

Let conviction forth from you
Flash like lightning into view,
Clearing all obstructions through!
Never yield, never yield!"

"Learning to be humble is not lost time at all." For it is now an acknowledged truism that Nurses are permitted to go in an out among men with the privilege of queens. But are we not simply picking up stones on the pebbly beach of life, like the great Isaac Newton, with the vast ocean still before us? As I think of all this, muse upon the vast and splendid opportunities which lie before us as a profession, the many and glorious possibilities which the magic spell of "sympathy" might evolve to us, the exquisite little "snowdrop" rises to my view. Now most of we Nurses like this dear little pet; and with many of our sick friends it is quite a favourite flower, too. Hitherto I have been unable to spare the time to think the matter out—that is, would the exquisite colours, shades, &c., required to produce it wash if made into a badge? If so, shall I hasten to tell you that, if I had my way, this lovely little flower, suggestive and emblematical as it is, should be my badge; the three letters, "B.N.A.," being neatly woven directly underneath it, somewhat after the style of the Coventry silk-woven names. To an artistic eye this would be an appropriate and "telling" design, which, in point of neatness, should almost suit the most fastidious tastes, and would combine the ornamental and the useful likewise. I have great faith in that; for as a contemporary writer has told us, "If Nurses must be anything, they must be practical." This might be neatly tacked upon the top part of the Nurse's apron-bib (right or left corner), were it made of washing material; and should it become general the cost would not be a very serious item after all.

On the other hand, to ensure its becoming general, I should like to see some provision made for those of our struggling sisters to whom every new ideal means a new struggle to attain thereunto. These women are often to be found among our brave and gentle pioneers; and these are they who have fought so nobly and so well in days gone by for us. Pioneer work is seldom light, little as we may realise it; and our true nobility must not now be permitted to drift away from our ranks. So we must do better than have a badge, we must deserve one; therefore, "let him who is greatest among you be your servant." As modern ingenuity and experience have proved abundantly, that whatever appeals to the physical frailties of humanity as a curative agent, and comes accredited with successes, enters upon no vain career. Then why should not a badge be adopted, foreshadowing definite aims and united endeavour? And peradventure some poor storm-tossed mariner might gladly hail its light, thereby find himself enabled to sight yonder late-rising star of hope, and steer his tiny craft into the haven whither he would be. Actions speak where language would fail us; and that dear old captain, "Kindness," has never lost a sailor yet. Let us take home the moral, for there is an unspoken language by which the best and most powerful preaching in the world is done. Besides:

"I never knew a generous hand
Grow poorer for such deed;
A power we all can understand
Still bids that hand succeed.
Whate'er a noble act may cost,
Whate'er the service given,
A kindness done is never lost,
Neither on earth nor heaven."

"But greatness of character does not come all at once," methinks I hear some lone sister say.

Quite true, sister; it does not. "Like all other things of value, it is the result of slow formation and growth. How long a time does God take to mould an ear of corn, ripen an apple, develop the beauty of the flower, or the strength of the majestic oak of the forest! Just think of it for yourself. So of real life. No standing still is possible, however much some would prefer it. Life must be progressive. First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. If men are

not rising upward to be like angels, they are sure to be descending downwards to become like demons. This is inevitable. Providence has nothing good or high waiting for those who are not resolved to aim at something good, high, and noble. Indeed, we may add, *purpose is the one eternal condition of success.*"

You will remember what Disraeli said at the funeral of the Duke of Wellington: "He has been called fortunate; but fortune is a divinity which has never favoured those who were not at the same time sagacious and intrepid, inventive and patient. It was his own character that created his career, alike achieved his exploits, and guarded him from every vicissitude; for it was his sublime self-control that regulated his lofty fate."

I have only now to echo the words of a dear deceased patient, and with them I will conclude my letter:—"Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Post-mortem kindness does not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way."—Yours very sincerely, SISTER JOSEPHINE,
Alias SARAH CLAYTON, M.B.N.A., &c.,
District Nursing Sister.

TO NURSES WITH ARTISTIC TASTES. SPECIAL PRIZE.

A Book or Books of the value of Half-a-Guinea will be given to the Competitor whose Sketch, in pen and ink, of a Badge most suitable for the British Nurses' Association shall be considered the best.

RULES.

- 1.—Anyone can compete provided such Competitor be engaged in Nursing work, and the Competition is therefore open to Probationers.
- 2.—The sketch must be drawn with pen and black ink on cards not less than four inches square.
- 3.—The colours to be used must also be quoted—for example, state whether silver on blue ground, gold on crimson, and so on.
- 4.—Say what part of the dress the badge should be fixed to.
- 5.—Sketches must reach the office of THE NURSING RECORD not later than Saturday, December 13th next.
- 6.—The umpires' decision to be final.

COMPETITIVE PRIZE ESSAY. TWENTY-FIRST COMPETITION.

A Book or Books of the value of One Guinea will be awarded for an Essay upon the following subject:—

"Write a Story, founded upon your own actual experience, suitable for Christmas reading, the subject being left entirely to yourself."

RULES.

- 1.—Contributions must reach the Editor, at the office of THE NURSING RECORD, not later than Saturday, December 13th, addressed as follows:—"Prize Essay Competition, THE NURSING RECORD, St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane, London, E.C."
 - 2.—Manuscript must be written distinctly in ink and on one side of the paper only, upon not less than 24 nor more than 48 pages of ordinary-sized ruled sermon paper. The pages must be numbered and fastened together.
 - 3.—The real and full name and address (stating whether Miss or Mrs.) of the Competitor must be inscribed on the back of each contribution, and notification of which Hospital or Institution the Competitor has been or is attached to.
 - 4.—Trained Nurses or those personally associated with Nursing work only allowed to compete.
- Winners in previous Competitions are permitted to compete, but in case of a "tie" the prize would be awarded to the Competitor who has not secured a prize before.
- The decision of the Prize Essay Editor to be final, and any infringement of the above Rules will be considered a disqualification.
- NOTICE.—The Prize Essay Editor will not undertake to return MSS. unless accompanied with a sufficiently stamped addressed envelope; and in no case will he be responsible for any loss of same during transmission, &c. In no case must manuscripts be rolled up when sent by post; they must be folded.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)