

work immediately before us. There is a pressing need, not only for interesting college students in nursing as a profession, upon which a committee is already at work, but for the broader field of interesting universities to include in their curricula preparatory courses.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF THE CENTRAL DIRECTORY

STATE registration has been in the majority of states voluntary, providing only the means by which the public may know the difference between the women educated and morally fit and those who are not. The next step, naturally, has been the establishment by nurses of registries where, irrespective of schools, the services may be obtained of women vouched for by the state. Hardly a month passes that we do not hear of a central registry being established by a county or local nursing organization. In the larger cities, where registries have been maintained by alumnae associations, the membership of the central registry is made up principally of nurses from the outside, or from the smaller schools not maintaining directories of their own.

The possibilities in central registries, if all registered nurses would unite in them, are unlimited. When the time comes that alumnae of the large schools maintaining their own registries can put aside school boundaries and affiliate for the good of their profession and the convenience of the public, the educational and economic possibilities of the central registry will be unlimited. The large residence club house, with all the comforts and conveniences of home and hotel life combined, would follow. This would give to the new graduates a kind of protection which is greatly needed when we consider how much younger nurses are coming out of the schools, even more than ten years ago. It would provide a place for social freedom, an element almost lacking in the life of the great majority of nurses. It would make possible systematic courses of lectures, parliamentary drill, and such lighter diversions as classes in dancing, cards, etc. It would help dispel the loneliness of the days of waiting for cases.

Most of the opposition to central directories comes from women who are still bound by school lines, who confuse intense devotion to their own school or registry with professional loyalty, and who give as their excuse that it would be impossible to administer the affairs of such a registry impartially. This argument has been refuted over and over by the success of the many registries that have been established.

Every registrar, whether of an alumnae or central registry, has had the experience of carrying on her list, day after day, and week after week, nurses whom she cannot place, graduates of reputable schools, who are

said to be good nurses but who, for some reason covering a period of years, have failed to build up a clientele for themselves. This proves that while the directory provides a place where nurses may register, their success after all depends upon their record in the training school, the quality of their work outside and, more than anything else, upon their personal conduct. As a matter of fact, the place she holds on the list has little to do with a nurse's chance of being called.

It is needless to say there has been worked out in many places such a system of record keeping that it is perfectly simple to keep the names of graduates of different schools in a mixed list, and yet to pick out those of a certain school at a glance, by means of colored cards.

The economic side of the value of maintaining one rather than a number of registries should appeal to the practical good sense of every nurse—one chief registrar, with the necessary assistant, both being paid sufficiently liberal salaries to make it possible to obtain the highest type of women, with one attractive directory office, centrally located, rather than several in hospitals, drug stores, or on side streets, all working toward the same end, with all nurses enrolled who have complied with the standards of state registration, irrespective of the schools in which they were trained.

#### THE DENTAL NURSE

IN connection with a letter from Miss Wallace, published in our letter department, in which she recommends to nurses that they prepare themselves to become registered dental nurses, we think it would be interesting to our readers to know a little more of this movement than is contained in the letter.

Briefly stated, the idea of a trained dental assistant comes about through the effort on the part of the dental profession to do prophylactic as well as repair work. Statistics show that there are only about 30,000 dentists in the United States and that it is impossible for this number to keep the teeth of the people properly cleaned in a way that will prevent decay. One dental college has included in its curriculum a course for the training of dental assistants for the purpose of enabling them to do cleaning and polishing of the teeth and some of the minor procedures of dentistry. In the official outline of the course no educational qualifications are called for. It would seem that any woman might enter this course and, provided she passed the necessary examinations at its close, be considered qualified. The matter of the preparation of such women has been discussed in large dental conventions, and while the idea has been brought out that trained nurses with this additional training would make