

on this occasion than endeavour to set forth the circumstances which have called this Society into existence, in order that we may be able to give an answer to those who desire to know in the first place why we exist, and secondly, why we set up tests for admission.

"First, then, as to 'Why we exist?' No one at all acquainted with the subject can deny that there is a very considerable number of persons of both sexes who either are, or profess to be, operators in Massage and Medical Electricity. Of this number a portion are Trained Nurses, and as such have certain advantages which enable them to keep their qualifications prominently before the medical profession, and to some extent before the general public also; further, they now possess the advantages which are to be obtained from combination in their Societies, especially in the R.B.N.A. and the Nurses' Co-operation.

"These, however, are Nurses first, and operators in Massage and Medical Electricity afterwards, and their main interests must, I take it, always lay in that which concerns the Nursing side of their work rather than the other.

"The majority of professed operators, however, are not Trained Nurses, and these, till our Society was formed, had no opportunity of combining for mutual benefit.

"They were simply a number of units engaged, with more or less regularity, on a work of great importance, but acting entirely without cohesion, with no opportunity of making their qualifications known other than by pestering overworked medical men with visits and letters, and with no protection against ignorant and untrained impostors who profess to be qualified operators. Impudence and importunity seemed to be the main qualifications for success, while ability, training, and experience were at a discount.

"So great, indeed, had become this latter evil that many most excellent operators, who had spent much time and money in training and making themselves really efficient, were scarcely able to obtain a case, while others, through social influence or carelessness on the part of medical men, were earning large incomes, though their qualifications were of the slightest, and even in some cases absolutely *nil*. This portion of my subject might be enlarged upon almost *ad infinitum*, but surely enough has been indicated to show the need there is for all right-minded and honest operators to take some protective action.

"Of the advantages of combination and co-operation in the abstract I need not attempt to treat. They are well known to all, and their practical outcome is before us in every direction.

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