

poor man wept for his child. The contrast was touching and not to be easily forgotten, but here was Georgie restored to health, and to the dirt he loved, and delighted to meet an old acquaintance like myself.

We had a friendly conference, and he informed me that he was quite well now; "but I were werry 'appy along of the 'orspital," and that he would much like to return at any time on a visit—say at Christmas, when some entertainment was in prospect. Indeed, this is a favourite project among old Ward patients, and many are the wily ways by which they try to effect an entrance into their old cots, at that interesting time of the year.

I remember one long-standing tracheotomy, who, curiously enough, was always taken ill about a week before Christmas, and would come a long way by himself to seek admission to the Hospital, being convinced that something had gone wrong with his tube, and when assured that the condition of that instrument gave no uneasiness to the Medical mind, would immediately be seized with bad symptoms in his chest, or head, anywhere—it did not matter—so that he might have a chance of getting back into his old Ward. He haunted the Hospital, on and off, for some years, and must be now nearly grown up. When I last saw him, he was a fine lad in his teens, the throat wound long healed up, and the voice restored, and he told me that he was then a member, and according to his own showing, a very important member, of the choir of his parish church. M. F. E. H.

### "ASSOCIATION."

THE question of association, as it affects the interests of all women engaged in the Nursing industry, is one of the greatest importance to them. I propose to offer a few remarks upon the various bearings of the subject; to comment upon what association has already done, what it can and what it probably will do for Nurses, if they only come forward and loyally and unitedly support those who are so ably striving to help them. I shall also consider in what respects the B.N.A. resembles or differs from the trade associations of men. If I use the word "trade" by way of illustration, my sister workers must bear with me, for I share their loftiest aspirations, as my pen has shown (or tried to show) in these pages more often than once; and it is because I share them that I wish to see them crystallised into facts.

We cannot live in the clouds. We must have a terrestrial basis of some sort to go upon. I know of none firmer, wider, truer, or more enduring than Union, a bond of sisterhood, of sympathy,

and of interest that will bind every woman engaged in the art of Nursing to every other woman engaged in it, realising the familiar aphorism of "all for each, and each for all." There will be no room here for the question as to whether B. is a better Nurse than A., or C. than both; of gentle race, or lowly birth. Enough that all are Nurses, zealous for the honour of their art, and wishful to aid and comfort each other in every way possible.

So I would impress upon all Nurses the necessity of their supporting the B.N.A. Numbers alone can carry the day. Great measures cannot be accomplished by a handful of women, nor can a handful of women expect other people to carry them out for them. The best claim that Nurses can put forward for help from without is to show their friends that they are resolutely bent upon helping each other. There is nothing particularly cohesive about mere association. We associate with our friends and neighbours. We associate for purposes of pleasure, of pastime, of sport, and countless other things besides, but there is *nothing* to bind people together in these various forms of social intercourse; they are forgotten almost as soon as ended.

A very little thought will show us that Union has a far deeper significance, and implies and requires a higher order of qualities than association, which has brought Nurses together, as it were, but it is only union that can bind them to each other. To use a homely simile, familiar to all, and personal to most of us, "association is to union, what acquaintanceship is to betrothal." And in spite of the ineffable bathos that has been poured out upon the subject, I venture to assert that our "marriage" will not be a failure, but a true union of steadfast hearts and helping hands. And when we recognise the duties that union demands of us, and the sacrifices it requires, we shall the more value it. Loyalty, for instance, is a far higher quality than mere obedience. We do what we are told, because we are told to do it; but there may be neither heart service nor self-abnegation in the act, and therefore but little merit in it.

Fidelity is a rarer virtue, and stands higher than "membership." It is true in good or evil fortune, and leads to self-devotion, and the seeking of the good of a cause, without thought of self-interest and so on. Now amongst the many friends who have helped to promote the union of Nurses, I consider our own journal occupies a foremost place, for although quite independent of it, our RECORD is an outcome of association, and it is almost impossible to overrate the good it has done for Nurses. It has brought Nursing work to the fore, it places Nurses all over the kingdom into relation with each other, and in the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)