

As every fresh step taken in professional matters must be in its first stage, largely experimental, it is most important that there should be impartial unbiassed judgment, and judicious weighing of merits, also the faithful recording of opposite theories or organisations.

It will be obvious that the person or persons responsible for the conduct of a nursing journal should be themselves trained nurses, and should be so thoroughly versed in all matters connected with the profession, so well equipped with knowledge of its various branches, that their presentation of news to be recorded is in its manner, and method, itself an appraisal of its value.

Finally, the journal must be a reliable record, affording all possible material for the formation of sound judgments.

How to Make a Journal Useful.

The next Section was dealt with by Miss Mary M. Roberts, R.N., Editor of *The American Journal of Nursing*, whose paper on "How to Make a Journal Useful and Attractive" we print in abridged form.

INTRODUCTION.

That title is a pretty compliment to the editors of *The American Journal of Nursing*. I presume we were selected by the Programme Committee, not because we have arrived, but because our remarkably steady growth would seem to indicate that our magazine has at least been useful. Our growth is due, however, in very large measure to two things: the wisdom of the pioneers who founded the *Journal* and the fine loyalty of American nurses to their official magazine.

THE REAL PROBLEM—DIVERSE INTERESTS.

Editors of "class publications" are supposed to have "an easy berth." It would be a simple matter to make a journal useful and attractive to a very clearly defined group. We who are editors of nursing journals face the problem of meeting the needs of nurses primarily, but of nurses with constantly increasing diversification of interests. A nurse is no longer just a nurse: she is some particular kind of nurse, as private duty, public health, a ward sister, a Plunkett nurse, an obstetric nurse, a midwife, an instructor or what not. It is important that an editor have the faculty of visualising her audience, of seeing the instructor in the poorly equipped as well as the well-equipped class room, the private duty nurse in the isolated home as well as in the private corridors of highly developed hospitals; to see the public health nurse in her manifold activities, and to see the young nurse and the snowy-haired one in relation to each. For example, we have in the United States to-day more than 200,000 registered nurses. Within that group of "trained" nurses we have some thirty-odd specialities. We have the further complication of membership in three national nursing organisations, two of which, the American Nurses' Association (which owns the *American Journal of Nursing*) and the National League of Nursing Education, are officially represented by the magazine. We have, in addition, the honour of representing the International Council of Nurses.

In addition, we must constantly keep before us a concept of the normal reading tastes (I will not call it literary taste) of our far from homogeneous group. This covers the entire range from the most ephemeral of popular writing to the solid meat of sociology and philosophy.

No magazine made up wholly of scientific or purely technical articles, therefore, will be widely read by nurses. Such a magazine would be hailed with joy by the intellectual and highly educated few; it will not appeal to the many.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

We have a definite responsibility to these very widely scattered groups, scattered both geographically and in interests. Our position of leadership as an official magazine lays upon us an obligation to all nurses who are willing to read. These responsibilities are not unique. They are common to all the professional Nursing journals, varying only in emphasis and in accordance with the rate of development in particular countries.

OFFICIAL OR ORGANISATION MATERIAL.

Can one journal really be useful to such a diverse public? We believe it can. We believe that nursing has not yet so far advanced that it can afford to scatter its finances or its interests in many professional periodicals. Nursing programmes can best be advanced if all nurses are informed on major issues. Professional unity is extremely important. A strong but reasonably flexible general nursing magazine is the most useful single medium for maintaining that unity. An analysis of the problem indicates a common core of professional interests and professional knowledge which is augmented year by year, as a tree adds new rings to its growth. An official magazine is very definitely charged with the responsibility for presenting this information while it is in season, of presenting it in readily usable form, and of making of it a permanent historical record. This material should reach the magazine through official channels and, once the machinery of the offices of secretaries and publicity committees has been set up, should reach the magazine without further news-gathering agencies.

Organisation material must be presented in as attractive a form as possible in order to catch the interest of the younger nurses. I venture to make this statement even though much of our own organisation material is condensed beyond the point of attractiveness because of space limitations. Young nurses will not become interested in the professional organisations, whose usefulness I need not dwell upon before this audience, if their activities are not presented in vital, attractive, sparkling form. One rather colloquial article on how nurses worked together to secure legislation, let us say, describing the anxiety, the effort, the difficulties, and final triumph, will influence many more nurses than a half-dozen stereotyped reports that legislation was secured, important though these are as a matter of record.

"GREEDY GRASPERS."

It is safe to assume that every specialist is an Oliver Twist and wants "more." Hospital administrators are usually well served by special magazines. The educators tend to be "greedy graspers" of space, and their arguments are so sound, viz., that their work is fundamental to all else, that it requires courage to limit their allotment, but the editor must never forget all the thousands of nurses who have only a remote interest in credits, curriculum, and class-room activities generally (indeed some of them fairly bristle when nursing education is mentioned), but who do have personal problems in the care of patients and in their own life adjustments of a very real sort. The educational group has the very great merit of readiness to supply material of high professional quality. It properly tends to be highly technical in nature, but some of it must be in what may be called interpretative form in order to catch the interest of the less well-informed.

ARTICLES ON NURSING.

At the opposite extreme stands the tremendous private duty group, made up of nurses working alone, hungering and thirsting, so they constantly tell us, for assistance with their problems, but producing very little "copy." There

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