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Editorial.

OUR Hospitals have fallen upon evil days. No one can read, as we are doing every day, the Reports and Balance-sheets of these great Institutions, without being struck with the startling depreciation which has recently taken place in their income. This is a matter which has not yet received the critical consideration which, in view of its immense importance, it certainly deserves. Because it is manifest that there must be a reason for the fact, and that the reason should be faced and grappled with, and removed, as speedily as possible; otherwise, the presumption would be that its maleficent effects would be continually intensified, and the burden of debt which now, like a heavy shadow, hangs over our Hospitals, would deepen and descend in greater and greater volume.

Now, we imagine that no one who has studied the subject will deny that above and beyond all things, public satisfaction and confidence in a Charity may be estimated by the amount of public money poured into its coffers. The converse, perhaps, will also be accepted as a fact which has been frequently proved, that a falling-off to any marked extent in the voluntary contributions to a Hospital, signifies a diminution in public confidence in its work. Herein lies, we are forced to believe, the chief reason for the loss of income—stated at no less than £50,000—which the London Hospitals last year sustained. We do not, for one moment, believe that this is due to diminished wealth in the country, because the revenue and banking returns prove that the reverse is the

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