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## EDITORIAL.

### A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NURSES.

One of the first needs of the Nursing Profession in every country is a National Association of Nurses through which it can find self expression, maintain high ethical and professional standards, safeguard the honour of its members, promote their economic and other interests, and enter into relationship with national groups of nurses in other countries.

The first essentials of such an association are that it shall be the free voice of the nurses themselves, that it shall work for the interests of the profession at large, and that it shall keep itself pure from the taint of the commercial press, the primary aim of which must necessarily be the subjection and exploitation of the nursing profession by the laity for financial gain. It will readily be understood that those nursing educationalists who have, for the last quarter of a century, opposed the recognition of unskilled nursing which assumes to be skilled, will not tolerate quack nursing journals which assume to be skilled, when those who presume to conduct them have not mastered the most elementary principles of the profession concerning which, they have the effrontery to pose as experts. They cannot be prevented from exploiting the foolish, but they can be prevented from subjugating the intelligent.

Recently a proposal has been put forward to found "a National Association of Nurses" backed by Mr. J. S. Pollitt, of Blackburn—who has on many occasions proved himself a kind friend to nurses—as Hon. Treasurer. It has the merit that its affairs are to be managed entirely by nurses, and the weak point that it is to be "an association of nurses of all grades."

In our view every nerve should now be strained to secure the passage of the Nurses Registration Bill, when strong and forceful

Associations of Nurses can be built up, but without the firm foundation of a minimum standard of nursing education, defined by Act of Parliament, there is no safe ground on which to build, and for this reason we regret time spent in the organization of new associations of nurses even with the most laudable objects, when the urgent need of the moment is the concentration of every effort upon the promotion of legislation.

The Royal British Nurses Association might, and should, have been an effective National organization. Founded in 1887 as the British Nurses Association, it received such enthusiastic support from nurses that, five years later, it gained a Royal Charter giving it wide powers of self-government. Unfortunately its nurse members were prevented making use of those powers, and the work which it might have done has, for the most part, been effected through other organizations—notably the Matrons Council—now affiliated in the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland. THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

This Council is built up upon a plan where by, through groups of nurses, the voice of each one can be effective, as each possesses an equal vote, and it is so constituted that it is capable of unlimited expansion, as all associations of nurses, formed for the benefit of nurses, are eligible for affiliation, provided that the members hold qualifications of training acceptable to the Council. Moreover, it holds the field as the National Association from this country recognized as such by the Great International Federation of Nurses—the membership of which is 50,000 strong.

### THE NURSES SOCIAL UNION.

The proposal put forward by Mr. Pollitt to form another National Association inclusive of every variety of interest which is already covered by other organizations, has

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