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Editorial.

AN APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC.

It is with pleasure we announce that a public meeting in support of the State Registration of Trained Nurses will be held in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, London, S.W., on the afternoon of Friday, February 21st. We take the earliest opportunity of making this announcement so that all friends of the Registration Cause may reserve that day, and allow no other engagement to interfere with the claims of this meeting.

The chair will be taken by Lady Helen Munro Ferguson. We may therefore rest assured that the case for Registration will be stated clearly and forcibly, and with characteristic eloquence and charm. The speakers will be announced later on, but at the present moment we want to urge upon all Registrationists to do their share in bringing to the meeting not only those who are already convinced of the desirability of the movement, but those who at present know little about it and whose influence would be of value if they understood the question.

We cannot expect that large numbers of provincial and Welsh, Scotch, and Irish nurses can attend, for nurses are busy people and the claims of their work exacting. Still we hope that some of them will be able to be present, and we have announced the date of the meeting thus early in the hope that as many as possible will make every effort to do so.

The objects of the meeting are twofold. 1st. Educational. Before any Bill can become law public opinion must endorse its desirability. Our aim therefore must be to educate the public so that the electorate may know what we want and why we want it.

2nd. A large public meeting such as that which will take place at the Caxton Hall, is also a demonstration, showing that the nurses of this country are in earnest in this matter. That they consider it one of vital importance not only to themselves but to the sick whom they serve, and that they are prepared to take every constitutional means to obtain this reform for which they have now been asking for twenty years.

The opposition has been bitter and long, but it has no arguments behind it except those of ignorance and self-interest, and it must eventually give way before the force of public opinion as all such opposition is bound to do, sooner or later. Indeed there are signs that this unreasonable opposition can no longer be maintained, and we need only read history to know that though evolution may be delayed it cannot be prevented. It has been one of the most cruel features of the anti-registration campaign that it has not only delayed organisation amongst nurses, and the establishment of their rightful claim to recognition as skilled workers, but has, in consequence, been the means of a vast amount of unnecessary suffering to the sick public, who have endured much at the hands of incompetent attendants, whom, owing to the lack of recognised standards, they have employed in the belief that they were thoroughly qualified nurses.

We must not, therefore, rest content in the knowledge that our cause is a righteous one, and that it will one day succeed, but must strain every nerve to reach our goal without delay. The Public Meeting at Caxton Hall, on February 21st, may do much to hasten the day when a Nurses' Registration Act is at length placed upon the Statute Book of this country, and we call upon all nurses to do their utmost to make that meeting a great success.

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