

The  
**Royal British Nurses' Association.**

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A  
 MEMBER.



I PURPOSE to say a few words upon our Association from the standpoint of a Member, and at view from the arena rather than the platform.

Speaking generally, Nurse Membership may be regarded under three different aspects, viz.: The Personal, the Professional, and the Sentimental. We will take the last first, as being the least important, and also a peculiar but by no means infrequent phase of Membership; for instance, Nurse A. joins because Nurse B. did—and they always act in pairs. Anon Nurse A. deserts because Nurse C. persuaded her to, and so vacuous is her idea of membership, that she is apt to become perfectly oblivious of its most elementary obligation. However we may regard these Nurses as ephemera—who live in the sunshine and die in the shade.

We will now take the Personal view of the question based upon individual interest; and before joining, a Nurse asks herself the natural and practical question, "What *good* will the Association do for *me*?" Here we get a definite question, and we can give a definite reply. Read the Prospectus, think it over and judge for yourself, and you will find the advantages offered you there will compare very favourably with those of similar unions in other callings, viz., opportunities of hearing important and instructive papers on various departments of Nursing work; pleasant channels for social enjoyment; a lady Hostess at Head-quarters, who will always be ready and willing to receive members, and afford any information they may desire respecting the R.B.N.A.; pensions for old age, pecuniary help in times of urgent need; the Helena Medal for distinguished service in the Nursing ranks at home or abroad. And last, but not least, dearer because nearer to us than all the rest—A Home for Nurses, an early effort of our Association. Nor should those members ever forget how much they owe to kind hearts and

generous hands *outside* our ranks, and wise heads and able management within, to make it a delightful abode for Nurses recovering from sickness, or resting from overstrain. Let us all hope that in the near future we shall be able to speak of these Homes in the plural number, and if these were the only outcome of the Association, I should consider we had not united together in vain, for we can all help on this good work by supporting the R.B.N.A.

Having considered some of the individual advantages of Membership, let us turn to the higher, wider, and more abiding aspect of it, the Professional, and before joining the Association, a Nurse may reasonably ask, "What *good* has it done for my profession, and what is it likely to do in the future?" And here we may remark that a Nurse who has not the good of her profession at heart, is hardly likely to adorn or advance it. Viewing the Association then from a professional standpoint, I think members or intending members, will have every reason to be gratified by what has been done for them by our leaders in that direction; prominent above all the rest being, of course, the Register and the Charter, and we must never forget we owe both these great measures to the power of *Association*, for unless Nurses had combined together, these would not, and could not have been carried out. To a thoughtful Nurse-member, the great struggle for freedom, and *justice* to the Nursing Profession should be a most instructive lesson in administration. You are Members to-day, you may be Councillors and "Executives" (?) some day. Leaders are not immortal, and the members of the future will have to take up the task of governing the Association.

There is yet another point of view of the Association that no Member can overlook, for it has led, if not directly, certainly indirectly, to a development, the importance of which it is almost impossible to over-rate—Nursing Press representation which in due time will expand into Nursing Press Power. For the first time in the history of the Nursing Profession we have a journal coeval with the R.B.N.A., conducted by a Nurse for Nurses which the Editor tells us goes forth to all lands; and we know that our Association goes with it, and that its best interests and higher aims will be safe in the hands of one of its most distinguished members; and many of her sister-members contribute to the journal also.

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