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EDITORIAL.

THE LONDON HOSPITAL.—I.

OUR readers will have read the statements made last week, and this, before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, now investigating the management of our Hospitals. Until some decision has been arrived at by the Lords' Committee, or by the Committee of the London Hospital, we will not express our judgment upon the evidence, but content ourselves with reviewing it critically and impartially. We shall also take an early opportunity of issuing the verbatim proceedings to our readers, but as a mere matter of justice to the Hospital authorities refrain from doing so until we can also give their reply to the grave charges made against them. We ask our readers also to keep an open mind on the subject. There are always two sides to every question, and one version generally seems correct until the other has been stated.

The witnesses hitherto examined comprise five former Probationers, the late Chaplain, and the present Secretary and Matron of the London Hospital, with some corroborative evidence advanced on the part of those whom we will call the plaintiffs in the case.

To take—as is customary—their case first, the allegations which they advance resolve themselves into four distinct charges that the nursing organisation is radically bad. Because, firstly, it is asserted that the patients are sacrificed; secondly, that the Nurses are sweated; thirdly, that the public is swindled; and fourthly, that there is no redress obtainable by any one. The cause for the harm that is wrought is stated to be a manifest wish on the part of the authorities to turn the Hospital into a great manufactory of Nurses, combined with a huge Nurse farm. We have never heard of an attempt being made before to unite agriculture and manufactures in one business, and imagine that any one who baldly proposed such a scheme would be regarded as a fit candidate for the benefits of Hanwell. But there is no disguising the fact—because it is notorious—that the London Hospital has for some years past turned out annually an ever-increasing number of young ladies, with an amateur smattering of the rudiments of Nursing, gained in a three months' course as paying Probationers. As our readers are aware, we have denounced the evils of this system in no halting terms, and proved it to be fraught with danger to the public, while most detrimental to the progress of real Nursing, and eminently unfair to trained Nurses. There is therefore no need for us now to reiterate our views on the manufacturing matter. With regard to the farming principle, we have also fully expressed our sentiments, showing in what measure and within what strictly defined limits it is beneficial to every one concerned, that our Hospitals should supply highly trained Nurses to tend the richer public outside their walls. But we have shown conclusively, and justice and right emphasize the argument, that it is essential that the women thus sent out upon the Hospitals' responsibility should, in order to maintain its

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