

ciation was formed in order to hold meetings throughout the country, at which questions involving the interests of the legal profession could be discussed by provincial lawyers, and social gatherings of its members be brought about. For exactly thirty years the two bodies worked apart in needless divergence, and to the necessary weakening of each, and then wiser counsels prevailed, an amalgamation of the societies was effected, and ever since 1874 the annual meetings have been held in a large provincial town. These are opened by an address from the President of the Society, a number of interesting professional papers are read and discussed, and "very pleasant opportunities," adds the official chronicle, "are afforded of bringing London solicitors into friendly contact with their professional brethren in the provinces."

The British Nurses' Association has had the wisdom to define its intention upon this important question at once. Its managers might perhaps with much show of reason have postponed a provincial meeting. They might have fairly enough urged that the Association was of tender age, and could not provide the organisation necessary to carry through a provincial meeting with success, or that its Members were unfitted in diverse ways for making country journeys. But once more we congratulate the Association on the wisdom displayed in avoiding such excuses, and not only doing the right thing, but doing it at once. Because when it is reflected that this professional body numbers Members, as it has been stated, in every county and nearly every large town in England, it is manifestly every whit as much provincial as metropolitan in its constitution.

Every part of the country therefore can claim to be considered in the choice of the locality of the Members' Meeting, and probably we shall find in due course that the claim of every district is duly allowed. But a beginning must be made somewhere, and we are informed that for many reasons Cambridge was chosen as the most suitable place for the first annual meeting. As will be observed from the programme sketched out, full advantage is evidently to be taken of the many interesting features of the town.

Here again we find much to admire in the organisation of the Association. One of the most difficult matters in a University city is to avoid clashing with the collegiate bodies upon the one hand, or with the town authorities on the other. "Town against Gown" is a cry which has come down through the centuries, and though naturally its virulence has disappeared with the diffusion of education, and the victories of trade, some of the old spirit of jealousy on the one side,

and fancied superiority on the other, undoubtedly is still existent. We are therefore the more glad to observe that both the City and the University authorities have been evidently consulted, and have united in offering welcome to the Association.

The meeting, it appears, is to be held by the kind permission of the Mayor in the Guildhall, and then business being done, the Colleges are placed under tribute to provide pleasure. Dinner in the world-renowned Halls of various Colleges, followed by an hour or two employed in sight-seeing, and then Garden Parties on the beautiful lawns, for which Cambridge is so famous, is a programme which will doubtless attract Members from all parts of the kingdom. Given only fine weather, and the first Annual Meeting of the British Nurses' Association should be not only a most successful, but also a highly pleasurable gathering.

But it is its underlying and deeper significance to which we desire to call especial attention. The enemies of the Association jeered and giped at the idea of Nurses uniting together, until the phenomenal success of the movement reflected the ridicule back upon themselves. Then the cry was raised, and parrot-like was repeated, that it was a union of London Nurses, in which country Members were slighted or quite forgotten. Nothing could, and nothing will, prove the falsity of this charge so completely as this action of the Association in at once adopting the principle of Provincial Meetings.

But beyond this temporary effect in disconcerting its opponents, we foresee that great advantages, both to the Nursing profession and to the Association, will arise from this system. Not only will the dangers of schism or secession, which we have shown befell the Unions of doctors and of lawyers upon this matter, be altogether avoided, but the strength of the Association will be greatly increased, we doubt not, both morally and numerically. Many waverers will be led to join its ranks, or support its projects, when they find it strong enough to take such decided action, and such an independent position. Many who had no previous knowledge of its existence or of the objects which it seeks to attain will find both made clear to them by its appearance in their immediate neighbourhood.

The benefits of the Association, however, in binding Nurses together for common ends—business and pleasure—will not only be made manifest, but intensified and individualised—if the term may be employed—by this peripatetic action. For wherever it goes it necessarily draws its local Members more closely together than would under ordinary circumstances be probable or even possible. It gives each an increased personal feeling of union

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