

measure of success has been gained by the exertions of others. And on these grounds—and we think very rightly—it was urged that henceforward a much enhanced subscription should be asked from Nurses who desire to obtain the privileges of Membership, while those who have been engaged in the work of securing the firm foundation of the Association should in future continue only to pay the smaller subscription which upon their election they had contracted to do. It was argued that, to carry out the new schemes which are in prospect, a larger income is requisite, and that it is more seemly, as well as more professional, that the Members by their own subscriptions should pay for these, than that the necessary funds should be obtained by appeals to the charitable public. With this argument also we entirely and cordially concur. But a point upon which scarcely sufficient importance has, in our judgment, been placed is that for the Executive Committee to propose, and for the General Meeting of Members to accept, this proposal, proves beyond all dispute that leaders and rank and file are agreed upon the complete solidity of the success which the Association has achieved. Because it is manifest that, had the movement been in the smallest degree a failure, measures would have been proposed and taken to encourage Nurses to join it, whereas to double the annual and life subscription at one stroke can only mean that the Membership is in future to be made much more exclusive, and financially, as well as professionally, restricted to a much more select constituency.

This is the way in which all successful bodies have hitherto progressed, and so we take no credit to ourselves for pointing out many months ago that some such process would surely take place in the progress of the Association; though we confess that the conditions have been made more stringent, and more quickly so, than we anticipated. We know from many communications that Nurses who have been foolish enough to believe the blustering rhodomontades of the enemies of the Association and to hold aloof from it until now, have been bitterly disappointed to have their applications for Membership declined upon the ground that they do not reach the now necessary standard, and we doubt not that this new pecuniary restriction will cause many more to regret their procrastination. But the point upon which we desire to lay most stress is this—that the object of the Association now clearly is not to increase the number of its Members, but, by raising the professional standing and the social position necessary for Membership, to enormously increase its prestige and its influence. When the Accounts for the past year

are critically inspected, it becomes still more clear why the managers of the Association have taken this step, and why it is so probable that it will be eminently successful.

It will be observed, then, that the totals of the Balance-sheet reach the imposing figure of £1,102, in itself sufficient proof of rapid financial success. But from this should be deducted the balance which remained in hand at the end of the last financial year, and the receipts from the advertisements, &c., in the Annual Report, from the sale of cards, and from the *Conversazione*, in all a sum amounting to more than £370. Then, when the life subscriptions—which are invested in all prudently-managed societies—are set aside, there was, it appears, received last year an income from settled sources of almost exactly £600. On referring to the expenditure side of the account, we observe that the Association invested and carried forward as balance, sums which, together, more than equalled the amount received in life subscriptions and that brought forward as a balance from the previous year, while its ordinary expenses amounted to about £550. We are informed, however, that the very large sum spent on “printing, stationery, postage, &c.,” was caused by the great outlay on these items incidental to the commencement of Registration, and that hereafter this charge will be necessarily much less. From which it follows that, in future, there will probably be a larger balance on the right side than even is shown this year. And this enforces the argument for which we are contending, that those who manage the financial affairs of the Association have evidently discovered, what we by our analysis of the accounts have shown, that the B.N.A. has already gained the first object of all nations, societies and individuals—a settled income larger than its necessary expenditure. As we remarked at first, this lies beneath the surface. But it appears to us that it is well worthy of careful notice as showing the financial strength achieved by the Association, and as explaining the safety of the additions to the subscription of future Members. Because it needs no more than these facts to prove that a body which, in two years, has invested in funds and furniture more than £1,000, and has a settled income in excess of its annual expenditure, stands upon such firm ground that it can well afford to increase the value and prestige of its Membership by deliberately diminishing the number of those able to obtain it.

SOLITUDE is one of the highest enjoyments of which our nature is susceptible. Solitude is also, when too long continued, capable of being made the most severe, indescribable, unendurable source of anguish.

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