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EDITORIAL.

ILLOGICAL AND OBSOLETE.

As we notified last week we have received a copy of a protest against the State Registration of Nurses, sent out for signature from the London Hospital, with a covering letter from the Chairman, Lord Knutsford, both of which we print below.

COVERING LETTER.

London Hospital,
Whitechapel, E.
April, 1914.

DEAR MADAM,—May I ask you to read these enclosures? If you share our views on this important matter, will you kindly sign and return the enclosed Protest against State Registration? If you can obtain any further signatures of your Nurses or others, you will be helping us to gather together a definite expression of opinion of those interested in preventing legislation which, in our judgment, would be detrimental to the real progress of nursing.

Should State Registration ever come to pass, I need scarcely point out how it would enhance the existing difficulties in securing the services of competent Nurses in small Hospitals throughout the country, and how it would still further curtail the supply of Nurses required to carry on nursing in rural districts.

I will not trouble you with a long letter, as these enclosures enter into details and explain the vital importance of this question on the future welfare of Nurses.

Yours faithfully,
KNUTSFORD,
Chairman.

PROTEST.

We the undersigned, wish to make our carefully considered protest against the Bill, now before Parliament, to promote the State Registration of Nurses. We believe that the Bill would be a source of danger to the public by inspiring a false sense of security, and detrimental to the true interests of the best Nurses by attempting to promote an undesirable standard of uniformity.

In the first place the extraordinary egotism and blindness revealed in this covering letter are incredible. Within the last year, in Dublin last June, with two

dissentients, in Glasgow in March of this year, unanimously, and within the last fortnight in London, by an overwhelming majority, trained Nurses, assembled in open conference, have reiterated their demand for legal registration, a demand supported not in the United Kingdom alone, but throughout the world, wherever nurses are organized. Yet the Chairman, Matron and authorities of the London Hospital still persist in their illogical opposition, and obsolete protests, neither of which however will affect the solid majority of 228, by which the first reading of the Nurses Registration Bill was carried in the House of Commons, on March 3rd.

Secondly the wording of the protest is disingenuous, because the signatories will imply by their signatures that they have read and "carefully considered" the Bill against which they are protesting. We venture to say that 99 out of 100 will not have done so.

No doubt the Matron and Chairman of the London Hospital, and the authorities of St. Thomas' will obtain a certain number of signatures from present and past pupils of these schools, augmented by those of ladies of title who run Rural Nursing Associations with inadequate standards, and pay inadequate salaries to the women employed. But the organized nurses throughout the kingdom are solidly insistent in their demand for State Registration, and in this have the support of the medical profession which is equally united on the question. They are determined—the opposition of the London Hospital to the State Registration of Trained Nurses notwithstanding—that the cruel exploitation of the sick by the criminal classes, as well as by untrained and undertrained nurses, and those who purvey them, shall cease, and in this they are conscious they have the support of both Houses of Parliament.

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