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## Editorial.

### A DIRECTORY OF NURSES.

It is very interesting to observe the diverse views which have been expressed concerning the proposal made by the Central Hospital Council for London—that, instead of a Register, there should be a Directory, of Nurses. There are some who have not studied the subject who fail to understand that the suggestion simply represents the proverbial red herring drawn across the Registration track. The mere fact, however, that such an artifice has been considered necessary proves, to our mind, that the battle of Registration is nearly won.

It is the best possible evidence that those who have always bitterly opposed Registration are now convinced that the public will not permit the present condition of affairs to continue, and that, therefore, the attitude they have hitherto assumed of opposing every effort at reform cannot be any longer persisted in. To this extent, then, their suggestion of a Directory represents the weakening of the opposition to Registration, and we welcome it, therefore, as a most encouraging fact. The Council, however, will find itself compelled to go a little further than originally intended; because the suggestion has been treated with due gravity, and it has been very shrewdly urged that a Bill should be drafted for the consideration of Parliament showing precisely how the Directory shall be established and maintained. Nothing could be better from our point of view than that the so-called Central Hospital Council of London should prepare such a Bill. It would not only vastly assist the progress of legislation, but it would bring to a simple, direct issue the fundamental question: Are the trained

nurses of the future to be governed by hospital authorities—to whom they are not responsible—or are they to be governed by a Central Council on which they will be accorded just representation? Whether the list of nurses' names is called a Directory or a Register is of no importance whatever.

The Alpha and Omega of the matter is—what body shall control the admission of names to, and the removal of names from, the list of nurses? In fact, who shall in future control the education and the subsequent discipline of trained nurses in this country? When that question comes to be placed before Parliament in this simple form, we have no doubt whatever as to what the answer will be. The whole trend of professional legislation for the last fifty years has been to place the control of a profession in the hands of representative members of that profession. The whole trend of the great Labour movement, now developing under our eyes, is to make the worker free from any absolutism on the part of the employer. To place the nurses of this country under the domination of the hospitals would, we consider, be bad for the latter, for it would inevitably convert them from charitable into mere commercial institutions; the change, we are convinced, would be worse for the public, and it would be, certainly, worst of all for the nursing profession. It is well known that the whole of the nursing reform movement has been created and carried on by trained nurses and the medical profession, and that it has been most bitterly opposed at every step by lay hospital managers.

The advocates of State Registration demand justice for the public, fair play and self-government for trained nurses. They desire nothing more; they will be content with nothing less.

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