

to risk angering the authorities under whom they are working, and jeopardising the positions they hold. With any thus situated, however, the choice surely should rest, while so circumstanced, between joining openly or not at all; and if openly, then one argument against the wearing of a badge falls to the ground. Indeed, it is moreover known to many that already some Members of the British Nurses' Association, who have had the courage of their opinions, have, without any display of badge at all, felt to their cost the effect of membership. Also, alas! there is no doubt that jealousy may be rampant, friction created, and discord aroused by the different views and opinions existing in the Nursing world on the subject of the British Nurses' Association itself, without the stimulus feared from any outward sign of partizanship.

Again, as to Private Nurses, the Editorial is—with regard to many, at any rate—undeniably wrong in saying that “they would, in their lonely work and retired lives, care little to wear an addition to their uniform which only few people would see, and the significance of which still fewer could understand.”

In the rush and bustle of Hospital life, trifling details in the dress or ornaments of a Nurse may very likely often escape notice or remark; but if we remember how very different the relation of patient and Nurse is in a private house, we shall see at once how much the case is altered. The medal of the Guild of St. Barnabas and the small cross of the St. John's Ambulance Association, both quiet and unobtrusive as they are, are constantly the source of interest and inquiry to patients and their friends. Surely wearing a distinctive sign of having been considered, by competent judges, properly qualified to minister to the sick, will not tend to lessen the confidence already felt in the Nurse who has, we will hope, done her best to show in deed and in word that she is, to some extent at any rate, worthy of her vocation. The sight, too, of the St. Barnabas medal has drawn many Nurses together, and has made them feel friendly at once, when uniform alone was powerless to do so, and when, perhaps, both were strangers in a strange land, or only crossing one another for a moment in the path through life.

It may, however, be argued that the cases are not analagous, and that the knowledge that their views and opinions must necessarily, in a measure at least, coincide from the mere fact of membership in the one instance, would not hold good in the other; also that the bond of union and of mutual friends would be wanting. The latter objection would probably soon cease to exist; still, even if it were so, the tendency of membership to any body is to draw together, and to mould the opinions of those belonging to it, and

surely, if slowly, all Members of the British Nurses' Association, however far apart, will come to feel that they belong to one another, and have rights and interests unknown to the outside world.

Possibly too, though not in this case an emblem of a religious organisation, wearing a badge might serve to remind them that there *are* obligations on them as Members, and that it is only by each individual doing her best, that the highest standard of excellence can ever be reached by any body as a whole; also that there is no limit to the possibilities to be arrived at by united effort rightly directed, for truly, as has been already urged in this matter, “unity is strength.”

Amongst the reasons given against the idea of a badge, by those who are our opponents in this matter, it has been alleged that wearing any distinctive sign would not be “professional.” Surely this is being hypercritical and mounting upon stilts. Here again, also, there most certainly are two sides to the question. It is just to identify ourselves with a movement which is in the end to distinguish professional Nurses from those who have no right to the title, that many of us are anxious to possess a definite symbol; and the argument that qualified Medical men and Members of the British Medical Association wear nothing to mark their being so, is hardly an argument against a badge for Nurses. For Doctors may be fully qualified for their work without necessarily being Members of the British Medical Association; and indeed the same objection would hold good with equal force as regards cap and apron, themselves our cherished emblems of office, for a Doctor in a sick-room has often little or nothing to distinguish him outwardly—to the unprofessional eye, at any rate—and the fact that Doctors do not wear the equivalent to indoor or to outdoor uniform would scarcely be sufficient to dub either as unsuitable or undesirable for those who work under them, and who are the rearguard of the grand profession to which both in a sense belong.

Moreover, too, clergymen and barristers, and soldiers and sailors, all certainly professional men, are, when on duty, at least, distinguished by their outward garb, which becomes a badge in the sense of marking them as belonging to special bodies. Besides, even if all this were not so, to argue that the fact of one set of persons not seeing fit to do a thing is a sufficient cause for another set of persons only partially placed in the same position not doing it either, can surely not be called conclusive reasoning in the matter.

The personal enthusiasm and sense of fellowship, aptly called by the French *esprit de corps*, which is latent in the hearts of many, sometimes requires the force of circumstances to develop it. Anything

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