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Editorial.

FRESH BEGINNINGS.

"I fling my past behind me, like a robe
Worn threadbare in the seams and out of date.
I have outgrown it. Wherefore should I weep
And dwell upon its beauty and its dyes
Of Oriental splendour, or complain
That I must needs discard it? I can weave
Upon the shuttles of the future years
A fabric far more durable. Subdued,
It may be, in the blending of its hues,
Where sombre shades commingle, yet the gleam
Of golden warp shall shoot it through and through,
While over all a fadeless lustre lies,
And starred with gems made out of crystallised tears,
My new robe shall be richer than the old."

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

The one lesson which it is of supreme importance for workers to learn is that if their work is to stand it must be arranged on lines capable of constant expansion according to the needs of the time. We cannot take the thing our hand has accomplished and say: "This is my creation, I hand it on to posterity finished and complete, mine for all time," for we know that hundreds of hands will be held out, are already being held out, to take this cherished work of ours, and, in carrying it on in all loyalty to the original conception, to add to it, alter it, until its shape is almost unrecognisable, in order to fit it to the needs of the future. Constitutions and regulations which meet the needs of one generation require revision for the next. It is, therefore, wise to keep continually before us that, though we may formulate general principles which will abide, we are working primarily for our own times, and the freer we leave those who come after us to adapt our methods to their own requirements the more wisely we shall have performed our own share of the world's work.

Even in the short span of our own lives we cast behind us methods for which already we have no longer any use; Experience, that hard but most wise task-mistress, has taught us lessons which must be utilised, and we fling the past behind us, as the child discards the lesson books which, in their time, have served a useful purpose, for those suited to his needs when he has come to man's estate.

The New Year is a time for fresh beginnings, and it were well if British nurses resolved that it should see further progress made in their consolidation, see them combining as they have never done before for the good of all. We should like to see every well-trained Matron a member of the Matrons' Council, every well-trained nurse associated with her colleagues for the organisation of her profession by the State.

All the leading Matrons and nurses in the United States belong either to the Society of Superintendents or the National Associated Alumnae. This does not imply that all think alike, but that they work together on broad matters of principle.

One of the healthiest signs of the times in the United Kingdom is the evident desire of nurses for greater union. In England we have Leagues affiliated together. In Ireland the Irish Nurses' Association is a vigorous society doing good and useful work. In Scotland there are indications that nurses are awaking to the need of union, the ultimate goal of all combination on the part of nurses being, of course, to increase their efficiency for the better service of the sick. The work we should set our hands to in the present year is to increase the desire for union in our ranks and to bring about its accomplishment.

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