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EDITORIAL.

THE CALL OF PUBLIC DUTY.

The stupendous majority in the House of Commons on March 3rd in favour of the first reading of the Nurses' Registration Bill is fresh incentive to all those who—convinced that the present disorganized condition of nursing is causing unnecessary suffering and danger to the sick—have incessantly worked for the regulation of their profession by the State.

This victory, the importance and completeness of which can hardly be overestimated must be pushed to its legitimate conclusion, and every nurse who desires to see a minimum standard of education for members of her profession established, must determine that, by united effort, no stone shall be left unturned to place the Nurses' Registration Bill on the Statute Book of these Realms in the near future.

It would scarcely be possible to approach either the Government, or individual Members of Parliament, with a stronger case for immediate legislation than that which can be advanced in support of the Nurses' Registration Bill.

In the first place there is the urgent need of the sick, a need which is always appealing to nurses, and urging them on to fresh endeavour to secure the legislation necessary to protect this helpless class of the community. Secondly nurses can support their demand backed by the unanimous Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1905, by the action of the House of Lords in passing a Nurses' Registration Bill in 1908, and by the recent action of the House of Commons in carrying the first reading of the Bill, introduced into that House by Dr. Chapple on March 3rd, by the great majority of 228, a majority, moreover, which included names of distinguished Members of all Parties in the House.

We know the widespread pleasure that this vote has given. Nurses have always believed that if their Registration Bill were put to the test in the House of Commons a majority vote was assured. Tuesday's voting proved them triumphantly right.

We appeal, and we are confident that our readers are ready and eager to respond to our appeal, to every one who reads these words to consider what they can personally do to further the registration cause at this time.

The personal interest and work of every one is needed at the present moment, and those whose conscientious convictions have inspired them through so many years will we know continue their good work until, with the consummation of their hopes, the need for it has ceased.

We do well to call to mind the words of the first President of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, the late Miss Louisa Stevenson, LL.D., when presiding at its annual meeting just ten years ago.

"I recognize, and am fully aware, of the professional, social and political opposition with which we have to contend, but our cause is good and we shall win the battle in the long run. I remember the struggle of women to obtain the right to qualify as medical practitioners, and the arguments used by the opposition then were precisely the same as those advanced now against the better education and registration of nurses. . . . I ask you to remember that reforms are not initiated by the great and mighty, and I know of no reform measure taken up enthusiastically by large numbers, but our cause is founded on justice and righteousness, and will ultimately triumph. I am perfectly certain, I am as sure as that the sun will rise to-morrow, that eventually, for the whole of the British Empire, there will be established a State Register of Trained Nurses."

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