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Editorial.

THE LESSONS OF THE CONGRESS.—I.

Now that the International Congress has passed into the region of Nursing history, it will be well briefly to consider some of the great lessons which it has taught. These lessons appear to us to be—first, that the Congress has proved once more the great necessity for, and the widespread influence which may be exerted by, a professional journal; secondly, the results which can be achieved by professional co-operation; thirdly, the significance of organisation which is purely professional in its nature; and, fourthly, the results which may be expected from such international co-operation.

The recent Congress can be fairly claimed as a remarkable proof of the widespread influence of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING. This claim will perforce be admitted even by those who have opposed professional organisation most strenuously in the past; because this journal not only conveyed all the preliminary notices of the Congress to every part of the Nursing world, but it also brought, into the necessary communication with the central offices, the Nurses from every country who finally came together at the meetings in London. Through its medium, the hundreds of details of the organisation of the Congress were arranged and widely advertised, so that it was possible for our readers, living thousands of miles apart to communicate with each other and with the International officers, and so perfect the arrangements which, all taken together, created and ensured the success which was finally achieved.

It is, moreover, a fact that this journal stood alone in this country in carrying through this world-wide organisation. Far from assisting in the work, it is much to be regretted that other periodicals either attempted to boycott the Congress,

or displayed their jealousy at its success by attempting to minimise its importance and its usefulness. We are so well accustomed in this country to malignant attacks upon every effort for improvement or progress in the Nursing profession, that we would not now refer to this matter, were it not necessary for our present purpose to emphasise the fact that THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, by its own unaided efforts, brought together its readers from every part of the known world, and thus took no small part in bringing about such an International gathering of Nurses as the world has never seen before.

Our object in emphasising this journalistic triumph is merely to prove beyond dispute the cardinal fact that an independent professional organ, conducted by nurses for nurses, controlled and carried on solely and entirely for the benefit of the profession it represents, is not only at present of the greatest usefulness, but also possesses a widespread authority and influence which is fraught with benefit for the future, not only to the whole profession of nursing but also to every individual nurse.

Personally, we are well satisfied to know that it has been conclusively proved that this Journal can arouse sufficient enthusiasm in Nurses living all over the world to induce them to travel thousands of miles for the purpose of meeting their fellow-workers, and discussing with them some of the many problems which are of interest or importance to them all. But the great lesson for Nurses is that, without this Journal, this International gathering could not have been held, and, therefore, that the possibilities for good, which this Congress has demonstrated, demand an absolutely independent professional journal to voice the views and wishes of trained nurses, to co-ordinate their efforts, and to focus their united strength.

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