

the bread of independence before you enter our ranks!" and this lesson nurses will have to learn.

It is, in our opinion, better that they should begin in a small way, and consolidate their forces slowly, than that they should come before the public with a flourish of trumpets, outwardly presenting an imposing front, but, in reality, being no more than a "man of straw" bolstered up by an over-generous public, and having no vitality, because the salt of self-respect, which should season, sweeten, and purify the whole being, is lacking in their composition; and any organization so constituted degenerates inevitably into the "sick man," whose very existence is a danger to his healthier neighbours.

Nurses must, therefore, combine on a self-respecting basis if they would attain public and professional esteem. Our American colleagues have taught us this lesson, and we hope that one result of the opportunity of intercourse with leaders of the Nursing Profession in America, afforded by the coming International Congress, will be to inspire British Nurses with the spirit which animates American and Canadian women in their professional affairs. For the Canadian nurses have, under existing circumstances we think rightly, linked themselves professionally, not with the mother country, as under ordinary conditions would be natural and advisable, but, have associated themselves with the wise and liberal Constitutions of the American Society of Superintendents, and the National Associated Alumnae of the United States, with the result that their Association is speedily becoming a professional force of much importance. British nurses will do well to take this lesson to heart, and decline to be held up to the public as suitable recipients of charity, but insist upon managing their own professional affairs, and paying their own way as they go. They can then, without asking or receiving favours, take an independent stand before the public as a self-respecting profession.

From the conversations we have had with many nurses lately, we know that very many are like-minded with ourselves, and this healthy spirit of self-respect is one which should be fostered and cherished. Those who are superintendents of nurses can do much to instil healthy sentiment on this subject by including a definite course of instruction on nursing ethics in the curriculum of their pupil nurses, who will then leave their training school imbued with a sense of their professional obligations.

Annotations.

A CONSULTATIVE DEPARTMENT.

THE Hospital Saturday Committee in Birmingham has inaugurated a new departure at the instance of Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, which we cannot consider either wise or professional. They desire to found a superior dispensary, at which the patients who are treated will pay half a guinea for advice and medicine.

It is proposed to employ as "consultants," in connection with this dispensary, young physicians and surgeons at a salary of £500 a year each, the committee guaranteeing an expected deficiency of £800 a year, and Mr. Arthur Chamberlain a further £400. It is somewhat difficult to understand what special benefit can be obtained by the public from attendance at the Dispensary when they might obtain advice from a general practitioner for the same sum as they would pay to the young consultant. Further, the scheme does not appear to be at all popular with the medical profession in Birmingham, and this we can readily understand, for the commercial aspect of the question seems contrary to all professional etiquette, and the tendency of the proposed scheme, if adopted to any extent, will no doubt be to reduce the calling of medicine from that of a learned profession to the level of a trade. That this is clearly recognised by the medical profession in Birmingham, is evidenced from the letter addressed by Dr. Robert Saundby to the *Birmingham Post*. He says, "It is impossible to tell how this institute will be managed, but it is clear that it is intended to make it, if possible, a paying concern, and therefore the medical profession will watch carefully the methods by which it carries on its business. We shall certainly expect the medical officers employed by it to have the same regard to the rules of professional propriety which govern the rest of the profession. I daresay everything will go on well, but one cannot help regarding with some distrust an institution started with such an open avowal of the intention of the founders to make it a financial success, and so little consideration for the medical profession with whose business it proposes to compete."

The danger is a real one, and we hope the interests of the medical profession will be well guarded. We are further of opinion that the benefit received by the public will not be in

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