

various medical associations. He attends meetings to hear discussions of professional interest, or perhaps to take a modest part. As his practice extends, he does not consider himself so busy or so successful as to call a halt in self-improvement. To the end of his days he is to be found working in the hospitals, preparing papers, comparing experiences with other doctors, perhaps learning from those younger than himself. He never knows enough, and is always ready to add any knowledge that will aid him in his professional career; for he knows that the greater his knowledge and experience the more valuable he becomes to the community at large.

I would ask you to compare his professional life with that of the graduate nurse, and then let each one answer to herself the question,—

“Has post-graduate work any value?”

But, it will be said, the doctor's work is so different from that of the nurse. He gives but a part of his time each day, whereas she, in taking a post-graduate course, would have to give the whole of hers; and with that protest we enter upon the second division of our subject,—

“The difficulties in the way of making it feasible.”

That there are “difficulties” we cannot deny, but is any path that is very smooth and even very much worth while? It is true the nurse would have to give all her time in taking a post-graduate course, but the time so spent is an investment from which she looks for a return just as surely as she looks for a return from a certain sum of money invested. She *invests* a small portion of time at intervals. Let those of us who graduated some years ago think how much more efficient we should be to-day had we made a practice of investing even a few days or weeks of each year in self-improvement, for in talking of post-graduate work we do not exclude the nurses who hold hospital positions. Are they gaining a knowledge of the work done elsewhere? Are they continuing their studies? Are they discussing subjects of professional interest with other members of their profession? Are they taking an active part in the work of the various nurses' associations?

But, it is said again, suppose the nurse is willing—nay, eager—for post-graduate work, where is it to be procured? Do not the hospitals close their doors and refuse to grant the opportunities she seeks? A serious difficulty presents itself here. It is true that hospitals are not very willing to offer post-graduate courses. Let us consider if there be any reason for this attitude on the part of women who are themselves nurses and should be willing to co-operate with others in their desire for self-improvement.

A nurse who wishes to take a post-graduate course, as a rule, expects the hospital to give her

board, lodging, and laundry work, with some payment added on. This should not be. But, you say, she *works*; she should be paid. From a hospital point of view a nurse coming for a limited time cannot form part of the regular nursing staff, and her services are therefore of little value. And, think again, do doctors demand payment for the post-graduate *work* they do?

And it is well to remember that in many hospitals only the regular staff can be accommodated, and it would be impossible to arrange for the housing of graduates, even if they were willing to pay for the privilege.

Again, a nurse who takes a post-graduate course is apt to expect the best positions, usually given to the senior undergraduates. It would be manifestly unfair to deprive the undergraduates of any valuable experience they can gain; and superintendents have the responsibility of seeing that their pupils graduate as *qualified* nurses, and that the experience which is of right theirs should not be given to others.

Again, nurses from other schools are apt to be critical of methods differing from those to which they have been accustomed, and superintendents hesitate to run the risk of introducing a disturbing element where the best discipline is essential.

In considering this difficulty our third division of the subject presents itself, viz. :—

“The best way of obtaining post-graduate work.”

Two suggestions occur to me, and in making these it is to be remembered that money compensation should not be considered. To pay graduate nurses when giving them the opportunities for study would not be the proper way to expend hospital funds. It is different with the undergraduate, who gives her services for a long period in return for her training, although it is now the opinion of many whose judgment we must respect that even the undergraduate should receive no compensation.

The first suggestion I would offer is that nurses might act as substitutes during the vacation seasons in any special department selected by themselves. There would be room for them at this time of year, and no one could accuse them of taking valuable experience from others. It is also the time when they have most leisure, when they are not so likely to have regular work.

The other suggestion is that they take a course as assistant to the head nurse of the department in which they wish to work. This would not interfere with the work of the undergraduates, and would be of service to the graduate, as she would gain an insight into the whole work of the department from the point of view of the head nurse and the doctor. Unless, however, this course were taken during the vacation season it would be necessary for her in the majority of cases to room outside the hospital.

There is another phase of post-graduate work which we as a society should consider seriously and

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