

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by



Royal Charter.)

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

TO MEMBERS OF THE R.B.N.A.

Through the medium of the Official Organ of the Corporation, we are to convey the thanks of all those responsible for the executive work in connection with the Bill for State Registration for the many kind messages of congratulation and encouragement from members in all parts of the United Kingdom. Many of the nurses who took an active part in "lobbying" Members of Parliament show that their interest in the measure has by no means abated, and they call at the office and keep the telephone exchange very busy in order to learn whether we can "report progress." In another part of the Journal the latest events are recorded so that it is needless to recapitulate them here.

We hope that when the Bill has become an Act of Parliament the nurses will maintain the same healthy interest in it, and that all nurses whether Members of this Corporation or of any other organisation, will avail themselves of the opportunity given to them of taking the reins of government into their own hands.

THE ROYAL RED CROSS.

We note that in the list of awards of the Royal Red Cross there appear the names of Mrs. Latter and Miss Bickerton, both well known to Members of the Royal British Nurses' Association. Mrs. Latter receives the Royal Red Cross in recognition of the excellent work which she accomplished when Matron of the Red Cross Hospital at Knighton. Miss Bickerton, Matron of the Prince of Wales Hospital, has also with conspicuous ability met the heavy demands made upon her powers of organisation throughout the years of war, and the members of their Association congratulate both ladies very warmly.

"FEAR HATH TORMENT."

There are some statements which admit of no denial, they are not debatable, they do not challenge opinion, they are dogmatic, unassailable truths.

Can anyone be found, for instance, who could deny that "fear hath torment"? No, because no one could be found who is immune to the emotion of fear—physical or moral. The emotions are the motors of the mind, the driving forces, the impelling influences, guarded and controlled by free will. Far from fear being an altogether negative thing, the poet Pope assures us in his "Essay on Man" that it is a natural constituent in the human make-up.

On the positive side, fear is a wholesome impulse. "Holy fear" is one of the sevenfold gifts. Fear to do wrong is the guiding principle of every courageous man and woman. In this sense courage and fear "make and maintain the balance of the mind."

But the fear that hath torment is a very different thing. To discuss the springs of it is not our purpose in this essay—that belongs rather to the intimate things of psychology; we would rather show how great and far-reaching are the consequences to the individual and to the community. The greatest thing needed for the world's advancement and progress in the highest sense of those words is *moral courage*. The courage to hold fast to the vision of truth, and to express it openly and fearlessly. The really courageous person is the only one who can rightly claim to be a *freeman* or *freewoman*. A fearsome person is his (or her) own bonds slave. Fear is the greatest ally that tyranny can have. Tyrants and bullies, to a great extent, are created by fear, and sustained and strengthened by fear.

Like the silent Navy, the nursing profession dislikes parade and ostentation, flattery, photography and favour. Its members want justice, economic independence—born of self-respect, self-government and legal status. A pure democracy which will give them the necessary freedom and power to work out their own salvation. These are some of the great, enduring and stable things of life. To gain them, courage is the necessary panoply; fear is a dangerous deterrent. These ideals, all will admit, form the unwritten moral code of the nursing profession. But—let us pause for a moment—a searching self-examination will reveal to the most sincere that *fear*, writ large, has dimmed our vision and prevented its realisation. We have become apathetic and indifferent, aye,

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