

Editorial

THE NURSING OF TUBERCULOUS PATIENTS. THE great Congress which has taken place this week in London must possess much interest for trained nurses. The importance ascribed to it by the medical profession is sufficiently proved by the large numbers of members and delegates from nearly every important medical society in the civilised world who have come together this week in London; and it appears to us to be a matter of much regret that so few nursing bodies have appointed nurses to attend the Congress on their behalf. The ravages which are made by tubercular diseases are so universal and so immense that it is a matter of international importance to discover the best possible methods for their prevention, as well as for their cure.

Although there can be little doubt that advanced sanitary knowledge, and the vast improvements which have consequently been made in the public health, have very materially lessened the death-roll of Tuberculosis, it cannot be disputed that these allied diseases still represent the greatest existing foes to human health and life; and it may indeed be fairly argued that the improvements which have thus far been made tend rather to their prevention than to their direct cure. It is, however, certain that greater advances have been made within the last quarter of a century in the successful treatment of tuberculosis than have ever been made before. For example, the removal of tuberculous glands is now-adays accomplished with certainty and success in thousands of cases; and thus we are saved those terribly painful cases which were formerly so common amongst children and young adults, in which diseased glands of the neck and other parts of the body broke down into abscesses and discharged for weeks or months, leaving the patient at best enfeebled, if not permanently injured in health, and bearing all through life the long unsightly scars; whilst in the great majority of cases the disease progressed until the lungs were affected. and ordinary consumption occurred. Now-adays, as we have said, these glands are removed, and within a week the clean surgical wound is healed, the patient is cured, and there is a thin, gradually fading scar, as the only consequence of what was formerly regarded with dread or despair. We lay



