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THE Nursing Record

EVERY SATURDAY
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AND

The Hospital World.

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PROFICIT DEFICIT."

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Editorial.

A SELFISH AGE.

"Measure thy life by loss instead of gain
Not by the wine drunk but the wine poured forth."

IS the spirit of selfishness which is undoubtedly a spirit of the age infecting the nursing profession? We are loth to believe it, and yet signs are not wanting that it is so. In the battle for right against wrong, for liberty against oppression, for self-government against autocracy which has taken, which is taking place in our ranks, how many have either taken no part, or even sided with the oppressors because "it would never do you know, I want to get on, and if I go against my chief, or take part in this controversy I shall never get anything." We can all recall not one but many such instances. But, setting nursing politics on one side, is the average nurse of to-day as devoted to the interests of her patients as she was ten or fifteen years ago? Many and noble instances of unselfish devotion to-day which will bear comparison with those of any age, might easily be produced. But we are speaking of the *average* nurse, and complaints are not wanting from ward sisters that "nurses are not what they were, they

come into the wards for a few years, to pass away the time, they get through somehow and off they go." Again, we hear of private nurses who arrive at houses where patients are acutely ill, with bicycles as a part of their luggage. Setting aside the want of good breeding thus exhibited, for no one would dream of taking a bicycle when paying an ordinary visit, without enquiring of the hostess whether this were convenient, it certainly gives the impression at once that a nurse is thinking more of her own amusement than of the welfare of the patient she has undertaken to attend. Again, even a sister has been known to leave a dying patient, who has just been operated on, to the care of probationers rather than forego her evening off and her usual bicycle ride. We are not arguing that nurses should not have regular times off duty, and regular exercise; but we do claim that if they are to do their duty there are times when these must be foregone. We are not commercial contractors pledged to give so much and no more for value received, but members of a great and noble profession, raised to its present position by the devotion and self-sacrifice of its members. Our duty is to maintain the prestige so won by an unselfish devotion to duty.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)