

## EDITORIAL COMMENT



### THE SUPERINTENDENTS' OBLIGATION

IN our last issue we made an appeal to all nurses, "without regard to school, creed, or color," to contribute the amount of one day's earnings towards the creation of a fund to endow the Course in Hospital Economics at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. There is no question in our judgment but that the nucleus of such a fund should first be raised by small contributions from the masses of nurses. They should show their true professional spirit and unity of purpose by such action before making any appeal to people outside of the profession for assistance.

We are of the opinion that comparatively few nurses are informed about this course. The value of it and its needs have not been brought home to them in a personal way. They pass over the reports in the JOURNAL as something not of interest to them, and any appeal in printed form reaches very few.

The establishment of the Course in Hospital Economics is the work of the Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools for Nurses. The direct obligation for its support rests with the members of that society. We make the same appeal to the superintendents that we made last month to the nurses at large.

Will you contribute, at once, the amount of one day's earnings towards meeting the financial obligations of the Economics Course? There are bills unpaid from the last year for which each member is at least morally responsible.

But we ask of the superintendents something more than a small donation of money, something far more difficult to many to give, but vastly more enduring in results to the future of the course, that of personal service.

The education of the graduates of each school in regard to their professional obligations rests largely with the superintendents, and we suggest that with the opening of the organization work in each community, the subject of the Course in Hospital Economics be taken up, its origin explained, and its value and future needs set forth in a manner to arouse in the nurses in private practice a desire to help.

This Course in Hospital Economics, being purely educational, is a legitimate object for which to solicit aid from the public, for the advantages which it offers will be felt in time in every city and town where a hospital and training-school are maintained. All educational institutions seek endowments for provision for special knowledge and research. Gifts of money from men and women who have had the advantages of such endowments brought home to them are constantly being received by universities and schools of different kinds. When it can be said that the nurses of this country have raised ten thousand or twenty thousand dollars as a nucleus for the fund needed for the continuation of the course, then, and not until then, can they justly appeal to philanthropists for assistance in the endowment of the chair.

The individual members of the Superintendents' Society cover practically the whole territory where nursing is taught. A crusade in the interest of the Course in Hospital Economics would result in the enlightenment of nurses and

the public with practical results in the nature of financial aid as a natural sequence.

The criticism is often made that nurses are demanding a voice in the standards of education that nurses shall receive while they contribute very little towards the financial support of nursing schools. This Course in Hospital Economics at Teachers College having been established by nurses, they should demonstrate not only their willingness, but their ability to contribute their share towards its support, after which the public, which is directly benefited by the superior advantages which it provides, may properly be asked for assistance.

No class of workers come more directly into touch with people of generous means than the superintendents of training-schools. They are looked to by the graduates of the schools over which they preside for suggestions along educational and professional lines.

We believe the success of the endowment is simply a matter of judicious talking on the part of the superintendents, and before the New Year comes in a splendid beginning can be made. The class of fifteen just graduated have pledged themselves to raise three hundred dollars during the coming year.

The graduates from this course, numbering more than thirty, are now broadly scattered and they should become powerful factors in this talking crusade.

Those who need further enlightenment in regard to the course can have printed matter sent them by writing to Miss A. C. Maxwell, of the Presbyterian Hospital, New York City, the acting chairman in the absence of Miss Banfield, or to Miss A. L. Alline, 402 West One-Hundred-and-Twenty-fourth Street, New York City.

#### SOME CORRECTIONS.

There were several errors in the last number which we wish to correct.

We did not know until after the number was out that in the last Economics Class there was a Miss Peterson and a Miss Patterson, and in the proof-reading we mixed them up rather badly. Miss Peterson should have been credited as being at the Nurses' Settlement on Henry Street. Miss Patterson, Miss Riddle's assistant at the Newton Hospital, and Miss Balcum, not Miss Baldwin, the assistant at the Homœopathic Hospital, Rochester.

In Miss Dock's report of the Berlin Congress Miss Charlotte Ehrlicher, superintendent of the German Hospital Training-School, should have been given as delegate from the Post-Graduate Alumnae Association, New York. Miss Selden's name from the same school was omitted.

It is always difficult to make a correct list of the people who attend conventions, and in copying lists of names the most expert secretary will sometimes make mistakes. The proof-reading of names is always difficult, and it may interest our readers to know that printing long lists of names is the most expensive kind of type-setting. With the best of care errors will occur of this nature.

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#### A NEW KIND OF SCHOOL WORK

WITH the beginning of the last school year a course in nursing was introduced into the curriculum of the evening high-school of the Charlestown district in Boston, about which there were very sensational articles published in the daily papers which gave rise to a feeling of much doubt in the minds of many

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nurses of the wisdom of the step. One was led to think from the press notices that the pupils taking this course were to be graduated full-fledged trained nurses to enter into competition with the regularly educated women, and that a new abuse in the nature of short-course schools for nurses was being established by the public-school authorities of Boston.

