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## EDITORIAL.

### UNHEALTHY HOSPITALS.

RECENT events have brought to the front a question of vast importance to the health and well-being of Trained Nurses. It is now an accepted dictum that every woman who desires to follow this vocation should pass through a period of tuition and practical work in the Wards of a Hospital. All professional readers of this journal are well aware what arduous duties, what strict discipline, this implies. Nor does any Nurse worthy of the name grumble or complain of either. When complaints are made—certainly when whining epistles are addressed on the subject of "white slavery" in connection with Nursing to the public press—they almost invariably proceed from women who have mistaken their vocation and their powers, and overvalued both their hearts and their heads. At the same time it must be admitted that in many ways the life of Sisters and Nurses might, in many Hospitals, be made much happier and more comfortable, their work be rendered less harassing and more effective, and a positive increase of general efficiency be gained, simply by means of better organisation.

We believe that, even as enormous advances have within the last decade been made in this direction, so within the next few years still greater improvements will be effected; and the historian of the future will, we doubt not, largely attribute such progress to the powerful influence of the British Nurses' Association. We are constantly receiving fresh proofs of the increasingly important part played by this body, all over the world. By one post this week, for example, we received four letters from New Zealand, from South Africa, from Canada, and from the North of England. Each writer mentioned that she was a member of the Association, and mentioned details in which her particular Hospital was striving to conform to the scheme of education outlined in the Syllabus of Practical Training issued by the Association; and to prepare its Nurses for what is now regarded all over the world as inevitable—a systematic Registration of skilled attendants on the sick. This fresh proof of the widespread influence of the B.N.A. leads us to suggest that it could do a great work for Hospitals, as well as for all Nurses therein employed, if under its auspices could be drawn up a comprehensive scheme of the daily work to be done in Hospitals, the hours of duty, of meals, and of recreation, and the duties to be allotted to each class of workers. It is well known how greatly the organisation in these matters varies in different Hospitals, and yet how all important it is to the welfare of the Institution, of the patients, and of the Nurses themselves, that these details should be planned in the best possible manner.

But we chiefly desire now to call attention to matters more closely affecting the health, than the occupation, of women working in Hospitals. Notice has upon several occasions been markedly drawn in these columns to the great amount of sickness and even of mortality which is known to prevail amongst Nurses. It is an open secret that in many Hospitals in the United Kingdom, founded, endowed,

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