

believe them to be quite unacquainted with journalistic matters.

Now, for the first time, English Nurses have a Journal which has succeeded in carrying the news of London Hospitals to the Provinces, and that from Country Institutions to the Antipodes; while from South Africa, to India on the one side, and to Canada on the other, correspondents supply us with information for the reading of Nurses in this Metropolis. We look back, therefore, on new ground thoroughly broken and sown with good seed for future reaping, and we look forward in confidence to increased work and usefulness in the coming year.

But we have said that this present year of grace appears to us to have been the most important in the annals of English Nursing, and we believe that we can prove the truth of the assertion. Our readers all know that skilled Nursing, as we now understand the term, is entirely a thing of modern growth, and practically has come into existence within the knowledge of this generation. At the outside, thirty years is the span of its age; and as a matter of fact, it is only within the last fifteen years that Nursing has made the great strides which have brought it to its present position. But if our readers will reflect upon the gradual increase of its power and usefulness during the past two decades—that one year, so far as Nursing matters went, was very similar both to its predecessor and to its successor, until 1888 arrived—and then remember all that has been crowded into the compass of the past fifty-two weeks, they must admit that never before have Nursing matters attracted so much public attention, received so much general respect, nor caused so much professional feeling.

We may recall the fact that, as last year closed, it became known that a number of the leading Matrons of London and Provincial Hospitals had met together and decided to form a British Nurses' Association—to “unite Nurses for their mutual help and protection, and for the advancement in every way of their professional work.” In January, it was announced that the leaders of the Medical profession had been consulted, and that, with their advice and assistance, the organization of the new Association had been determined upon. In February, it was made known that Her Royal Highness Princess Christian had accepted its Presidency, and then on the 13th of that month took place the memorable meeting at St. George's Hall, at which hundreds of Nurses and Medical men were present, and where, after most eloquent addresses had been given, it was finally decided to inaugurate the new movement. On that day, we believe, nearly one hundred members were enrolled, and

in the next ten days the number was more than doubled. On February 24th, the first general meeting of members was held, the constitution of the Association was formally fixed, and its General Council and Executive Committee appointed; and then, in the words of the address issued, it only remained for Nurses to do their share, and come forward to join the professional body.

How completely Nurses have recognised the value of the opportunity offered to them is proved beyond doubt by the facts that, by the beginning of October, the Association numbered one thousand members; and, incredible though it may appear, we are informed, upon the very best authority, that since then these numbers have been doubled, and that the end of this year finds the Association more than two thousand strong. It is almost needless to remark that this success is marvellous. We will take an early opportunity of showing that no other professional association in this country has ever made such rapid progress. But here we will only remark that, with so much energy has this movement been conducted, that not only has this large number of members been enrolled, but we understand they have already been carefully organised. Not only so, but time has been found, we understand, to elaborate many of the details of the proposed Registration plan, and to draw up various benevolent schemes for the benefit of Nurses. Of course, these must take months, if not years, to carry into effect. What the Association wants, first and foremost, is to consolidate its strength; and the history of similar undertakings proves that this is no easy or speedy matter to accomplish.

But whatever happens in the future, one thing is certain—the rise and wonderful progress of the British Nurses' Association will make 1888 famous for ever in the annals of Nursing. But the year has been important in other and unfortunately less satisfactory ways. Early in the spring, four great London merchants were persuaded to give £20,000 as the guarantee amount required by law, to be placed in the hands of State officials, in order to inaugurate a Pension Fund for Nurses. We have pointed out in these columns the insuperable objections which exist to the present constitution of this scheme, and how impossible it is that it can be of any benefit to Nurses. A pension, we have shown, is one thing; and if Nurses do sufficient work for the public to deserve such superannuation allowances, let pensions be given freely and frankly to them. But an annuity is a totally different affair, and we have again and again pointed out the total ignorance of Nurses' wants exhibited by the promoters of this scheme, in expecting any Nurse, from her scanty salary, to be able to pay sufficient to gain an adequate

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