The superintendent of the public schools of that city in his yearly report just issued speaks of this experiment as follows:

"Another most interesting development of the possibilities of evening high-school instruction has been witnessed in Charlestown. The practical application of physiology and hygiene to the business of nursing has there been taught with remarkable success. A large class of young women, some of whom came from distant parts of the city, has been taught by Dr. Laura A. C. Hughes, assisted by Miss Jennie Dix, both of whom are graduates of the Boston City Hospital Training-School for Nurses, and have had large experience in nursing and in directing other nurses.

"This class, on March 10, gave a demonstration of their acquirements before a large and much-pleased audience. The members of the class, dressed in nurses' gowns, caps, and aprons, appeared on the platform, where they made beds for patients, carried helpless patients in chairs, lifted them into bed, undressed them under the bedclothes, and gave them a bath; changed the beds without removing the patients, moved them on the draw-sheet, lifted them from one bed to another on a sheet, took and recorded their temperature, pulse, and respiration. Two girls had volunteered their services as patients for all these operations, and seemed to enjoy their treatment. Then the best method of washing and dressing babies was shown by a direct application to two live babies brought in for the purpose. The making and applying of poultices, fomentations, bandages of many kinds, and slings were fully demonstrated. The preparation of nurse and patient for aseptic surgery was actually made by some of the pupils, after which the exercises were concluded by brief illustrations of the methods of giving medicine, restoring respiration, and using the tourniquet.

"All this work is simple and elementary, as it needs must be for mere beginners, *and it is far from making the members of the class trained nurses;*\* but, on the other hand, it has made them useful attendants in the less serious kinds of illness, *and has given them excellent practical knowledge, based on the latest results of science, which they can carry into many homes besides their own.* Such is the result of the first season's experiment. Another year there may be offered advanced as well as elementary instruction in nursing. *It would greatly promote the welfare of the people if every future mother should be required to take a practical course of instruction in nursing. Their sick children would suffer less, and be less likely to die.*"

It is quite apparent from this report that there is opportunity for much abuse in the establishment of such courses in the public schools. Where the application of the knowledge gained is confined to the home no one knows better than trained nurses the value of such instruction, but the superintendent distinctly states that the pupils can carry this knowledge "into many homes besides their own," and there lies the danger. Until registration has created in the minds of the people a clear and intelligent distinction between a nurse trained in a hospital under proper conditions, and one who has taken up nursing without complying with any recognized standard of training, there will be many women

who will take advantage of such courses as the one referred to to impose themselves upon the public. In the minds of the ignorant a nurse's uniform, with the ability to do a few simple things, such as changing a sheet under a helpless patient, is all the guarantee of professional skill needed.

The safeguard is in keeping such teaching in the hands of trained nurses. Such departments in nursing in the public schools will open up a new and very important field of work for nurses. Both Dr. Hughes and Miss Dix, who are the pioneers in this work, are women of broad experience, with the welfare of the profession at heart, and can be trusted to draw the line between the elements of home nursing and the elements of professional nursing, if that is possible, but we question the wisdom of dressing up such pupils in a nurse's uniform to masquerade before their friends in the garb that can be legitimately used by professional nurses only, and we are surprised that this should have been countenanced by either of the teachers mentioned. From our point of view nothing more than a plain white apron, a common garment in every New England home, is necessary for pupils studying the elements of home-nursing. It would hardly be expected that in a case of slight illness in the family the mother or daughter would wait to secure a full nurse's uniform before applying those simple principles of home-nursing that she might have been taught in the public schools; then why teach them that anything more than a clean white apron and a wash dress is needed?

That a greater knowledge of the laws of hygiene and the elements of practical nursing are needed in our American homes we do not need to affirm, but such knowledge should be taught in our schools in a simple, practical manner, and without spectacular effect or any suggestion that such knowledge gives the pupils any claim to call themselves trained nurses or to wear a trained nurse's dress.

#### EXHIBIT AT ST. LOUIS.

Among the Massachusetts exhibits at the St. Louis Exposition is that of the public school, and prominence is given to the nursing department referred to above. Seventy-two photographs are bound in four large volumes illustrating the course of work. One hundred and twenty-six women took the course last year—more than half of the number were married women, one the mother of twelve children. One of the reasons given in favor of such courses in the public schools is that it will provide nursing care for the great middle class, who cannot pay for a trained nurse and are above the aid of charity.

If cooking and commercial law can be taught without any idea of making professional cooks and lawyers, then, it is argued, nursing might be taught without attempting to produce trained nurses, and upon these lines all nurses will give their support to the movement.

