

impossible for the present, and doubtless they will be ready to answer both to the nursing profession and the public for their action.

But the public remain in danger from the ignorant the untrustworthy and the unscrupulous who now pose as nurses and who do infinite harm to the sick. As nurses, then, have been prevented from effecting reforms, the public must protect themselves, and must take the necessary steps to secure that end.

It is therefore proposed to form a Society for the Protection of the Public by the Compulsory Registration of Trained Nurses; to disseminate through the country the facts and to explain why the nurses have not been permitted to work out their own professional salvation. The Society will be composed chiefly of laymen and laywomen, but medical practitioners and nurses interested in the question will be eligible for membership. It is suggested that the first object of the Society shall be to obtain an inquiry by a Select Committee of either House of Parliament into the whole Nursing question. To this course, a large number of Members of Parliament have already promised to give their support, and it is certain, from the promises already received, that further assistance can be obtained. We shall be pleased to hear from any of our readers who approve of the formation of the proposed Society, and who would be willing to take part in its work.

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### Annotations.

#### LOYALTY.

ONCE more we have passed a mile stone on the way of life and, with most people the New Year is a time for looking backward and looking forward. Looking backward we see, more clearly than when we were in the midst of the fray, the result of our work in the past, its successes and its failures, and from a distance we see the whole in a truer perspective than is possible when from its closeness it obscures our whole horizon. Looking forward, if we are wise, we profit by bygone experience to avoid mistakes in planning our course for the future. The Nursing Profession will do well to take stock at this time, and from the lessons of the past to order its ways for the future. From our own knowledge of nurses in the past we say, without hesitation, that the greatest need of the profession as a whole is that individual members should cultivate a sense of

loyalty one to the other. There are many nurses, good women, doing in their own spheres excellent work, which is worthy of all commendation, but, so far, little has been done to attain effective co-operation for the good of the public, and of the nursing profession. Women are at no time quick to cooperate, and the economic position of nurses, their dependence, to a large extent upon medical men for their work, and consequently for their means of livelihood, and the unscrupulous intimidation to which they have been subjected has prevented many, who, if left to themselves would have been glad to work for the general good, from undertaking duties which would bring them into collision with their employers. They have in many cases unfortunately chosen the "line of least resistance," they have not been true to their colours, and have deserted those who would have helped them to attain professional emancipation. But for the future surely they will alter their line of action. If for no higher reason, then, as a mere instinct of self protection the time has come when nurses must stand shoulder to shoulders, and protect the interests of their class. But we cannot believe that self interest is the only motive which will compel them to combine. The protection of the public from the many untrained and undesirable women who at present go out as private nurses, must appeal to every woman with nursing instinct, and some tardy sense of loyalty to those who, in securing their interests, have borne the burden and heat of the day, may, we hope, be awakened in them in the future. The reason why men are so well able to protect their own interests is that, whatever may be their failures and shortcomings, they, as a rule, stand by one another, and loyally support those whom they select as their leaders. When women have learnt to do the same they will be many degrees nearer the attainment of their desires. It is because they allow themselves to be influenced by side issues, instead of keeping the main issue steadily in view, and working to attain that their forces are weakened. Men know this well enough. They know also that if they can stir up a personal feeling against the leaders of any cause which they wish to damage that disunion and consequent weakness will ensue. Let us resolve to be true to our leaders in the coming year, and, as a motto we may well adopt: "In great things unity, in small things liberty, in all things charity."

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