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Editorial.

THE GOVERNMENT AND NURSES.

There is ground for congratulation in the fact that at last the continual demand of trained nurses to be properly constituted as a professional body of workers has aroused the interest of the Legislature and of Government Departments in this country. In proof of the first assertion we have only to point to the re-appointment of the Select Committee on Nursing of the House of Commons to consider the expediency of providing for the Registration of Nurses, and of the second to the promise of the Board of Trade to afford the objectors to the City Financiers' scheme to control nurses an opportunity of stating their case before handing over the nurses of this country to the domination of a body of laymen whose representatives seek to acquire powers as autocratic and dangerous as they are unconstitutional.

THE VALUE OF ORGANISATION.

When we consider that large numbers of nurses take no intelligent interest in their professional affairs, and do not realise the dangers with which, industrially and financially, they are threatened in the immediate future, it says much for the work of those who do appreciate their professional responsibilities that they have been able to arouse so widespread an expression of public disapproval of the scheme, and emphasises not only the justice of their cause, but also the effectiveness of their methods of organisation.

THE POSITION OF NURSES.

Considerable indignation, as voiced by a correspondent in this journal last week, has been expressed at the pronouncement of Miss C. J. Wood in relation to professional organisation, that "there is no further need to consult the nurses, they have been consulted for the past fifteen or twenty years." Nevertheless nurses will do well to pause and consider to what extent individually they have called

forth this criticism. Miss Wood is one of those who came forward twenty years ago to help nurses to help themselves, and no doubt realises how hopeless it is to attempt to arouse the majority of women in this country to take an interest in any serious question whatever, from their own enfranchisement downwards. The apathy of nurses in regard to their true interests has undoubtedly had the effect of alienating from their cause the sympathies of many of those who were in a position to render them valuable and gratuitous service.

THE REASONS OF APATHY.

If we seek for the reasons of this terrible apathy, we must do so in the degrading position of women in the body politic, in the low standard of life maintained by thousands of wealthy women who are content while leading a most frivolous existence to accept food and raiment without contributing one iota to the work of the nation, the good of the State, or returning in labour of any kind, as do the women of the poorer classes, the value of their maintenance, thus entering into partnership of living with the men of their class.

It is useless to deny that comparisons made at various international Congresses of Women have reflected disadvantageously upon the intelligence and sense of justice of English women. The nation is too rich, too idle, and in consequence too material to realise that there are things which make for higher happiness than rich food, fine clothes, and the excitement afforded by a life of pleasure. Under such a system women, who are as a sex poor and dependent, can often be bribed by place or patronage to betray the best interests of their sex, and in consequence of the people as a whole.

The wild beasts find their own food, the domestic animals evince something of affection, loyalty, and faithfulness. The unenfranchised and kept woman knows little of these things. How should she? Her only chance of personal advancement and comfort is by way of devious

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