

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE NURSING RECORD
EDITED BY MRS BEDFORD FENWICK

No. 1,620.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1919.

Vol. LXII

EDITORIAL.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HELP?

What every Nurse should now ask herself is, "What have I done to help to win professional status for trained nurses?" If she can truthfully reassure herself that (1) she belongs to an organized nurses' society to promote State Registration on self-governing lines; (2) that she has given intelligent support to this principle; and (3) that she has faithfully paid her annual subscription, then she has done her duty, and has cause for satisfaction, now that the great victory is in sight.

But if, on the other hand, she has to own that she has been satisfied to stand aside—whilst others worked and paid—and has pursued a narrow, selfish, and personal aim, and has done nothing for the elevation of her profession, then let us hope her conscience will prick her poignantly, and that she will consider at once how she can, even at the eleventh hour, do her duty, not only to her colleagues, but to the community.

A GREAT FUTURE.

We wonder how many nurses realise the wonderful opportunity which will soon be theirs, as members of a State Organized Profession, standing shoulder to shoulder with the great profession of medicine, in the coming evolution of new health conditions for the people, humble and devoted servants of science, active and practical servants of the sick, helping to attain higher material, and in consequence spiritual, conditions of living and happiness for the whole community? A glorious field of endeavour, worthy of the very best brains and energy with which women are endowed.

The title, "Registered Nurse," will come to signify in the near future a woman occupied in very honourable, highly skilled, and beneficent work—a title of which she has every right to be proud.

The Organization of Trained Nursing by the State is a splendid dream to come true. Let us go on dreaming dreams of fine and beautiful

possibilities; sooner or later they will materialise, if not in this world—then in Heaven!

PROFESSIONAL CONSCIENCE.

Very few nurses will wish to own themselves in this solemn hour of accomplishment devoid of professional conscience; in other words—so far as the community is concerned—of health conscience, but those who are still as individuals standing aside watching the development of events in the nursing world, must be so estimated.

In the past the position of nurses has been a difficult one, as they instinctively realised that their future careers depended almost entirely on those who have done so much to crush out professional conscience and liberty of action amongst this dependent class. Even to this day the Nursing Staffs in the majority of large hospitals are denied free discussion on their own professional affairs, including State Registration, by autocratic hospital managers and matrons. The authorities at Bart's, Guy's, St. Thomas', and the London and many others are serious offenders in this connection. It seems incredible, but it is true.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Let trained nurses, in a dignified manner, claim their right to hear the truth, and having heard it, to think and act for themselves in this important matter.

The plain duty, moreover, of every trained nurse at this fine time of harvest, is at least to labour at the eleventh hour. Others have won for her an exceeding great reward, therefore let each nurse associate herself with the organizers of victory, directly with the Royal Chartered Corporation of Trained Nurses, the Royal British Nurses' Association, by becoming a member, or by joining one of the groups of Nurses' Organizations in England, Scotland or Ireland, which, through loyal co-operation, are winning "A place in the sun" for their profession through their State Registration Bill.

The Government, after due consideration, has followed the precedent of the House of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)