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## EDITORIAL.

### BELLS AND A PURPOSE.

Chiming faintly yet sweetly, away on distant virgin wavelengths, sound the Bells of the Abbey Church of Westminster, pealing for the great occasion of a Royal Marriage. Still silent in time, yet sounding in the imagination of the present, we catch the ripples of the glorious chimes, borne in on our consciousness like tidal waters; now nearer and clearer, now receding and fainter; rich in hope and happiness and in promise.

Marriage bells in NOVEMBER! Dull, grey and shrouded November! Transformed by beauty, love and high endeavour, it will surely fling away its fogs and its gloom, and give way to brightness and splendour and don its wedding garment fit to greet a King's Daughter.

After the marriage will come the responsibilities, and it is therefore fitting that the actual ceremony should be solemn and binding, lest we forget.

Nurses—romantically minded and adoring a true love story—will take the keenest interest in the Royal Wedding, and be amongst the first to wish the bridal pair all health, wealth and happiness and much beside all these. As the Royal Princess steps nearer to her coming greatness, and her devotion to duty is daily more evident, we would wish to see British Nurses emulate this Royal devotion and singleness of purpose.

The Nursing Profession is a truly royal profession, emerging from the dimness of a long-forgotten past and claiming in its ranks saints and martyrs, queens and virgins, great men and great women in all ages, only to appear to decline in greatness in this enlightened twentieth century. Twenty centuries of Christian civilisation and the time-honoured Profession of Nursing is about to disintegrate? Yet this apparent truth appears to fall on apathetic ears. Nurses individually are so engrossed by work, and by trying to pack two hours' of work into sixty minutes that they have no time to spare to help solve the troubles within the profession.

Now and then, in a sudden burst of enthusiasm a Nurse will join a professional organisation, determine to become a vital factor in it, pay her fee and set the world in order. Then, in common practice, she loses her new-found enthusiasm, forgets her determination and does nothing for a whole year until her subscription is due again. Very few care about the work which is done daily at headquarters and are very little interested in those who do the work.

How can all this be altered and the Nurses' enthusiasm be kept glowing and ardent? One method is to help Nurses to understand that Time itself will never stand still, and the students of to-day are the trained Nurses of to-morrow; that the students of the future need the

help and loyalty of Nurses of to-day and to-morrow! Every student and trained Nurse to-day can help to ensure better conditions, better status and happier lives for their successors in the Profession. They are tremendous and vital links in the health services of posterity. British subjects of to-morrow can be sure of better health and less suffering, if Nurses to-day will organise, and through their organisations improve conditions for sick people of the present, and teach them how to avoid illness and disease in the future.

Present-day Nurses, by organisation, can grasp and hold on to liberty and freedom and pass these priceless riches on to the next generation. By unity and determination and tenacity of purpose they can "pull down the walls of Jericho," and remove mountains! There need be no "closed shop," but freedom and liberty of spirit and work for all, if only Nurses would place their energies where they trust their annual subscriptions.

The British College of Nurses, Ltd., is a professional organisation of Registered Nurses, which offers efficient, professional and civic education, economic security and legal help; social and benevolent help to its members. It jealously watches over the statutory privileges of Registered Nurses and is ready and anxious to do battle to prevent these rights and privileges being filched from them. One example from recent history will suffice to show how numbers united in policy and determination, can work their will upon the legislation of the land.

In 1943, the Nurses' Act, whereby a second grade of Nurses was brought into being and given legal status and privileges, and placed in economic competition with State Registered Nurses, was only made possible by the unity of purpose of members of a large Nurses' organisation. The British College of Nurses, Ltd., opposed this action tooth and nail, but lost the day because of the lack of numbers of interested Nurses. Fortunately, light has dawned, and the Act approving a Roll of Assistant Nurses has now been proved useless, and obstructive to the recruitment of Student Nurses for full State Registration, and is about to be relegated to oblivion.

Registered Nurses should get to know the organisation which has their interests and those of their patients at heart, they should then join it and support it with their loyalty and whole energies; attend its general and annual meetings and find out what goes on at headquarters, and assist it by bringing suggestions and new ideas to the meetings. Then each Nurse can affect the life and well-being of Nurses and patients of the future, and can bring blessings or miseries to another generation of British subjects. Is it worth while raking amongst the dying embers of enthusiasm and getting to work anew? Only you, as an individual Nurse, can provide the answer.

G. M. H.

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