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EDITED BY MRS. BEDFORD FENWICK.

No. 648.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1900.

VOL. XXV.

**Editorial.**

THE VALUE OF CERTIFICATES.

IN the last issue of *Truth* exception is taken to the fact that a probationer who failed to obtain a certificate at the Manchester Royal Infirmary was, on leaving, refused a testimonial by the Matron, "without any charge of negligence or misconduct having been made." The point raised is most important. The bestowal of a certificate on a nurse on the completion of her training means, if it means anything, that, in the judgment of the institution which has trained her, she is qualified to take her place in the ranks of graduate nurses; the withholding of a certificate means, if it means anything, that in the opinion of the authorities of the institution, the nurse is not so qualified. It is obvious that in the interests of the public, as well as in barest justice to certificated nurses, the value of the certificate given must be jealously guarded. But supposing a nurse who has failed, as the nurse in question did fail, to satisfy her examiners, both in medical and surgical nursing, can obtain a testimonial from her Matron,

which she would no doubt endeavour to supplement with others from the medical staff; she can, armed with a sheaf of such documents, obtain employment which should be open only to efficient and graduate nurses. A Matron's testimonial carries great weight, and is universally and rightly regarded as of paramount importance. If one had been given in the instance quoted above not only would injustice have been done to the public in guaranteeing a nurse whom the institution had not considered worthy of its certificate, but injury would also have been inflicted on those nurses who had earned it, and indeed there would be little inducement to any nurse to work for a certificate if she knew that if she failed to obtain it she could procure from her Matron a testimonial that would stand her in equally good stead. When we learn further that the probationer in question was given the opportunity of staying another six months in the Infirmary, in order to compete again at the examination, but "she did not think it worth her while to do so," and that though it is not the practice of the Manchester Royal Infirmary to give testimonials, which might

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