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Editorial.

AN EMPLOYERS' REGISTRATION BILL FOR NURSES.

The Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association issued the January journal on Christmas Eve in order to give notice to the members of a Special General Meeting at which they will be asked to consider a report in reference to a Bill for the State Registration of Trained Nurses.

It will be within the memory of the older members of the Association that the question which disrupted it in the nineties was the unconstitutional expulsion of the Matron Founders from the Governing Body, for their determined demand that the Association should utilise the powers conferred upon it by the Royal Charter to improve the education and status of trained nurses.

Then came the historic Conference on the Registration question between representatives of nursing bodies and the Parliamentary Bills Committee of the British Medical Association. At this Conference, the delegate of the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, founded to obtain the Registration of Trained Nurses, voted for, and turned the scale in favour of, a resolution that

"A legal system of Registration of Nurses is inexpedient in principle, and injurious to the best interests of nurses, and of doubtful public benefit."

Further, when members protested against this betrayal of their interests, the majority of the Executive Committee not only endorsed the action of its delegate in voting for this resolution, but upon the proposal of the Medical Hon. Secretary, Mr. E. A. Fardon, seconded by Dr. Calvert, passed a vote of thanks to her!

Thus had it not been for the conscientious work of the Matrons' Council for the last seven years, the whole question would have been allowed to lapse. Upon its initiative, the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses was formed, which has justified its foundation by enrolling, since February of last

year, 900 members, who have drafted a Bill on just and constitutional lines, providing for the legal Registration of Nurses, which it is hoped to introduce into the House of Commons next Session.

Nurses have thus plainly shown their ability to deal with their own affairs, and have proved to the R.B.N.A. that it must either support the principle of State Registration or cease to exist. So the current issue of the official organ of the Association announces the "feeling of confidence that the Society is working for the good of its members by promoting the scheme for the Registration of Nurses."

We fear it will take more than this sudden *volte face* to restore the confidence of nurses in the management of the R.B.N.A., for the same men are in power who have repeatedly betrayed our interests, and, so long as this is the case, confidence can never be restored, for their policy is quite consistent, and deprives nurses of all responsibility and power in their own professional matters; it is the policy of subjugation of, instead of self-government for, nurses.

This is the policy permeating the "brief synopsis" of a Bill published in our official organ before it has been brought before the Governing Body. We do not now propose to discuss it clause by clause, but we draw attention to the following facts:—

No authority has ever been given by the Governing Body for such a Bill to be drawn at all, nor has any intimation that the Executive Committee were at work upon it been notified to the members. On the contrary, in his last report to the General Council on October 23rd, the Medical Honorary Secretary reported that "the question of State Registration was a very difficult one, and required the most careful consideration as to the best attitude for this Association to take with regard to the matter. At present State Registration was only in the air, and very few knew what it meant"! Now the managers of the R.B.N.A., at the eleventh hour, have sprung a Bill on the members, which, consistently with their uniform policy, deprives

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