

correspondence column they can have a chat (on paper) every week, and discuss matters germane to their work, or bearing upon their interests. A Nurse without her RECORD is like a Nurse without her belt: she has nothing to hang her opinions (?) upon. Already matters of the greatest importance to Nurses have been brought forward in its pages, affecting their health, food, recreation, and dwellings, and numberless other things besides. If association had only brought us a RECORD we should not have done badly by associating. But for our journal the interesting papers read before the British Nurses' Association would have been sealed mysteries to Provincial Members, for there are not many Nurses who can spare the time or afford the expense of a visit to London to attend the Meetings.

Another cause directly connected with the B.N.A. that will tend to promote union amongst Nurses is the establishment of headquarters in London. The Association has advanced to the dignity of a householder; it can receive its friends, and all the world knows where to find it. Nurses can drop in and meet each other, and find an ever-ready welcome from our Lady Secretary, to whom we all owe so much, "and sometimes counsel take," and for all I know to the contrary, "sometimes tea." The winter *Conversazione* and the summer annual meetings will also pleasantly bring Nurses together and kindle a feeling of *esprit de corps* amongst them.

These are some of the good things the B.N.A. has done for Nurses. Let us consider one or two that may be done if Nurses exert themselves to promote them. One is the establishment of Branch Associations affiliated to the parent stem in our big provincial cities, which would tend to rouse an interest in Nursing work, and spread the name and fame of our Association all over the kingdom, and tend to keep Nurses together and stimulate them to work for the good of the cause and the promotion of their own interests. Unless we keep up the circulation in the extremities, the B.N.A. may suffer from congestion of the brain, which is not altogether a healthy condition. As far as provincial Members are concerned, the present arrangements are somewhat Olympian.

Another scheme that Nurses should steadfastly try to help on is the founding of Health Resorts on the coast, or the hills, where Nurses, who break down in their work, can at once be sent for rest and change of air (without any immediate expense to them), which is often all they require to get well. Every Member of the B.N.A. should take a personal interest in trying to carry out this proposed measure. "*Toute femme est une malade*," should be recognised by no women more than Nurses (and those who have charge of them).

But is it so? Nursing work, if it were conducted on fairly hygienic conditions (which it rarely or never is), would not be so very injurious to young Nurses; and as their health is their wealth, they should do, or have done for them, everything to preserve it. In all these things, union will make force; and without union, Nurses will never be a force.

The B.N.A., as compared to other trade associations, is numerically weak, financially far from rich, of "tender" age; it has much to learn from experience, and at present much to hope for from friends. A young mechanic joins his Union as a matter of course and common sense, but he never dreams of asking anybody out of it to support it. A young Nurse joins her "Union," and finds it necessary to look for aid from without. Why is this and upon what grounds? The answer to this query is one of great importance to every Member, present or potential, of the B.N.A. I think we need not go very far to find it. To the world at large, bricklaying and carpentering are but matters of languid interest, and I believe I speak the sense of almost every householder when I say that we regard the advent of these necessary artisans in the light of a "mild infliction," accompanied in some mysterious manner with noise, dirt, and disorder.

Far other is it with Nursing. Every member of the community has the deepest personal interest in that, for any day of our lives may find us dangerously ill or grievously injured, and will not Nursing come home to our hearts then? Nor are our sorrows confined to ourselves.

"We are not all alone unhappy.
This wide and universal theatre
Contains more woeful pageant
Than the part we play in."

To the toil-worn mechanic in the Hospital, the pauper in the Workhouse Infirmary, the loved bread-winner in his erstwhile happy home, the wee sufferer in his cot, in ducal halls, in the palaces of kings, comes the levelling hand of sickness and suffering. To all, to each, comes the welcome Nurse, skilful, kindly, patient to minister to our sick necessities. Let the thought of these sad hours of suffering (now perchance happily past) lead us all to have a kindly thought for "our" Nurses, and try if we cannot do something for those who did so much for us. To my knowledge Nurses have never asked for public aid before; and it was only when they saw how wise and necessary it was for them to strive and help each other, that they asked their friends to kindly help them carry out some of the beneficent schemes that have been devised for them by the B.N.A.

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