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#### PROGRESS OF REGISTRATION

THE situation in the registration movement in England is exceedingly interesting and is described in detail in the Foreign Department pages, and Miss Dock's paper, "Who are Representative?" in the same department gives those of us of a land of freedom food for thought and reason for thanksgiving.

There is every indication of renewed activity in the State and registration work in our own country in the early fall, and while we regret deeply our inability to give space to the State reports at the close of the winter's work, we

think these reports may be read now with greater advantage as the season is about to open.

We want to remind the nurses in those States where the law is now in operation that it is unwise to delay sending in one's application for registration. In New York State there is danger of great congestion at the end of the three years during which a certificate may be obtained *without* examination, for while many have applied and received their certificates, great numbers have neglected to do so, the common excuse being "no photograph." When the time limit has passed and those same foolish virgins have to take an examination or go without the "R.N." there will be great lamentation. Only eighteen months more, after which time *all* must take the examination.

The work of the examiners is most tedious and difficult; they are all busy people like yourselves. Don't make their labors any more of a burden than need be by waiting until the last moment before sending in your application.

When you have received your certificate remember it is void until it has been registered in the County Clerk's Office in the city where you live.

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#### THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL TRAINING-SCHOOL TAKES AN ADVANCE STEP

As we go to press the public announcement is made that the pupils of the Training-School of the Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, are to be given the first four months of their instruction at Simmons College, the subjects to be taught being household arts, elementary chemistry, bacteriology, anatomy and physiology, etc. As we understand the announcement the pupils are to live at the hospital while attending the classes at Simmons. No allowance of money will be made hereafter during the term of three-years' training. A tuition fee of fifty dollars will be required with a deposit of ten dollars for breakage. For those who need financial aid scholarships will be established. The period of probation is to be six months, the first four months being spent at Simmons College and two months in the hospital wards. The pupils in this school have three-months' training in a maternity hospital—at present being sent to Sloan and the Pierpont Morgan Hospitals in New York—and are also to have three-months' experience at the Corey Hill Hospital at Brookline, Mass., the large private hospital established in the spring by a company of medical men and under the supervision of Miss Stone, who for many years was Miss Maxwell's assistant at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York.

If the instruction at Simmons College is conducted in a manner satisfactory to the Massachusetts Hospital management it will only be a matter of time when all the training-schools in the vicinity will fall into line, and we shall be brought one step nearer to our ideal nursing college. The disapproval in the Simmons College plan is that nurses have not been permitted to have any voice in outlining or directing the work, as in the beginning they hoped would be the case.

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#### OUR YEAR-END ANNOUNCEMENT

WITH this issue the JOURNAL closes its fourth volume, and with the new year will come some changes in its form and policy. The demand for space for purely educational and professional matter has been far in excess of the financial development of the magazine, consequently the directors feel obliged to restrict rather than enlarge the number of reading pages and curtail the

amount of space that has been given freely to official reports, confining such reports to the organizations engaged in strictly educational and professional work.

With this end in view the Spanish-American War Nurses and the Guild of St. Barnabas have been notified that the JOURNAL will be unable to act as the official organ of those societies in future, although it will always publish announcements and brief reports of annual meetings. While the JOURNAL is in sympathy with the patriotic and religious societies, and stands ready at all times to advance their interests, it finds the amount of space now given to those organizations needed for other purposes, and its policy somewhat handicapped by the official representation of societies that are not included in *alumnæ* affiliations.

The year that has closed has brought a very great growth in the professional outlook of the JOURNAL. Its field of usefulness has broadened and every week brings assurance of its influence in bringing the members of the nursing profession into closer unity on all vital questions of work and development.

One of the changes in the form of the JOURNAL will be placing the Editorial Comments on the opening pages instead of at the end in small type. This change is made by request from several sections of the country, it being claimed that everybody looks at the beginning, while few read to the end of any magazine, and that the summing up of the month's progress is found in the editorials.

The regular departments of Book Reviews, Medical Notes, and the Foreign Department will be printed in the same type as the body of the magazine, leaving only the Official Reports and items in the small type. This is also done by request, as many of our readers find so much fine print, used to make space, objectionable.

The *alumnæ* work is now so well organized that we shall ask the societies holding monthly meetings to report quarterly to the JOURNAL, except when there is some special feature, when space always will be cordially granted.

To the State work, which is now in its crucial period, will be given space freely; also all reports showing progress along the lines of preliminary training, or new fields of work for nurses in any direction.

The development of visiting, district, and tuberculosis work of nurses will receive more attention than in the past, and articles prepared by private nurses for those engaged in the same field will be a special feature of the coming numbers.

Again we thank our hosts of friends in many lands for their continued good-will, assistance, and encouragement, and promise to serve them more faithfully, if that be possible, in the future than ever before.

