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Editorial.

A NOBLE GIFT.

We announced last week the generous decision of Miss M. A. Nutting and Miss L. L. Dock that the third volume of their History of Nursing shall be sold for the benefit of the International Council of Nurses. The proof sheets of the work already accomplished, which we have been privileged to read, bear evidence of an enormous amount of research, and from the material before them the authors have woven with great skill the story of the beginnings of the profession of which they are such distinguished members. We can say with confidence that when these books are published not only will they be found of absorbing interest, but it will be the duty of every nurse to acquaint herself with their contents, for never before have nurses had the opportunity therein afforded them of obtaining a clear outline of the early history of their profession.

The work which has been done shows the magnitude of the task before the authors when they deal with the history of the last 35 years in which such great progress in organisation, as well as in practical methods of work, has been made in many countries. The labour of obtaining the data on which to work will be materially lessened, if in each country it is collected and systematised by those who are acquainted with their national nursing history, and who can obtain access to the records which must be consulted. Thus in this country the history of District Nursing, of the Navy and Army Services, of the Private Nursing Movement, and of the organisation work already accomplished, are necessary for the compilation of any complete History of Nursing; more especially is it important that a true account

in connection with organisation should be placed on record, because a volume purporting to be a "history" of nursing has already been published by a lay woman, who has preferred to popularise her story rather than to make it historically accurate. It is thus necessary that the truth, supported by documentary evidence, should be in the hands of the compilers of the first history of their profession written by trained nurses.

In inviting the help of the branches of the International Council of Nurses in each country to assist them in their task, Miss Nutting and Miss Dock have assigned to them a most honourable duty, and with great, but characteristic generosity, they propose to recognise the assistance thus rendered, by giving any profits which are realised from the sale of the third volume to the treasury of the International Council of Nurses, so benefitting it in perpetuity. The income thus derived will be of the utmost assistance in extending the usefulness of the Council which at the present time has only just crossed the border of the promised land, and stands on the threshold of a sphere of ever enlarging and increasing usefulness.

It is now just eight years since the International Council of Nurses was founded. The work which it has accomplished in that time, including the holding of three most successful and enjoyable Conferences, in Buffalo in 1901, in Berlin in 1904, and in Paris recently, encourages us to hope that Miss Dock's dreams for the future of international prizes, scholarships, and exchange of lecturers may become realities. Every nurse of an affiliated society may do something to help to bring about so desirable an end, and may emulate in some small measure the public spirit and indefatigable work of its gifted Hon. Secretary.

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