

travelled straight through without an hour's loss of time. Of their destination and work we hope to hear later. Maybe they will be directed to take duty on the hospital ships, or they may await the wounded to be brought from Volos to Athens; in any case their whole-hearted sympathetic services are at the disposal of the Greek nation.

As we go to press we have received a telegram from the Crown Princess, asking that six more nurses may be sent to Athens. Miss Jessy Parson, of King's College Hospital, Miss Amy Davidson and Miss Emily Fox, of Guy's Hospital, will therefore leave London with three other volunteers at the earliest possible date.

Duty.

BY MARGARET BREAY, M.R.B.N.A.

"I slept and dreamt that life was beauty,
I woke, and found that life was duty."

"My father always used to say that chrysanthemums smell of duty," said a nurse to me one day, and ever since the peculiar scent of these flowers, as the seasons have brought them back to us once more, has always to me brought with it this remark.

We all, I suppose, wish to do our duty, and to do it well and thoroughly, but happy indeed are those who, reviewing the past, can say that with them this has always been the case. However, faulty as we most of us own ourselves to be, still we can *aim* at what we believe duty demands of us.

"Who aimeth at the sky
Hits higher far than he who means a tree"

and

"Hitch your waggon to a star"

are good work-a-day maxims.

In order to aim definitely, we must have an accurate idea as to what our duty is, and for the sake of clearness it is well to consider it under sub-divisions. We shall all, probably, be agreed in placing foremost our *religious* duties, of which it is outside the province of this article to treat. Secondly, we place our *social* duties, and these may again be sub-divided into (a) *public*, and (b) *private* duties.

In the NURSING RECORD it is natural that we should chiefly concern ourselves with our public duties as *Nurses*.

Our public duty then, I take it, consists in:—

(1) Observance of the laws of the land so far as they have been laid down for our profession.

(2) Loyalty to our Hospital or Institution if

we are attached to one, and to those who are in authority.

(3) Our duty to our patients.

(4) To the medical men for whom we nurse, and lastly, but by no means least, our duty to our profession.

In all well-organised communities the well-being of the individual must give way to the public good. We have a fine example of self-sacrificing devotion to public duty in Horatius, where Macaulay tells us that

"Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son, nor wife, nor limb, nor life
In the brave days of old."

If the heathen Roman was able to attain to such a standard, surely after nineteen centuries of Christianity we ought not to be content with a lower one. It is our duty, then, to put the interests of our profession before our own, if the two clash. To do this, we must first make up our minds as to what we believe *is* for the good of our profession; and having done this, fight for it, if need be, at all costs. It follows that we must keep ourselves abreast with nursing politics, and with the nursing literature of the day; that we must try to see all round knotty questions; and having, to the best of our ability, decided upon a given course, we must fearlessly express ourselves regardless of consequences. Not to do this, to simply refrain from speech or action, is distinctly, under some circumstances, to do wrong.

The instance of Meroz may here be cited. There was a battle, of which the issue seemed doubtful. The inhabitants of the town of Meroz took no part. They abstained from espousing either side. When the battle had been fought and won, they were "cursed bitterly" by the angel of the Lord, simply for their inaction, "because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty." We cannot, therefore, rid ourselves of our responsibilities by shirking them.

Having settled what our aims should be, we shall be wise to co-operate in order to attain our ends. "Union is strength," and Æsop's fable of the dying father who collected his sons about him, and requested them each to break in half a bundle of faggots, conveys a lesson which will hold good to the end of time. It will be remembered that each son tried in vain to break the bundle, and then the feeble dying old man untied it, and broke each stick in half with ease.

Further, in making up our minds how to act on any given point, we are many of us swayed by popular opinion, and are apt to think that the majority must necessarily be in the right.

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