reported organized. Since then there are one district society, the South Eastern Iowa, and three city organizations, at Des Moines, Sioux City, and Burlington.

A few months ago the Burlington Dental Assistants' Society included in its membership the assistants of the practitioners of the city with one exception. Today there is no exception. This is an argument in itself. If there were no benefits derived there would not be so much

interest and enthusiasm. The Burlington assistants are also members of the South Eastern Iowa. There is great interest shown in both societies. We have poured models, invested inlays, discussed sterilization and novocain preparation and many other things equally useful. And as far as I know Iowa is the only state in the Union that has an assistants' section in the state dental society. Let us make it a success.

RADIOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION¹

By JULIO ENDELMAN, M.S., D.D.S., F.A.C.D.

If it were possible to propound to every member of the dental profession the question as to which of various factors had been the most potent in drawing a tight line of demarcation between good and bad dentistry, we are inclined to prophesy that radiography would head the list with a respectable majority. It is interesting in this connection to note the progress which has been made from the time of its first application in dentistry to the present day, in technic and interpretation and in the greater cautiousness displayed in advancing opinions based on radiographic findings as compared with the venturesomeness characteristic of radiographic diagnoses of former years. Dark shadows have been and are even today, to quite an extent,

the tottering foundation upon which are built diagnoses, at times, leading to the ruthless sacrifice of teeth. Instances have come under our observation in which the diagnosis of "dental granulomata" has been arrived at exclusively upon the evidence of a shadow in the neighborhood of teeth containing vital pulps. Likewise we know of cases in which teeth affected with a moderate degree of some form of pyorrhea alveolaris have been ordered extracted for the cure of a systemic involvement which had existed years before the advent of the dental affection. The interpretation of dental radiograms is by no means a matter of such simplicity as some are prone to have us assume and, further, any attempt at diagnosing mouth conditions on the basis of radiography and at the exclusion of other helps available in

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the detection of dental and oral conditions is a travesty upon the higher aims of dentistry and a light-hearted appreciation of the responsibility of its function. A radiograph per se is merely a record of densities in the structure of the teeth, jaws and attached soft tissues. The significance of these varying degrees of densities is the problem whose solution, in each individual case, must be arrived at with the aid of histology, normal and pathologic, and of anatomy, normal and pathologic, plus such other information as every conscientious diagnostician endeavors to obtain. The realm of dental diagnosis has been invaded by some whose training does not warrant them in assuming the right to dispense information on matters pertaining to the histology and pathology of the mouth and its contained organs. Neither the medical degree, nor the dental degree, nor

the ability to produce radiograms are the sole requirements for entrance into the diagnostic field. The diagnosis of dental conditions demands a most thorough familiarity with dental histology and pathology and years of clinical observation of normal and pathologic conditions in the human mouth. The clinical examination of the mouth without a radiographic record is as incomplete as is a radiographic examination of a series of films without the clinical confirmation of such findings. The information on radiographic interpretation contained in books on the subject, of which there are several in existence, is most valuable, but only to those who by previous training and preparation are able to properly assimilate such knowledge. To the mind arid in matters of histology and pathology correct radiographic interpretation is an impregnable citadel.