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EDITORIAL.

FOR the last two weeks we have been considering the important subject raised by Miss Dannatt's article, published in our twenty-eighth number—the charges to be made by Hospitals for their Private Nurses. We have shown that this is not only a most important matter, but that it is one which affects so many different classes, that it demands the most careful consideration before any change can be attempted, or even proposed, in the scale of payments now enforced. We proved last week that no Hospital could start a Private Nursing Home of its own, without employing, for the initial and necessary expenses, funds subscribed for a totally different object—the relief of the sick poor; and that consequently no honourable business men, such as the managing Committee of a Hospital usually comprises, would sanction such an ex-

penditure unless they were abundantly convinced, from the experiences of similar institutions, that the scheme would be not only self-supporting, but also remunerative.

From this it necessarily follows that a Hospital undertaking such a scheme would be compelled to make such charges for its Private Nurses as the results obtained by other Homes had proved to be financially safe. But it might be well argued—"Let it be granted that a Hospital must at first charge from thirty shillings to two guineas a week for its Private Nurses, in order to secure the Institution from loss. Experience shows that if the scheme be not successful the Committee will be compelled to close the Home in a year. But if it is successful—that is to say, if the Nurses are kept almost constantly at work—the expenses of the Home soon become very small, and the receipts comparatively large. In other words, the money at first expended is, in case of success, rapidly recouped, and probably within two years completely paid back. In such an event, why should the Hospital continue to make money from the scheme? Why should a charitable, be converted into a commercial, undertaking? Why should not the charges be at once reduced, say, to twenty shillings a week, which probably would, still, more than clear the expenses, by causing a greater demand from the public for more of the Nurses at this cheaper rate.

Now, it is quite fair to argue thus; but let us see how far-reaching, in even one direction only, would be the effects of such a measure if it were adopted by one large Hospital. It would soon be known that Nurses could be obtained from this Institution at considerably cheaper rates than those in force elsewhere. The demand for the Nurses undoubtedly would rapidly increase, and would compel a constant increase of the numbers of the Staff at work. In a very short time no Nurse would be able to get any rest at all, unless invalidated, in which case she would either be sent into the Hospital or to a Convalescent Home.

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