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Editorial.

THE NEW SOCIETY.

THE new Society which has been formed to obtain the State Registration of Trained Nurses by Act of Parliament, has raised a standard round which all nurses should rally. There is a deep and widespread feeling amongst nurses that such legislation is necessary, or as many of them put it that it "must come." But if this is to be the case not only is there much hard work ahead, but trained nurses themselves must be at the helm, inspiring, organizing, guiding the movement. They must have a strong Society by means of which their views and needs can be placed both before the public and before Parliament. It is true that there are other interests to be considered, and that those of the medical profession merit and will receive consideration. By all means let us have a medical Society to deal with the question also, nurses will welcome its co-operation. But the very fact that so powerful a profession as that of medicine is certain to express its united views on this subject forms an additional reason why those of nurses should be conjointly and forcibly voiced. Isolated opinion in these days is

powerless to influence public movements, and consequently nurses must present a united front at this crisis. We have come to the parting of the ways, and the question which is immediately before us is whether, in the future, nurses shall be members of a profession, developing on broad and liberal lines, to keep pace with the demands of medicine and surgery, subordinate to them as regards the treatment of the sick, but outside the sick room self-regulated, and self-governing, or whether they shall merely follow a calling in which they mechanically perform certain offices for the sick without attempting, in common with all professions, to base their work on the study of underlying principles. Briefly the public and the medical profession have great stakes in the organization of nursing, but to nurses themselves the question is one of life and death in the professional sense, and when legislation in which they are concerned comes, as it is rapidly coming, into the sphere of practical politics, they must be organised and ready to voice their views, and take action, otherwise they will certainly be considered a negligible quantity, and all other interests will be considered before their own.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)