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EDITORIAL.

NURSES, KEEP YOUR CHARTER.

From time to time crises occur of supreme importance to the nursing profession, and such a crisis has now arisen. It has for some time been known that the Draft Supplemental Charter for the amalgamation of the Royal British Nurses' Association and the College of Nursing, Ltd., under the title of the Royal British College of Nursing, for which the Association has petitioned the King in Council, has been referred back to the promoters, and that the Lords of the Privy Council took grave exception to some of its proposals.

The objections raised by the Privy Council have now been considered by the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and at its meeting on September 27th that Council adopted the following resolution, which has been forwarded to the Council of the College of Nursing, Ltd.:

That the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, after careful consideration of the objections raised by the Privy Council to the Draft Supplemental Charter, as agreed upon by the Corporation and the College of Nursing, Ltd., has reluctantly come to the conclusion that it would not be to the interest of the Corporation to accept the alterations suggested.

It is evident, therefore, that there is no immediate prospect that the College of Nursing, Ltd., will acquire the status of a Royal Corporation by the simple expedient of laying hands on the Royal Charter which the nurses themselves so earnestly worked for, paid for, and won, absorbing the Association in the process, and so attempting to secure absolute control of nurses.

For, fundamentally, the claim of the College of Nursing, Ltd., is that it should have a monopoly of control of (1) the registration and discipline, (2) the definition of educational standards, and (3) the organi-

zation of the nursing profession. In the medical profession these three divisions of power are vested in three separate bodies, and thus no absolute monopoly of authority is entrusted to any one Corporation. Thus registration and disciplinary powers, and the definition of professional standards of education are vested in the General Medical Council by Act of Parliament; the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in the three kingdoms are educational and academic bodies; and the British Medical Association combines medical practitioners in a strong association which affords free opportunities for the discussion of professional questions, the protection of professional interests, and for voicing united aspirations and demands. All these bodies are composed exclusively of members of the medical profession.

The College of Nursing, Ltd., a lay controlled body, which desires to absorb the Royal British Nurses' Association, proposes to combine these three functions:—*i.e.*, to be (1) the registration authority for nurses—and it has, indeed, pledged Parliament in this respect before its claims have been considered by the Legislature; (2) to be the educational authority, and (3) to control organized nurses, and thus to set up an absolute monopoly over the entire nursing profession in Great Britain and Ireland.

The organization of the Nursing Profession, to be satisfactory, must follow the lines laid down by the profession of medicine. Its government, discipline, and the definition of its educational standards must, as advocated by the Central Committee for State Registration of Nurses be vested in an independent statutory body, the General Nursing Council; not one College of Nursing, but several, should do useful work as academic bodies, in the United Kingdom, while registered

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