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## Editorial. Resolutions

CHRISTMAS IS ONE OF THE loveliest times of the year ; it has many customs and one from which we all derive happiness, is that of Carolling. The carols in which our nurses delight tell of the oldest and most beautiful story this world has ever known. So well can we picture the eager shepherds as they followed the star ; we are moved by the finding of the child Jesus in a manger. At this time, all over the world, families and loved ones are gathered together and all pettinesses are forgotten. At Christmas the world would appear to see the true measure of greatness, and so it is with those we respect and love.

The spirit of unity which animates a nation when it is in peril has returned under different circumstances. Many shadows, suspicions and misunderstandings mar our friendships and working with others. At the time such things are mountainous ; looking back they are no longer troublesome, and eventually when we see the completed purpose, the whole pattern of life will fall into place.

But looking back is a good exercise in that it rebukes so many of the fears which proved groundless, but because we have been given a free will and are able to exercise a moral choice between good and evil, we are never really satisfied. Again, we are conservative creatures, too frequently disliking change and resisting it as long as we can.

The New Year has come and what have we decided ? It is the time when we make new resolutions ; many will feel that such traditional moves are not worthwhile owing to experience of previous failure. Surely the doctrine of providence underlies the whole of life and is it not true that deep-rooted in each one of us is the belief in the over-ruling hand of Providence ? Was not that known by Shakespeare when he wrote :—

“ There’s a Divinity which shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we may.”

We in our chosen work are privileged—we have known, in many instances, disappointment and apparent destruction. In many hearts the canker of evil has appeared to get in and turn what should have been good into something of ugliness. Harmony has been turned to discord, and so the web becomes more tangled, and the knots more difficult to undo. In numberless ways we have been warned that we should try not to worry about the future to the extent of always being over-anxious. We must, of course, have forethought but anxiety may so easily blind us to actual facts.

Constantly we have evidence of a Human Providence as well as a Divine Providence. Beauty in the form

of flowers, trees, birds, music and the happiness in the face of a child, is always in evidence. Collectively we know that we are all working to an end shaped by providence and our work lies in different fields and varied ways ; physical, social, intellectual and political.

The drawbacks and difficulties which would appear to constantly block our way are necessary to our character—they keep us alert and watchful and create greater care in our standards, if we believe that good should and must prevail. Surely we are grateful for the trust we are given, for we also have human freedom as well as responsibility.

Many of us have watched the old year go with mixed feelings of regret and pleasure. Shadows and sunshine have chequered its pattern but it has on the whole been a difficult year for most people, imposing wear, tear and strain.

Some years ago a message was given from the pulpit which is equally true today. It showed that although the children of Israel grumbled and rebelled against the monotony of life and food in the desert, nevertheless when later generations looked back over the vicissitudes of their national history they felt that God was guiding his chosen people most manifestly at precisely that time.

We in the nursing profession have the greatest opportunities possible and we are in the position to be constantly aware of what we owe to others rather than what we expect from them. Are we going to lack faith because difficulties are magnified, or are we going forward into the new year firmly resolved to give more for the good of all ? Are we going to weave a web which will tell its own story exerting the greatest influence from which only the best can result ?

It is necessary to be firm and resolute, for is it not true that the block of granite which is the obstacle in the pathway of the weak, becomes a stepping-stone in the pathway of the strong. It has been written that “ He that resolves upon any great and good end, has by that very resolution sealed the chief barrier to it.” He will find such resolution removing difficulties, searching out or making means, giving courage for despondency and strength for weakness, and like the Star to the Wise Men of old, ever guiding him nearer and nearer to perfection.

Accept the mood which the beginning of another year induces, remembering the words of Miss Haskin :—

“ I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year,  
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,  
And he replied, ‘ Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God,  
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.’ ”

MARGARET B. MACKELLAR.

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