

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by



Royal Charter.)

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

BUILDERS OF YOUR OWN PROFESSION OR PERSIAN KITTENS—WHICH?

The Registration Board meets, for the first time after the holiday recess, at the end of the forthcoming week, and nurses who have decided to place their names on the Register of the Corporation should send in their applications without delay, and thereby line up under the banner of the Royal Charter in the struggle to set the profession on surer foundations, and to attain to such organisation as will effectually safeguard the interests of the nurses and ensure real development and progress for their profession. Such development can never come by the easy paths offered by patronage and benevolence; it can only come from *within* the profession—that is, through the will and the effort of the nurses themselves. Unless the nurses are prepared to consider the present situation and to take some part, however small, in looking after their own interests, they will only have themselves to blame if the conditions under which they work continue to be dictated more by the convenience of the institutions than by any needs and claims of the workers.

In a letter, received just as we go to press, a very clear-headed and progressive Member of the Association tells of a call she had from a Member of the College of Nursing, Ltd. The latter lady was evidently blissfully ignorant of the actual principles involved in the present controversy, and kept reiterating her conviction that "we should all join up." As for the precise reason for arriving at this conclusion she was quite deliciously nebulous, her principal argument in support of her case being "everybody's doing it," a statement disproved by the existence and attitude of seven self-supporting organised societies of nurses. Apart from this inaccuracy, however, if her particular line of reasoning were, in itself, the correct one whereby to govern our lives, we should still have been cave dwellers, with an

intelligence a little higher than the brutes. Far too many people are content that, in their adult bodies, they shall retain but the child's faculty for reason and judgment; they are too lazy to think out courageously and independently those questions which concern them and their fellow-workers, but prefer to take the line of least resistance, to be mere reflections of those in whose environment they chance to be. In fact, they prefer to share among them a kind of group soul, which, at the present time, so far as nursing questions are concerned, they seem to have handed into the keeping of people outside the borders of the profession altogether—people much cleverer than themselves, who long ago recognised in a Royal Chartered Corporation of Nurses a prospective, potential antagonist, a power in the hands of the nurses. It therefore became their policy to use their influence to prevent the Association, if possible, from adding the strength of numbers to the powers it had won in the Charter. To any understanding authority, before which demands might be laid, there is a wide difference between a Royal Association of *Nurses*, incorporated by the most ancient and honourable form of incorporation, and a College of *Nursing*, incorporated under the Companies' Act. The latter can only claim to be a company started to deal with nursing education. But a Chartered Association of *Nurses* implies something quite different. It means a *living* organisation, built up by the nurses themselves, a body which, were it hundreds of thousands strong, could still move and act as one body. Under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, the *Nurses* have been given the powers to build up such an organisation, a great combined body to voice their claims. Under the Sign Manual of a Sovereign of the Realm, they have been given the recognition and the authority for those claims to be heard if they come forward in sufficient numbers to show that they really desire progress for their profession, better salaries and more reason-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)