

THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

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A New Periodical for the College.

The Executive Committee of the Alumnae has appointed a committee to consider a proposal to establish a new publication which might be the organ of the Alumnae, the Faculty, and the College in general. A good many institutions—some of them not comparable in size with the Normal College—issue such a magazine, usually a quarterly. Alumnae news and reports, questions of college policy, plans for the future development of courses of study, articles of general educational interest and occasionally literary or scientific monographs find an appropriate place in such a publication. It should embody the spirit of the College and its graduates, and represent it before the educated public, as no undergraduate periodical ought to be expected to do, and as no mere news-letter, circulated only among the Alumnae, can possibly do.

Such a periodical is needed in the first place, to arouse fresh interest in a wider circle of the graduates, and make them better acquainted with their Alma Mater. Incidentally it ought to awaken a host of them to a consciousness of their duty toward the College,—a duty which they can begin to discharge in no better way than by becoming paying members of the Associated Alumnae. The last annual report seems to indicate that less than seventeen hundred, out of all the thousands that have been graduated from the Normal College, have understood this primary act of loyalty to the institution which has done so much for them. There is reason to believe that an attractive magazine, effectively and wisely conducted, would greatly increase the number of those who realize that they do care to stand by the College and support Alumnae activities.

In the past six years more changes have occurred in the organization of the College than in all its previous history. The average graduate of ten years ago has no comprehension of the present state of affairs,—the length of the course, the division into departments, the requirements for entrance, the method of instruction, the aims, activities, or amusements of the under-graduates. Nor have those responsible for these changes any fit way of informing graduates of what has been done, much less of discussing in advance the changes that are contemplated. The organization and equipment of new departments; the relation of the College to the public school system, to the teaching profession, to other colleges; the requirements for admission and graduation; student government; there are dozens of questions which ought to be publicly discussed, for the clarifying of ideas and for the information of all concerned, before they are finally acted upon.

Some readers will recall that a few years ago a question was under debate which seemed to some of us to threaten the very existence of the College as an institution for the higher education of women. In various periodicals, articles appeared which debated the interests of the College and contained the wildest mis-statements as to what the College did or proposed to do. As far as my observation went, no representative of the College knew of any channel through which the real facts could be set forth; it was inertia rather than argument, which seemed, on the surface of things, to avert the peril. A College Quarterly might at least have set forth with dignity and accuracy the view point of those who knew the facts, however, mistaken the conclusion they drew from them. And

such an organ of publicity ought to be at the disposal of the Alumnae, the Faculty and the Trustees for just such occasions.

It goes without saying that the method of conducting such a publication should be carefully thought out in advance, and even then it might be expected to cause trouble occasionally. No sharp tool can be used without some risk of cutting somebody's fingers once in a while. But this difficulty has been overcome elsewhere, and there is no reason to suppose that it can not be overcome in our case. On the one hand, such a magazine should not represent the views or further the plans of any clique. The opinions of the Trustees, or the Faculty, or the Alumnae can easily be ascertained from those who are officially entitled to speak for them; and such opinions would naturally be given prominence. On the other hand, opportunity should be given for the expression of individual views, at times and in methods that are opportune according to the judgment of a properly constituted board of editors. While it would be quite undesirable to create a periodical to be a mere echo of official judgment, it would be equally unfortunate to allow it to become the organ of factious opposition; the repository of irresponsible criticism, or a persistent advertiser of defects. Many a college periodical has been wrecked on one or more of these rocks, but it does not take more than mortal skill to steer clear of them.

It is going to demand considerable ability, however, to provide the financial support for such an enterprise. The whole project will come to grief unless all those interested—in the passive sense—can be brought to see that it is worth while making some effort, or even a little sacrifice, to establish it firmly. If the Alumnae Association will support the plan with enthusiasm and a moderate generosity, there will be hope of enlisting other aid enough to put the magazine on a sound basis. But if we are not willing

to pay and to work for a good College magazine, the plan will have to be postponed until that future day when our successors have a wider and a clearer conception than we of what the work of the Normal College both is and ought to be.

G. M. Whicher.

Nominating Committee.

Mrs. John R. Sim, Chairman; Mrs. D. A. Beck, Mrs. James A. McCague, Mrs. Frank E. Wise, Miss Clara Wells, Miss Jeannette S. Sewell, Miss Rosabell McDonald.

The Alumnae Breakfast.

As stated in last month's "News," the Alumnae Breakfast will be held at the Hotel Astor on Saturday, Feb. 17th. The committee ask that all ladies desiring to attend send in their application for tickets early. In order properly to arrange the guests at the different tables, the sale of tickets should close on the 15th at the latest. The many tardy applications last year caused confusion in seating a number of the guests, and this year it is hoped this unpleasantness may be avoided.

Thirty-two tables have already been taken and part of the program arranged. Among the guests expected are Mrs. Tod Helmuth, Mrs. Philip Carpenter and "Dorothy Dix." There will be a reception from 12.30 and the Breakfast will be served promptly at 1.30.

Applications for tables or tickets may be made to Mrs. George M. Daily, 525 W. 149th St., Chairman of Breakfast Committee. Tickets \$2.50. Tables seat 6, 8 or 10 guests.

Our President, Mrs. S. J. Kramer, who was recently appointed to membership on the Board of Education, has been assigned by the president of that body to the Committees on Supplies, on Studies and Text-Books, and to the Executive Committee of the Normal College.