

This fostering of the spirit of co-operation is especially valuable, because it is in this that women are so often found wanting. As individuals they may do much excellent work, but, we fear the great bulk of British women have yet to learn the privilege, and the duty of co-operation.

The coming Congress is an object lesson as to the privileges to be gained by union with other women workers. As a nation we are notoriously insular, apt to dictate to our neighbours, and to pride ourselves on our superiority. At the Congress we shall have the great advantage of listening to the views and experiences of picked women from all the world over. When such women as Miss Susan B. Anthony, Miss Anna Howard Shaw, Mrs. May Wright Sewall, and others likeminded come to speak to us, women who have set in motion the regeneration of the world, and who have brought us appreciably nearer to it, we must perforce sit down and take a lower seat. It will, indeed, be a rare and great privilege to hear from the lips of such women the history of their life's work.

But so far we have considered what we are to gain by the Congress. There is another side to the question, "Privilege begets responsibility." What are we prepared to *give* to it, in what spirit are we going forward into it? Those of us who are able, will surely give money to make the first International Congress of Women ever held in this country an unqualified success; others will give personal service, and others again will offer hospitality to the foreign delegates.

So far as Nursing is concerned, beyond the ways of helping already indicated, the Nursing Profession may bring the best contribution to this section by a determination to avail themselves of the unique advantages it affords. In this country nursing is practically unorganized, feeling on many questions runs high, but the Congress will afford an opportunity for nurses of all shades of thought to meet in open conference, and to discuss with perfect freedom the many questions which require solution, as well as to listen to the views of their colleagues of other nations, and to learn, more especially from American and Canadian nurses, how the organization which has already been accomplished in these countries has been effected.

The NURSING RECORD appeals to the better instincts of the Nursing Profession in this country to embrace this opportunity. To show themselves to their sisters of other nations as

a body of professional workers actuated by a sense of their responsibilities, and anxious to further the best interests of their profession, although they may differ as to the means by which such objects should be attained. The very fact that there are differences of opinion should make the opportunity afforded by the Congress the more welcome. We trust that British Nurses will realize that they stand on trial before the world, and that by the attitude they adopt, will their professional dignity, or the reverse, be appraised by the women of other nations.

Annotations.

THE SPIRIT OF NURSING.

It is a truism that a nurse, worthy of the name, and faithful to the traditions of her vocation, places before any other consideration the welfare of the sick, and the honour of her profession, and that comfort, ease, and professional advancement hold a secondary place in her consideration. We are far from saying that nurses should be indifferent to professional promotion, on the contrary we urge that they should be even ambitious, but we do unhesitatingly say that promotion may be bought too dearly, that other things besides personal advancement must receive consideration, and that, moreover, if desirable posts are obtained at the cost of ignoring the claims of others, or of repudiating public and professional obligations, because this is apparently the price demanded, then the spirit of the true nurse is altogether absent, in the woman who is willing to pay in such coin.

Is it because the nursing profession is becoming tainted with the sin of the age, the desire for luxurious comfort, and the greed of gold, that personal comfort seems so often to be put by nurses before a higher ideal? The spirit which moved the Crimean nurses to offer their services to our soldiers was not a desire for personal comfort, but of serving the sick, and ever since, when our hearts have burned within us at some deed of heroism, it has not been the prosperous, the self-seeking, the universally applauded, who have commanded our admiration, but those who have resolutely renounced personal comfort, and at some lonely outpost have deliberately risked discomfort, privation, and even death, to carry to the sick the benefits which their skilled training enables them to offer. Are we losing the spirit of the true soldier, who, wherever the battle rages thickest

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