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Editorial.

A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE.

THE great news in the nursing world this week is the appointment of Mrs. Dita H. Kinney—a graduate of the Massachusetts General Training School—in charge of the Army Nurse Corps, in the United States, in connection with the Army Medical Department, at Washington. It will be remembered that, when war was declared between America and Spain, the American War Office was unprovided with any efficient nursing organization for the care of the sick and wounded. The National Associated Alumnae, as representing the graduate nurses of the United States, offered to select for appointment reliable and suitable nurses, but meanwhile other arrangements were made, and Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee was appointed Acting Assistant Surgeon, United States Army, in charge of the Army Nurse Corps. Since this time the American Societies of Trained Nurses have worked strenuously to promote the passage of a Bill through Congress, of which an essential feature was the appointment of a trained nurse instead of a medical practitioner as Superintendent of Army Nurses. The

matter was one of principle, and by no means personal to Dr. McGee, who is universally popular, the principle contended for of course being that nurses, like the members of every other profession, should be governed by their peers.

Dr. McGee's position is explained by a quotation from a letter to the Editor of the *Trained Nurse*, in which she enclosed a copy of her resignation, sent to the Surgeon-General of the United States Army, of the position of Acting Assistant Surgeon in the Army, in charge of the Army Nurse Corps.

"The reason I felt in duty bound to stand by the army nurses thus long, has been that last year the Secretary of War did not approve and send to Congress the Surgeon-General's request for authority to appoint a Superintendent of the Nurse Corps to carry on my work. This year the request has been repeated, the Secretary has approved it, and it has gone to Congress with every prospect of passage. Therefore I feel justified in resigning, although the work must be carried on by a temporary expedient until Congressional action goes into effect."

We congratulate American nurses upon this professional recognition, which proves once again the value of professional organization, and that Governments are not always wilfully obdurate, in denying just demands, but rather err through want of knowledge.

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