standing of the vital importance to society of the work which nurses are doing, there can be little hope that schools of nursing can be maintained upon a truly satisfactory economic basis, or can render their full measure of usefulness to the public."

While hospital wards form the indispensable laboratories for training in nursing, equally necessary in any adequate system are bodies of trained teachers and suitable places in which to teach. Equally important are suitable conditions of student life and work.

"The ordinary needs for the proper conduct of the training school should be considered carefully in the making up of the hospital budget. The head of the school should be required to present an estimate of the probable expenses of her department, which should include provision for necessary developments in any desirable direction.

"Where it is impossible for the hospital to supply the necessary funds there should be no hesitation in making direct appeals to private individuals or associations, or, in certain cases, in asking for appropriations from public funds for the proper financial support of the school."

The Teaching Field (Range, Variety, and Character of Services).

"It is commonly accepted that a good teaching field must provide satisfactory opportunities for training in the four main branches of nursing—medical, surgical, obstetrical, and children—and that the services must be reasonably acute. Generally speaking, the value of any service from the standpoint of training is directly proportionate to the number of acute cases being cared for. . . .

"From the standpoint of teaching, a large and active private service in a hospital presents difficulties. . . . It is a distinct loss to the student in that it substitutes the restricted experience of service with one or two individuals for the varied and instructive opportunities provided by the many patients of the large open ward." In the interests of good teaching it is held that this service should be kept at a reasonable minimum.

The importance of training in the nursing of communicable diseases is emphasised. "So important, indeed, is this in the preparation of nurses for modern public health work, that it is difficult to see how they can get along without it. Affiliations should be sought which would provide this training in the acute infectious diseases for those particularly needing it, even where it is not required, or obtainable, for the entire student body. Facilities for training in the care of nervous and mental patients should also be made available. . . .

"The children's service should provide opportunity for the handling of sick children, not only in infancy, but up through the years of childhood. It is one of the most important of all the services, and with the development of public health work, and the widespread introduction of nurses into public schools, it has become fundamental and indispensable in the scheme of training.

The dispensary, or outdoor (out-patient?) service provides invaluable opportunities of instruction. Patients visiting dispensaries for advice or diagnosis present many conditions and stages of diseases rarely seen in the wards. . . . The dispensary should play a much larger part in the training of the nurse than it has hitherto usually done, and its special resources should be as completely utilized as possible."

Conditions of Life and Work for Students.

"The pivot upon which the whole curriculum swings is the system of hours of duty which the hospital requires of the nursing staff. The very purpose of the instruction for which the student pays by her service, is frustrated by long hours. Good teaching—any teaching, in fact—is wasted on students who have been engaged in prolonged, heavy, physical effort, or in exacting forms of nursing which involve considerable mental and nervous strain. The senses are dulled, the mind works more slowly, concentration is practically impossible, wrong impressions are frequently carried away, but worse than all of these is the fact that the student acquires a distaste for the work, which is made too difficult for her to accomplish creditably. The fact is that long hours of work for student nurses have been for a quarter of a century the greatest stumblingblock to progress in nursing. . . . It is strange that hospitals have been so slow in grasping and applying the findings of science on the subject of fatigue. The eight hours' day has been so generally accepted as the maximum for a normal, healthy life, especially under conditions demanding physical effort and mental strain, and it has been enforced by law in so many departments of the world's work, even under the unusual demands of war, that the hospital lays itself open to peculiarly unfavourable comparisons by its continued insistence on a policy which has been discredited, not only by scientific and educational authorities, but by frankly commercial enterprises as well.

"Training schools for nurses should be scrupulously sensitive in seeing that the instruction they offer is given under conditions which

previous page next page