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EDITORIAL.

NURSES AND MIDWIVES.

WITHIN the next few weeks, two separate schemes of Registration will be placed before the public—that advocated by the British Nurses' Association for Nurses, and that promoted by the Midwives' Institute for Midwives. The most salient feature of these two propositions is the vital differences which exist between them, as to their inception, their past progress, their proposed methods, and their future prospects. And yet it is not only obvious that there is the closest analogy and similarity in the object which each party seeks to attain, but curiously enough both Societies have been evolved from proceedings taken by one professional philanthropist. In this latter case, however, the distinction is once more strongly emphasized. Because the side which this person opposes has been eminently successful, whilst the other, which is dependent upon him, is daily losing public support and professional confidence.

The British Nurses' Association, as all our readers know, was founded just three years ago, in order to unite Nurses together for the advancement of their professional knowledge and efficiency, and for their mutual assistance in times of need. Its foundation principle was that Nurses must be organised under the auspices of the medical profession. The early months of its existence, therefore, were spent in conferences with eminent medical men, first in London, in order to settle its constitution, and afterwards in the chief provincial towns. It stated at once what it desired to do, and the opinions expressed upon the details at the many meetings held throughout the country were gathered together, discussed and utilised in the final preparation of its scheme of Registration. For eighteen months the Association patiently inquired; for six months longer it was engaged in the work of organisation. Meanwhile it was being slandered upon every side; but, unheeding this, quietly pursued the even tenor of its way. For the last year the work has been in full progress, and we are informed—so far as the difficulties are concerned—is now practically completed. The first Register, containing about seventeen hundred names, will be published in a few weeks, and then it will merely be a question of the addition of new names, on the same plan as that now adopted, until every woman in the British Empire who has the right to be recognised as a skilled attendant on the sick has become a Registered Nurse. How long or how short a time elapses before that consummation is quite immaterial, and only affects those whose names the public will not find on the Register. As to the method of working proposed by the Association, that has evidently never deviated one hair's-breadth from the first. It was arranged in 1887 that so soon as the Association had sufficiently defined its work and its constitution, and could forecast what powers and privileges it required, it should appeal to Her Majesty for the grant of a Royal Charter. We are not—and we regret it for

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