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"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

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EDITORIAL.

WE drew attention last week to the economic crisis, which appears to us to be arising in the Nursing world, and now propose to further consider the matter. We recalled the patent fact of the present great popularity of Nursing, and the effect which has thereby been produced—of causing many ladies to enter Hospitals as paying Probationers, who, in former days, would either have sought their livelihood as governesses or companions, or, if not obliged to work for their bread, would have spent their days in *ennui*, and their evenings in various phases of fashionable pleasure. And while the continued presence of large numbers of educated gentlewomen in the Nursing world cannot but raise the tone of the workers, and improve the quality of

the work, still we feel strongly that the system at present in vogue foreshadows difficulties in the future, which should be recognised at once, and to obviate which, measures should immediately be taken. To make our meaning quite clear, we would say that the dangers which we foresee as likely to arise are four-fold in their effects upon Hospitals and their patients, Nurses and Nursing.

To take the two first-named together, and remembering that we proved last week that no Institution could accommodate more than a certain number of Nurses; and that, therefore, the more Lady-Probationers who were taken for short periods, the fewer Probationers could be admitted, who would be prepared to stay a sufficient time in the service of the Institution, not only to become efficient in their work, but also thereafter to be of some use to the Hospital. It is unnecessary to prove to professional readers, that a three-months' Probationer is of little or no value in the real Nursing care of the patients in the Ward in which she is placed to learn; nor even to remind them that, for the same period at least, the Probationer causes the Sister and Staff Nurse a great deal of trouble and extra work in mere tuition and supervision. Everyone knows how much easier it is to carry out this, that, or the other Nursing detail one's self, than to teach another how to do it, and then watch that it is correctly done. Consequently, we hold that it is most certainly not conducive to the efficiency and the good name of any Hospital, that it should have too many short period Probationers, who, just as they are beginning to find their feet, and ceasing to be confused by the novel sights and sounds, and by the constant whirl of unaccustomed duties, pass away, to leave fresh strangers in their places, as equally ignorant, helpless, and useless, as they themselves were at first. However willing to work, however anxious to learn, even the best Probationers are practically handless at first; and everyone with any Hospital experience knows that such are more of an obstruction than a help

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