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**Editorial.**

SOCIAL REGENERATION.

Our special Christmas number carries to our readers far and near our heartiest good wishes for a right merry Christmas, and for success and happiness in the New Year.

The message of Christmas is a message of hope for the regeneration of the world, and it is the happiness of nurses that, in a special degree, they are called to share in the work of social reformation, work that through centuries has been furthered by such illustrious members of our race as St. Francis of Assisi, Joan of Arc, Frederika Fliedner, the founder of the Deaconesses Home at Kaiserswerth, from which our great-hearted Elizabeth Fry, and, later, Florence Nightingale, drew inspiration; Samuel Wilberforce, the slave emancipator; Shaftesbury, the friend of little children; Gordon, the saviour of Central Africa, and, in contemporary history, General and Mrs. Booth, who have stood by the wastrel and not only demanded regeneration for him, but declared their belief in its possibility, a belief which translated into action, in the light of the law of love, has produced astonishing results all over the world.

For that again is a chief factor in the work of regeneration. Systems, however perfect, for the betterment of the world, lack driving-force if behind them there is not the motive power of love. It is this force which makes the nurse so potent a factor in schemes for social improvement, for to be worthy members of our profession, we must be animated by love and sympathy, a sympathy which does not find expression in unregulated emotion, but in practical help, and, it may be, righteous indignation. Indignation which results in the purification or condemnation of unsanitary tenements, in the relief of unnecessary suffering, and of

social ills, in the prevention of infantile mortality, in raising the standard of the health of school children. It inspires nurses to care for the aged, the infirm, and the incurable, and to carry to the uttermost ends of the earth the healing and help which are their pride of craft.

Surely, of all sections of the community, nurses should enter into the spirit and the joy of Christmas, for they come into closer contact with the stricken and sorrowful than any class. The doctor and the clergy play their part, and go their way, it is the nurse who remains, and performs those intimate offices for the sick which, if rendered with sympathy as well as with skill, lay the foundations of trust, affection, and confidence.

Again, it is the district and visiting nurse who day by day, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, inculcates laws of hygiene, and preaches and practises cleanliness till the whole standard of life in the district under her influence is raised physically and morally. Does not her work of social reform find its inspiration in the manger at Bethlehem, where lay the Divine Babe whose whole life was one long ministry of service to others?

When, therefore, the heart of the nurse as a social reformer is sore at the evil, the misery, and the poverty with which she comes constantly in contact, and upon which all her devoted work seems at times to make little visible impression, let her remember that Christmas brings its message of regeneration for the individual, for the country, for the world; that the day is coming when there will be a new heaven and new earth, lovely and unspotted as it first left the hands of the Creator, and that it is her honour and her glory to hasten its coming. Then in this coming Christmastide she will seek to assimilate yet more of its spirit of love which has been the inspiration and the keynote of all lives of fragrant memory.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)