

1897.

WE take the opportunity, in this first issue in 1897, of expressing to our readers our heartiest greetings, and our hope that the year may prove to them one of happiness, and much useful work. As the Editor of this paper we look forward with hope to the progress in Nursing matters which may be expected during the coming year, and it is not without satisfaction that we venture to think that the programme of Nursing Reform which has always been advocated in the NURSING RECORD, is the one which will obtain on all sides in the future, and which indeed is being, in part, adopted almost daily in most unlikely quarters. Much, however, remains to be done, before necessary reforms can be effected, and it is to our readers, more especially to those whose kindly expressions of good will, to ourselves personally, and of appreciation of the RECORD, as the representative organ of the Nursing profession, constantly reach us, that we look for help. They can aid us much, both by making the NURSING RECORD known to those of their friends who are at present unacquainted with it, and also by using their personal influence in explaining and advocating the views which are advanced in it.

UNION.

That "union is strength" is a lesson which mankind has long since found out, witness the force of trades unions in the commercial world, and the power which the working man possesses, in union with his fellows, of influencing the labour market, and determining the relative positions of capital and labour. This lesson of co-operation is one which women have hitherto learnt somewhat imperfectly, but they are daily becoming more and more alive to the necessity for it, and when once Nurses have thoroughly learned the power which they possess, there is no doubt that their united demands for the improvement of their profession will come with a force which will be irresistible. Speaking as a Nurse to Nurses, we can wish for our readers nothing better than that they should one and all be ardent politicians, keenly alive to the well-being of the Nursing profession from a wider standpoint than that of the one Hospital in which their work lies, that they should be conversant more especially with all matters affecting the interests of Nurses, and women,

and that they should lose no opportunity both privately and publicly of insisting that these interests be regarded. It is beyond all question that the sense of the duty of Nurses to their *profession* is a necessity before they will take pains to interest themselves in matters which are outside their own immediate sphere of action, and this professional feeling is, we hope and believe, growing daily.

LEGAL REGISTRATION.

The policy of this paper has always been expressed with no uncertain sound, but we will once more place before our readers the questions which appear to us to need settlement in the future. First and foremost we place the recognition by Parliament of the status of Nurses, and consequently of a *legal and compulsory system of Registration*. Until this end is attained, thoroughly trained Nurses must always be placed in the most unfair competition with imperfectly trained, and in many cases unprincipled, persons. If, as we ardently hope the present year should foreshadow the enfranchisement of women, this advance would give, we are convinced, an enormous impetus to the cause of Nursing; firstly, because women would then be a force which would have to be reckoned with, and, secondly, because women's views on a women's matter would probably be sound and instinctively correct.

EXAMINATION.

Next, we believe that an *independent standard of examination* of Nurses is a necessity if their well-being is considered. At present, the only test before Registration is that of examination by the lecturers on Nursing in individual schools. Therefore, these Schools are a law to themselves. In some of them the training is excellent. In others a certain amount no doubt is *learnt* in three years, but of *training* there is little or none. A woman enters a Training School with the understanding that she receives a definite education, and in order that she should not be deprived of what is undoubtedly her due, there should be in our opinion an independent public examination of Nurses, analagous to those in the medical profession, in which the Nurse shall give evidence of having attained to a minimum standard of practical and theoretical knowledge before she is eligible for Registration.

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