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Editorial.

NEW BEGINNINGS.

There is always a feeling of exhilaration as we turn over a new page and begin afresh with a clean sheet before us—a sheet which we hope will bear a more perfect inscription than any yet recorded.

And so, at the beginning of a new year, we once more think not of the things which are past but of those which the immediate future has in store, and gather up our forces to attack the problems and work which await us.

Foremost amongst the things which demand consideration is the meeting of the International Council of Nurses in Berlin in 1904, while the International Council of Women is in session. The meetings of the International Council of Nurses will now the Council is fairly launched take place quinquennially, but it is felt that nurses have so much to gain by being brought into touch with women of all nations in other branches of work, that it has been decided to hold the meeting of their International Council at the same time and place as that of the International Council of Women. The chief business of the Council will be to receive reports as to the present conditions of nursing in various countries, and those presented at its meeting held in the United States in 1901 were so valuable, forming the most complete record yet published as to nursing organisation all over the world, that we are confident the meeting to be held in Germany will be looked forward to with the greatest interest, and, no doubt, many nurses in Great Britain who found it impossible to go to Buffalo will make an effort to be in Berlin in the summer of next year.

In Great Britain, the most important work in the near future for public-spirited nurses is the marshalling of their forces to obtain an Act of Parliament providing for their legal registration,

and they should therefore concentrate their energies on forwarding the work of the Society which has been formed with the object of obtaining such registration; and because the support of public opinion is necessary in order to obtain any legislation, it is essential that the public should be interested in the work of the Society, and that literature bearing upon this work should be brought to its notice. Members of our profession who have unique opportunities for educating the public on this all-important question are the private nurses, who are brought into direct contact with those who can influence legislation, and whose opinion, if their own work is good, carries considerable weight. It would be well if all private nurses realised their responsibilities in this matter, for it is not only their own professional status which is at stake, but the welfare of the sick, as is constantly demonstrated to the well-trained private nurse in the course of her work. If those of our readers who are private nurses would take the opportunities which offer for bringing this journal, and the reports it contains as to work of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, to the notice of the public, they would be doing good service.

Further, as we have from time to time pointed out, the usual preliminary to legislation in this country is the appointment of a Select Committee of one or other House of Parliament to inquire into the present conditions of the profession concerning which legislation is desired, and this is an end which all nurses should endeavour to promote.

In this, our first issue in the New Year, we must express to all our readers far and near, and to all associations of nurses which are working for the good of the profession at large, our heartiest greetings, and the hope that whatever success they have achieved in the past may be eclipsed by that which awaits them in the year upon which we are now entering.

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