

Nurse received a very valuable watch and chain, but in addition, perhaps scarcely a less useful gift—a strong travelling trunk.

Finally, we publish a grateful little acknowledgment of the marks of sympathy she has received, from Nurse Bayliss herself, from which we learn that the inscription upon her watch was that it was “presented to her by Members of the British Nurses’ Association, and others, as a mark of sympathy in time of trial.” And to our minds this is the most fitting inscription that could well have been selected. We cannot refrain from earnestly congratulating those members of the British Nurses’ Association upon this most excellent method of expressing their unity of purpose and their objects in meeting—for mutual help, protection, and sympathy.

There is yet, we consider, a still further and higher ground of congratulation. We hear of the Association growing week by week, in numbers and influence, to a degree which is, in our experience or memory, quite unprecedented. We are aware, from careful inquiries, that the ladies who are joining it are largely, if not altogether, Nurses of the modern type, intelligent, and educated—the Sisters and Matrons of the future. We are told on the best authority, moreover, of the large number of present Matrons of Hospitals and Infirmarys who have been enrolled in the Association, so that at the present rate, in another few short months, the difficulty will be to find a Matron who is not a member of this wonderfully successful professional organisation. We can easily foresee, therefore, that in the future every Nurse of any standing will belong to the Association; and with the enormous power which it must then possess, we can have no doubt that great schemes will be soon proposed and easily carried out. In fact, now, when it is less than one year old, it is steadily working for a Royal Charter to fix and define the legal status of Nurses, and vastly improve the whole art of Nursing. It is about to institute a Gold Medal of Merit for Nurses; to provide for its members Convalescent Homes and Holiday Houses; to hold Conversaciones and Meetings for the reading and discussion of papers on Nursing subjects; to organise a Benevolent Fund to assist such of its members as may be in need of temporary pecuniary help; and other equally wise professional or charitable undertakings. Some who know as little about Nurses as Nurses know about them, would like us to believe that educated intelligent women have joined the Association simply to see how much they can individually obtain for their half-crowns. Of course, no one believes them for a moment, but can thoroughly enjoy the idea of any Nurse grumbling that all these schemes, from which she will per-

sonally derive benefit, if necessary, are not an adequate return for an annual payment of thirty pence!

But still, with all this success and activity in the present, and this vista of great possibilities and power in the future, we cannot but feel that the British Nurses’ Association has in this simple act of sympathy with Nurse Bayliss taken up a standpoint which it will be difficult, if not impossible, for it to improve upon. We learn, moreover, that the Nurse is not a Member of the Association, so that the action taken on her behalf is all the more disinterested and sympathetic. We congratulate the Association in every way upon the incident. It has proved beyond doubt that its members are joined together in the one great desire to extend united aid to the helpless and the suffering, whether in their own ranks or outside it. It has shown beyond dispute that Nurses are able and willing, when guided by those they trust, to come forward and help to bear another’s burden. It is, we trust, most significant of the great work to be done by the Association in times to come, that this, the first act done in its name, has been one of purest sympathy and truest charity.

The incident and its results are alike suggestive and important, showing, on the one hand, an example of quiet heroism beyond all praise, and on the other, a quick and keen appreciation of those qualities upon the part of the public at large; a large-hearted sympathy with the sufferings entailed by loyal obedience to the call of duty, upon the part of those best able to understand and appreciate it, and their ability to give effectual proofs of that feeling—solely in consequence of union and organization. The small part that we ourselves have taken in the matter, we would refer to merely to point out the strong evidence it gives of the importance to Nurses of possessing a professional Journal, devoted entirely to their own interests, and thus affording them one and all an articulate voice upon all matters of interest and importance to themselves. We are confident that our readers will unite with us in earnestly wishing Nurse Bayliss a speedy and complete recovery of health and strength.

A SMILE.—Who can tell the value of a smile? It costs the giver nothing, but is beyond price to the erring and relenting, the sad and cheerless, the lost and forsaken. It disarms malice, subdues temper, turns hatred to love, revenge to kindness, and paves the darkest paths with gems of sunlight. A smile on the brow betrays a kind heart, a pleasant friend, an affectionate brother, a dutiful son, a happy husband. It adds a charm to beauty, it decorates the face of the deformed, and makes a lovely woman resemble an angel in paradise.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)