her if she had any suggestions as to what she would like to do. She replied that she would love to have me see her collection of dolls. The number and variety of dolls were most impressive. Of course, there was her favorite, Dee Dee, which could be bathed and fed, and had hair that could be combed. After admiring the collection, I was informed that it was almost time for Dee Dee's bath. We both cleaned her room up a bit and I took her soiled clothing with me before leaving her in privacy to attend to Dee Dee's grooming. This, I thought, would be a good time to tidy up the rest of the house, wash the dishes, and do the laundry.

By 10:30 I was almost through with everything except for hanging the laundry on the line, and Suzanne had finished with Dee Dee. I got some orange juice ready for Suzanne's intermediate nourishment. At 11 o'clock I made another urine test and again found that it was negative for sugar. "So far so good!" I said to myself. I asked Suzanne if she usually took a bath before lunch, and she said she did not. We decided to go for a little walk as soon as I hung the wash. She suggested the playground two blocks away, and off we went, first checking to see that all electrical appliances and lights were turned off. After a short and interesting walk to the playground, we headed back home to get lunch ready. Suzanne's lunch consisted of broiled liver, buttered carrots, an apple, bread and butter, and milk. At her insistence I had my lunch with her.

It was now time for her afternoon nap. I took her upstairs to help her get cleaned up and in bed. I tucked Dee Dee in beside her and read aloud her favorite story of "Jack and the Bean Stalk."

While Suzanne slept, I tidied the kitchen and did the dishes. I brought my "chart" up-to-date and began to plan Suzanne's dinner, which would be prepared by Mrs. Kato. I thought it would be helpful to prepare the simple items for the dinner. I gathered the clothes from the line, and put them in their proper places as best I could.

By 2 o'clock Suzanne was up and playing in the living room, and I gave her the intermediate nourishment. I asked if she enjoyed doing anything in particular, and she said she liked drawing with color crayons. I suggested we go and sit under a tree to do some drawing. She liked that idea very much and we both had lots of fun out there. At 3:30 I took her into the house to help her with her bath.

Mrs. Kato arrived at 4 P.M. I changed my clothes and before leaving I showed Mrs. Kato the chart and told her about the things I had prepared ahead of time for Suzanne's dinner. I said "good-bye" and assured Suzanne I would return in the morning.

Rosalina Ramos, a nurse whom little girls dream about (page 15), is of Filipino ancestry and was born on the Hawaiian Island of Kauai. She was graduated from the Practical Nursing School in Honolulu in July 1954. Miss Ramos tells of her experiences and of the personal satisfaction gained from caring for a diabetic patient: "Little Suzzane."