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EDITORIAL.

HOW HIGHLY TRAINED NURSES CAN HELP THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCILS TO FOUND THE PROFESSION OF NURSING

Many of those nurses who have associated themselves together for a number of years to obtain an Act for the State Registration of Nurses—for the purpose of founding a Profession of Nursing on a sound educational and economic basis, for the benefit of the sick—realise that this great work cannot be accomplished in a day.

Those pioneers who have studied the history of the formation of professions realise that they gradually evolved through individual effort, and that, when the men who had promoted and formed them desired State organisation and protection for their work, they were invariably met by the determination of British Parliaments to protect the existing rights and privileges of those earning their living, by some means or other, in the various professions, although many of these had not attained to the standard of knowledge and efficiency which it was desired should be the hall-mark of those who, in the future, should be permitted to form the profession.

Thus, when the Medical, Dental and Midwives' Acts were placed on the Statute Book, a period of grace was provided, during which time those who had attained a minimum, instead of a maximum, of skill might be placed on these respective Registers.

Whether or no this policy is advisable is not the question. It is the policy of successive Governments, uninformed where standards of professional education and efficiency are concerned, and without this concession to British prejudice no profession has been conceded legal status and future rights of organisation by Act of Parliament.

Yet, with knowledge and patience upon the part of experts, immense progress and improvement is constantly taking place through the Medical, Dental and Midwives' Acts for the benefit of the community, and also of the registered members of those professions.

Now that the Nursing Acts are in force, no doubt the best trained nurses—those holding certificates of three years' training from our leading training schools—may wonder what benefit they will receive by placing their names on a Register with those of nurses having a less efficient training than their own.

THE DUTY OF WELL-TRAINED NURSES.

We owe to sympathy with these highly qualified women, but we venture to suggest to them that it is their professional duty to come forward and place their names on the Registers, and, in overwhelming numbers, form the electorate which is to build up a highly skilled profession of nursing in the future, when the term of grace will have expired, and progressively efficient standards of nursing education and examination will be in force. It is only by the support of the great body of highly trained certificated nurses that the General Nursing Councils can effect the necessary reforms, and, in the near future, the great profession of our dreams take concrete form.

THE ADVANTAGES OF STATE REGISTRATION.

The most highly trained nurses must also realise that enrolment on the State Register gives them that legal status without which their work has, for so many years, remained exploitable, and without consideration, and that without the strong arm of the law, which forms nursing for the first time into a legalised profession, all their individual efforts for systematised education, a one portal examination, and recognition in Courts of Law (other than as domestic servants), are in vain. They re-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)