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EDITORIAL.

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The question of the standing of members of Voluntary Aid Detachments, and incidentally their relations with trained nurses, are beginning to be discussed in the press, and we hope the publicity thus given will result in a better understanding of the whole situation, which urgently requires readjusting. The War Office has at last, to a limited extent, realized the necessity for this readjustment, and is endeavouring to bring under discipline uncontrolled, if well intentioned, enthusiasm.

The Times has now opened its columns to the discussion of the question of the rights of the members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments, its medical correspondent espouses the cause of the small hospital run by Voluntary Aid Detachments, which it is asserted is "less formal, less mechanical, and kinder than the big one," and discounts the theory that "doctors and nurses can be put to better use in larger institutions, that it is difficult to maintain proper inspection, and to secure adequate discipline, and that the men become 'soft' in the comfortable atmosphere of these small hospitals." The writer further contends that "the uniform of the Voluntary Aid Detachments, men and women, should also be registered. This is a pressing need, as until registration is carried out the nurses will lack status and be hampered in their work," and our contemporary concludes a lengthy leading article, in support of these claims, with the words:—"We trust that the reasonable requests of the doctors and nurses concerned will be granted without delay."

The trained nurses of the United Kingdom have for the last quarter of a century pleaded for legal recognition, they have urged that it is "a pressing need,

as until registration is carried out they will lack status and be hampered in their work," and one thing all unite in desiring is the registration of their professional uniform.

Throughout the whole of this period when has *The Times* ever devoted one editorial inch to the question, or expressed the hope that the reasonable requests of the trained nurses will be granted without delay? Nothing indeed has been more marked, in the whole of the registration controversy, than the silence of most of the great London dailies on the nurses' point of view; and until this boycott is removed it is impossible for the public to become thoroughly acquainted with the perils to which they are exposed from unstandardized nursing, and with the injustice done to trained nurses, who have spent three or four years of their lives in learning their business thoroughly, by denying them the status which their long years of arduous study and resulting skill have earned.

In addition to *The Times* the *Spectator* is opening its columns to the discussion of the nursing question, and one of its correspondents states that the "ungenerous and discourteous treatment (of members of Voluntary Aid Detachments) by their fully trained sisters is a blot on a noble profession, and should be removed."

This accusation has yet to be proved, but, if it were true, it will be admitted that the trained nurses have had ample provocation. The truth is that now the War Office policy is to concentrate these short term probationers in the large hospitals they are for the first time working under discipline, and the winnowing, and educating process is going on. Those whose work stands the test will have no reason to complain of lack of appreciation. On the contrary it appears to us they get far more than the regular probationer either expects or receives.

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