

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

THE WATCHWORD.

Given by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Founder of the Council, at the International Congress of Nurses, Buffalo, 1901.

WORK.

The text of the few words which I would say to you is comprised in the one word—Work. We take our stand in the Preamble of this International Council of Nurses as a confederation of workers. "We nurses of all nations," it runs, "sincerely believing that the best good of our profession will be advanced by greater unity of thought, sympathy and purpose, do hereby band ourselves in a confederation of workers to further the efficient care of the sick, and to secure the honour and the interests of the Nursing Profession."

The work which lies before us in the organization of an International Council of Nurses may well impress us with its magnitude. We have written down its Constitution—a Constitution pregnant with, and powerful for good—but we have to make that Constitution live and to do this, we must inspire it with the vital force of a fine purposeful spirit. Hence Work must be our watchword.

It has been written that no man is happier than he who loves and fulfils the particular work for the world which falls to his share. To man is entrusted the nature of his actions, not the result of them, and, therefore, does it behove us to be diligent in our several spheres, although the law of evolution wills it that the good which our exertions effect may rarely become visible. Between the result of single efforts and the end we have in view, and the magnitude of the obstacles to be overcome, there may often appear a large and painful disproportion, but we must not allow ourselves to be discouraged by seemings; warm and hearty endeavour will certainly meet its reward. Good uses are never without result.

Once enacted, they become a part of the moral world; they give to it new enrichment and beauty, and the whole universe partakes of their influence. They may not return in the shape wherein played forth, but likelier after the manner of seeds, which never forget to turn to flowers. Philosophers tell us that since the creation of the world not one particle of matter has been lost. It may have passed into new shapes; it may have combined with other elements; it may have floated away in vapour, but it comes back even then in the dewdrop and the rain, helping the leaf to grow and the fruit to swell; through all its wanderings and transformations, Omniscience watches over and directs it. So is it with every generous and self-denying effort;

it may escape our observation and be utterly forgotten; it may seem to have been all in vain; but it has painted itself on the eternal world, and is never effaced. Nothing that has the ideas and principles of good in it can die, or be fruitless. That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain. "Everyman," says Fichte, "should go on working, never debating within himself, nor wavering in doubt whether it may suc-

ceed, but labour as if of necessity it must succeed." In work, then, consists the true pride of life.

Thus we have inspiration and effort, but we also need order. See what order there is in nature! along with sublimest activity, what smoothness, what ease! How still the growth of the plant, yet how rapid! How peacefully the stars of midnight seem encamped, yet before morning whole armies have disappeared! So much is achieved because everything is done in order at the right time, intently, yet deliberately. So, in the formation of this International Council of Nurses—its founders have looked well to its organization. The vote covers all. They have, therefore, chosen graduate suffrage as the foundation on which to erect their stately pillar of international professional co-operation, and



Miss Maud Banfield. Miss Milne. Miss S. E. Cartwright. Miss M. Mollett.
Miss Isla Stewart. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. Miss E. M. Waind.
Miss Lucy Walker.

GROUP OF MEMBERS OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL NURSES' LEAGUE (LONDON) AT THE BUFFALO CONGRESS, 1901.

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