

deferred, and the Council has gone out of office without arranging for these outward and visible signs of their status granted in 1919 to Registered Nurses; in fact, the result of a medical and matronic autocracy has been a shameful waste of time, opportunity, and money.

For these reprehensible conditions the Nursing Profession cannot be wholly exonerated. Had the majority of nurses taken an intelligent interest in their own affairs, acquainted themselves with the privileges granted to them by Parliament under the Nurses' Registration Act, taken prompt means to secure rights which were trifled with, studied professional opinion, as voiced in the professional press, and acted for themselves, instead of too often allowing themselves to be manipulated by a Company of laymen, there would have been a very different tale to tell of the generous legislation of 1919. To some extent the present situation is due to their lack of conscientious conviction and professional conscience.

But, when all is said and done, the Act is on the Statute Book, the privileges it confers can still be enforced, and, unless the Nursing Profession in this country stultifies itself, by returning to power persons who have proved themselves absolutely ignorant of nursing economics, we may hope that the year 1923 will see a decided improvement in the status of nurses in this country.

Nevertheless, you "cannot pour out of a pitcher what is not in it," and unless trained nurses show a more altruistic spirit in the future than in the past, it may be many years before they come into their full inheritance.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

But where nurses are free in self-governing organisations, as they are in the National and International Councils of Nurses, we perceive broad shafts of light.

The silence of the Great War is at an end, and the Grand Council of the International Council of Nurses has once more met (at Copenhagen) and federated the National Councils of five more countries—South Africa, Belgium, Italy, Norway, and China; thus the whole of His Majesty's Dominions beyond the Seas (with the exception of Australia), the United States of America, many European countries, and China, are included in this great Federation of Nurses which almost encircles the world, and which must, in the future, be a powerful factor in furthering the efficient care of the sick, and securing the honour and the

interest of the Nursing Profession, so that its energies may be utilised for the benefit of mankind.

Here is a splendid field for the exercise of the most generous and progressive impulses of the Nursing Sisterhood.

We turn, with relief, from the restricted and circumscribed outlook of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales to the splendid spaciousness of the International Council of Nurses.

For the moment a pigmy policy may appear to obstruct the evolution of trained nursing in Britain, but above and beyond this pettifogging atmosphere the nurses of the world have found freedom in this great Federation, through the combined intelligence of the women, in every country, who are leading the evolution of nursing to high ethical and professional standards, which no group of reactionaries of restricted outlook can withstand.

There is no reason whatever for despair. Evolution, the strongest power for progress in the world, is on the side of right. It has already removed mountains.

NURSING ECHOES.

To the outside world it may seem a sad thing to spend Christmas in hospital, but to those who know, whether members of the hospital staff or patients in the wards, Christmas Days spent in hospital are red-letter days, to be remembered above all that have gone before and come after. The very spirit of Christmas seems incarnate within hospital wards.

In many hospitals this year the standard has, if possible, excelled previous ones. The flowers were lovely, and everyone, from the senior member of the Visiting Staff to the youngest pro. and the newest ward maid, combined to give the patients a good time—and success crowned their efforts.

The New Year will be several days old before another issue of this Journal reaches our readers. We therefore most heartily wish them now all happiness and success in 1923.

The work of Lady Dudley's Nurses in the West of Ireland is work of the highest value, and it is with the greatest regret we learn that during 1921, at a time when the need for the work of the nurses was never more urgent, the Committee, through lack of funds, was

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