

made more and more restricted. From this, it appears, some argue that it may be well to wait till membership is difficult to obtain, and therefore more highly honoured than it is now by ignorant people, before they apply for the privilege. Those who hold back for this reason, we venture to believe, are not only acting foolishly for themselves, but wrongly for their profession. In the first place, if everyone had acted thus, the Association would never have been formed at all; secondly, those Nurses who wait till the battle is won, and the hardest work accomplished, will obtain a much less honourable position in the Association than will naturally be held by those who have borne the burden and heat of the conflict. The large number who have already joined the Association is no surprise to us, but only one more proof of the quiet courage and shrewd common sense of Nurses. These two thousand and more women know the condition of their profession—they recognise from actual daily experience the necessity for reform in their midst, and for union amongst themselves; and despite the sneers and jeers of self-seeking enemies, they have come forward to stand shoulder to shoulder, fully and firmly determined to win their way.

From the first we have recognised and pointed out the arduous nature of the work the Association has pledged itself to accomplish. It is no light task it has undertaken. All honour then, we say, to the Nurses who have declared themselves so anxious for the welfare of their profession, and so willing to work for its advancement. They will conquer, as unselfish enthusiasts have from the very dawn of history always succeeded, and to them will belong the whole credit of success. No honour ever falls to the share of the selfish or weak-kneed, who, when the battle is won, crowd forward in the hope of sharing the spoils of the victors.

What then is the programme which the Association proposes to accomplish, and which is so difficult that such praise is due to its first members? It has announced its intention, first to seek a Royal Charter for its own Incorporation, and to give it powers to institute a Legal Registration of Nurses. The effect of this measure would at once be the protection of the public against the hundreds of untrained and unskilled women who now practise upon it with impunity, pretending to be Trained Nurses; and coincidentally the protection of skilled workers against these women, who now usurp their places, and take the bread from their mouths. The purification of the Nursing Profession, the protection of the sick—surely these are objects well worthy to be striven for. But a Royal Charter is always difficult and expensive to obtain, and herein is shown the steadfastness

and courage of the Association in the high ideal which it has set itself to attain.

Beyond this great work, however, the Nurses' Union proposes to undertake various benevolent schemes for the benefit of its individual members. We understand that the General Council has sanctioned, and that the Executive Committee is now considering how to organise and carry on, Convalescent Homes and Holiday Houses at well-known seaside and inland health resorts; a Benevolent Fund, from which Nurses in urgent need of temporary assistance may be aided; a Central Home in London, which shall provide offices for the Association and its various departments, and also reading and refreshment rooms for London, and bedroom accommodation for Country, Members. How valuable each and every one of these schemes would be to Nurses our readers will know without any explanation from us. Besides this, the Association has determined to hold an annual *Conversazione* and series of six Meetings for the reading and discussion of papers upon Nursing subjects during each winter in London. How successful this past Session's work has been in this direction, needs no effort of memory to recall. And we learn with much pleasure that the work of organising the Association into local centres is so rapidly proceeding, that it is hoped that next winter may see simultaneous meetings for Members being held throughout the United Kingdom. But, of course, these schemes all involve much time and thought and labour, and the wonder is that the new machine already runs so smoothly. We prophesied its success in our first number. Now we congratulate it on the great advance which it has made in its first year of life.

We earnestly counsel all Nurses, who value the good fame of their profession, who desire to help their fellow-workers, or be helped themselves, to join the Association as soon as they are eligible—to aid in the coming contest, and thus participate in the honour of the certain success. As for those Nurses who are holding back till others have won for them legal status and all the material advantages which we have above enumerated, we do not envy their motive now, nor their position hereafter. They may perchance enter into the fruits of the work of others; they can never share in the honour of the victory—in the credit which future generations of Nurses will always bestow upon those who joined the Association before its Charter was granted, and the Profession of Nursing was established and recognised by the law of England.

A GOOD education consists in a combination of good habits.

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