

# The Nursing Record

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

No. 42.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17th, 1889.

VOL. 2.

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## EDITORIAL.

FOR the past two weeks, we have been considering some effects produced by the present great popularity of Nursing. We have shown that a great crisis is approaching, because of the large number of women who are desirous to enter Hospitals as paying Probationers, for three or six months, so as to acquire some knowledge of the Art, and thus create a temptation to make money which few of the Committees of our financially-straitened Hospitals can resist. The natural consequence, as we have pointed out, is that—especially at one or two Institutions—many such ladies are admitted for short periods, who are not only in that short period unable to learn sufficient to be of much use, but are moreover occupying the places of women who otherwise could have

been taken in as permanent workers. We proved how harmful such a system must be in any case—and especially when it is carried to any great excess—to the efficiency and good name of a Hospital, and to the comfort, well-being, and even safety of its patients.

But now we desire to draw attention to the equally deleterious effects of the system upon both Nurses and Nursing, and of course the evil results in the last case again react upon the sick, to their great discomfort, if not to their danger. We will put aside, then, the important fact, which cannot be too frequently reiterated, that no Hospital can possibly accommodate more than a certain number of workers; and, therefore, that where many paying Probationers are admitted for three or six months, only a few Staff Probationers can be taken for regular training. In fact, at such Hospitals it becomes imperative to make the period of tuition as short as possible, and to call its Nurses fully trained, after, at most, two years' employment. Whereas, it is now generally admitted by those most qualified to judge—and emphasised, indeed, by the British Nurses' Association—that no woman can be considered sufficiently educated in Nursing matters, who has been for less than three years engaged in learning her profession.

But with the peripatetic habits of Nurses, and the numbers who are always leaving, there is at every Hospital a succession of vacancies to be filled. And as this means that a continual supply of permanent Probationers must be ready for the posts of Staff Nurses, the result under the system we are denouncing can easily be foreseen. Not only is the period of training diminished for all, but, in many instances, Probationers of but short service and scanty experience are perforce appointed to perform the duties of a Staff Nurse. How utterly wrong this is, for the sake of the patient, needs no demonstration; but perhaps it may not occur to many, how extremely bad it is for the Nursing of a Ward, to have an untrained

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