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Editorial.

THE TRIUMPH OF REASON.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons, which has during the last two Sessions been inquiring into the expediency of providing for the Registration of Nurses, presented its Report last week, and we have the great pleasure of publishing it at length in another column. It will be observed that the Select Committee, after full investigation, have recommended to Parliament the great reforms for which we have contended for so many years. As in this long campaign this Journal has stood alone in the medical and nursing press—strenuously advocating the Registration of Nurses in the face of the strongest and most bitter opposition—it is with natural journalistic pride and satisfaction that we welcome this all-important pronouncement, which foreshadows the beginning of the end of eighteen years' incessant labour.

The Committee are "agreed that it is desirable that a Register of Nurses should be kept by a Central Body appointed by the State." There, in a nutshell, are the great foundation principles which are involved—the Registration of Nurses; carried on by a General Nursing Council; appointed, as the Committee proceed to recommend, by a special Act of Parliament; its constitution being defined in the Act. This latter course was taken, by the way, not only in the case of the Central Midwives' Board, to which the Committee refer, but also in the first Medical Act which constituted the General Medical Council.

In the opinion of the Select Committee, "the Central Body should consist of matrons, nurses, and representatives of the medical profession, of training-schools for nurses, and of the public," and the Committee further "consider it desirable that the number of representatives should be kept within reasonable limits." Here is another great principle accepted, which we have always advocated, that Matrons and nurses should chiefly compose the govern-

ing body of their profession. The number of members of the Council and other points, such as the amount of the Registration Fee, are details which will, of course, have to be embodied in the Act finally passed by Parliament, and they are all matters about which many and diverse opinions will probably be expressed. For the moment, we would content ourselves with pointing out that it is important that the General Nursing Council should be composed of persons of such high professional standing that their decisions, on the many novel questions which will be submitted to them, shall carry weight and conviction with the whole Nursing Profession; and that such persons would necessarily be unable, by reason of their other important professional duties, to devote the whole of their time to the business of the Nursing Council. Consequently, we believe that it will be necessary to have a sufficiently large Council to enable the onerous work, which, as we have recently shown, it will have to accomplish, to be carried out without making undue demands on the valuable time of leaders of the medical and nursing world. And with regard to the fee for Registration, we consider that the whole expense of the work should be paid for by nurses, as is the case with the medical profession, and should not be defrayed out of the ratepayers' pockets, as to a large extent will evidently be the case under the Midwives' Act.

It is very noteworthy that the Committee—like the Select Committee of the House of Lords which inquired into the Metropolitan Hospitals—are "impressed with the advisability" of three years "as the requisite period of training" for a nurse; but the Committee very wisely recommend that the period of training should be left to the discretion of the Central Body empowered by Parliament to organise and control nursing education. The Select Committee "recommend that the Central Body should decide what constitutes a recognised training-school for nurses," and that the Central Body should have the power of inspection of

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