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Editorial.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER.

The fact that the first annual meeting of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses is convened for May 8th affords an opportunity of reviewing the progress made by the Society during the first year of its existence. That during this year upwards of 700 nurses, the majority of whom are Charge Nurses, Sisters, or Matrons, have joined the Society is cause for congratulation. These nurses have had the courage of their convictions; they have not hesitated to express them while the question of Registration was still in the contentious stage which invariably precedes definite action in regard to legislation, and they have now the satisfaction of knowing that they have the sympathy of nurses all over the world who are working for professional enfranchisement; that throughout the country there is a remarkable awakening as to the necessity for Registration—for, having, in response to invitations, spoken at many meetings during the past year, we are able to say that the unanimity of feeling is little short of marvellous. The public, the medical profession, and nurses themselves are alike convinced of its necessity when it is put before them, and, if proof of the value of public meetings on the question were needed, it may be found in the fact that on more than one occasion medical men who came to these meetings in opposition to the principle of registration left them convinced of its desirability.

Lastly, the combination of nurses in a strong society for the purpose of obtaining Registration has had its effect on the weather-cock which dominates the Royal British Nurses' Association, and signs are not wanting that this agile bird will shortly veer round once more. We always believed that as soon as the hard preliminary work had been done outside, and the officials realised that public opinion had been formed on the Registra-

tion question, they would have no hesitation in recanting their recantation of the principle for which the Association was formed. We are glad that the opposition which might have been expected from this quarter may be withdrawn. Only it must be for ever remembered that a Society which trims its sails in accordance with the expediency of the moment is not one which can be entrusted with serious work, for there is no knowing when it may again see fit to perform another *volte face*.

The high hopes with which the R.B.N.A. was founded have been crushed by its own futility, and nurses who desire to effect professional reform realise that they must now do so through other channels. There was never greater need than now for the members of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses to stand shoulder to shoulder, so that they may prove that they are in earnest. For this reason we hope that the members will make every effort to be present at the meeting and conference on May 8th. Most important business is down for discussion on the agenda—no less, indeed, than that a Bill shall be drafted for consideration prior to its introduction into the House of Commons. Every member of the Society will, we are sure, wish to support this resolution by her presence and vote. During the last ten years we nurses have learnt much. We have learnt, for instance, that the predominant voice in framing the laws under which we work must be our own, and that we must secure, as the Society for State Registration has already secured, the sympathy and support of men and women versed in Parliamentary procedure.

It is satisfactory to be able to record that during the past year much appreciation of the work of the Society has been expressed by leading nurses in various British Colonies and in the United States. It must stimulate us to greater efforts to know that our work is watched and appraised by those in a position to judge of its value in these countries.

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