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EDITORIAL.

NURSING EDUCATION.—II.

WE pointed out last week the constitution of a Medical School in reference to the important remarks made by one of the best known thinkers and workers in the Nursing world, before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Metropolitan Hospital management, when she expressed her conviction that Nurse Training Schools should be organised upon the same principles as Medical Schools. The more the question is studied, the more closely the tide of public and professional opinion in this matter is watched, the more advisable does the principle appear; and the more probable that within a very brief space of time it will be carried into effect; because its advantage would be inestimable, both to the public and to the profession of Nursing. At present there can be little doubt that the calling is overcrowded, and yet the strange paradox is true, that really good Nurses are being constantly and unsuccessfully sought for—that they are "few and far between." The reason we believe to be partly due to the material, partly to the machinery, partly, perhaps, also to the way in which the manufactured article is treated; pre-

cisely in the same way that the best raw material may be spoilt in the manufacture by inefficient machinery, or afterwards by improper usage, while, again, the most elaborate machine cannot produce from inferior goods the best results.

For there can be no dispute that Nursing has now become a skilled calling, nor on the other hand that hundreds of women are every year commencing to undertake the work who have few, if any, of the qualifications necessary to secure success in its performance. Nor again can it be asserted that the education of Nurses for their responsible duties is, in nine cases out of ten, calculated to ensure their efficiency. Finally, there is equally little doubt that amongst the public generally there is only the vaguest and most nebulous knowledge as to what skilled Nursing is. While, by some, the Nurse is regarded as an angelic being—rather too good on the whole for this sublunary sphere—by others, she is held to be a cast-iron machine, warranted to work without regular meals or rest. Now it has for long been plain to those who have had much touch with public feeling on this matter that the first charm of novelty and sentiment with regard to Nurses is wearing off, and that the value of Nursing help being recognised, a strong disposition is becoming generally manifested to get as much assistance as possible out of the individual Nurse. Upon this point history is very instructive, because it shows, so conclusively that he who runs may read, that Medicine and all other sciences have passed through exactly the same cycle of public opinion. First comes the reverence and wonderment accorded to the novel in all ages. The feeling evinced, for example, to the "medicine man" by untutored savages, and towards the electrician in our grandfathers' days. Then comes the reaction due to closer acquaintance, and the Doctor is scoffed at—as he was a century ago in England—and yet held to be at every man's beck and call when necessity arose; while cheap ridicule is cast to-day upon the electrician because he cannot comfortably kill our criminals, or cheaply light

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