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Editorial.

IN THE HEART OF THE PEOPLE.

No one who saw the great procession on Saturday last, when thousands of women marched from Blackfriars to the Royal Albert Hall to support the demand for their enfranchisement, and no one who took part in the nursing contingent could fail to be profoundly impressed by the place which trained nurses have won in the esteem and affections of the people. Cheers, blessings, words of encouragement and appreciation were showered upon them all along the route; men raised their hats, women fluttered handkerchiefs, little children were taught to remove their hats as the nurses' contingent, headed by its purple banner bearing the Red Cross passed along. "It's the nurses; take off your hat, Tommy—they're good," said one mother to a child of some four summers. Many of the nurses wore indoor uniform, and bright, fresh, and spotlessly clean they looked, though some had been up all day and on duty the previous night.

After all, it is not surprising that the nurses were popular. Had not they or their colleagues nursed many of the crowd from death back to life in hospital wards or in their own homes? Are they not looking after the little children in the schools, and after our soldiers and sailors at home and abroad? Of the opinion of our defenders there could be no doubt. As the procession passed the Knightsbridge Barracks the men crowded the balconies and cheered and waved and shouted to the echo as the nurses marched past, and "the soldier's friend" was the word passed along. Those who headed the contingent were kept busy bowing, nodding, smiling, and waving to the crowd all the time. And how well they

understood one another! That was the secret of the nurses' popularity. On Saturday they were marching heads high, their faces set towards victory; but the crowd had a vision of them otherwise, passing up and down busy wards with a kindly word for all, bending over the sick and dying in the lone night watches, fighting for the life of the husband, the wife, or the little child, rejoicing as skill and devotion were rewarded by the return of the patient to health, or tenderly consoling those whom, in spite of every effort put forth, death had bereaved.

It was in such scenes as these that the intimate understanding between the crowd and the nurses on Saturday last had its origin—scenes which have enshrined them in the heart of the people. Who shall say that the nurses had not deserved the confidence shown in them which went straight home to their hearts?

Even in their battle for high standards of proficiency they were working for the good of the people, and the people understood. The greeting they received was a triumph which no section of workers could have failed to appreciate. "Get your registration soon," called one; and received the reply, "Your blessings to-day, registration to-morrow."

Nor were the police behind the crowd in their tribute of respect. Many hands went to the salute as the nurses passed by, and near the Albert Hall a constable begged for a flower from the sheaf carried by a nurse. Then up went the hands of half-a-dozen men in blue, and minus her bouquet, but with the words "the Force is with you" sounding in her ears, she entered Albert Hall to join in the paean poured forth by thousands of voices to the soul-stirring music of the "Marseillaise."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)