

THE
BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS REDFORD FENWICK

No. 979.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1907.

Vol. XXXVIII

Editorial.

PROFESSIONAL LOYALTY.

There is always an invigorating note in fresh beginnings, a new day, a new venture, other days may have been dreary, other ventures may not have come up to our expectations, but here is something quite fresh, full of unknown possibilities, and we brace ourselves to meet the unknown which, for aught we know, may hold in its keeping the desire of our hearts.

The opening of a new year, therefore, means much to us. Let us meet it with hope, with courage, with the determination to work strenuously. As nurses, what better work can we set before us than to strive for the good of the profession to which we owe much, and which has a right to expect service at our hands? At present its limits are undefined, its standards are uncertain, its members are not differentiated from those who have no right to assume the name of trained nurse, its fair fame is assailed, and so long as these conditions prevail the sick can not be assured of efficient service.

Let us then throw ourselves heart and soul into the campaign for professional organisation, so that we may obtain just conditions of work for nurses, and assured proficiency in those who offer their professional services to the sick.

The need for this is apparent. The would-be probationer is confronted by the fact that she has no means of knowing whether the training offered to her by various schools is efficient, whether, if she engages to undergo a term of training, she will at the end of that time have had the experience and teaching necessary to make her competent, and it is not infrequent for a girl who has passed through a course of

training at one hospital, to undergo a second course at another in order to obtain the instruction which she has then learnt is necessary. This ought not to be. Thus we need the definition of standards, the recognition by a central authority of institutions which conform to these standards, the independent testing by the same authority of the knowledge of the nurse who has passed through the appointed curriculum, and, in all justice to the nurse who has satisfactorily passed the tests imposed, the State recognition, and registration of her qualifications.

And if this is justice to the nurse, assuredly it is justice to the patient also. It will be remembered that Sir Victor Horsley informed the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Nursing that partially-trained nurses frequently exact the same pay as that exacted by fully-trained nurses, and Dr. Langley Browne added that they did so because they thought it stamped them as fully trained and was often their only claim to be so.

It is bad business to pay the same price for unskilled as for skilled labour. But, further, it is a matter of life and death to the sick to employ unskilled labour assuming it to be skilled.

Let all well-trained nurses realise their responsibilities, and, with loyalty to one another, to their leaders and to the sick, determine to work shoulder to shoulder during the present year to further the aims of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.

As a means to this end let all who wish to advance this cause throw their energies into working for the Petition to be presented to the Prime Minister, urging the introduction of a Government Bill for the State Registration of Nurses into the House of Commons next Session.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)