

The Nursing Record

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

No. II.

THURSDAY, JUNE 14th, 1888.

VOL. I.

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EDITORIAL.

IN discussing the subject of Registration we have hitherto made but slight reference to one important point, and given only scanty answer to one great practical question—What use will it be to nurses and others, individually and collectively? For various reasons we deemed it wiser in the first place to consider the matter from the standpoint of its opponents, and to answer, without delay, the objections they raised to the scheme. But now that we have met, and we trust finally disposed of, the abstract arguments urged against the adoption of Registration, it appears to us that we may turn to the more pleasant and more personal side of the subject, and show, in turn, the enormous benefits which nurses, medical men, and the public must derive from State action in this matter.

It is perhaps almost needless to say that it would be absolutely impossible, in the short space allotted to an Editorial Article, to do justice to the subject, or

answer, in the slightest degree exhaustively, this question in its relation to even one of these three classes. Moreover, all history teaches that in a new thing such as this, may lay concealed many quite unexpected possibilities; and so there are sure to be many direct and indirect advantages which will accrue to those immediately concerned, but which time only can sufficiently bring to light.

We must premise, therefore, that we shall merely touch upon those benefits which the experience of similar undertakings has conclusively proved to be obtainable or obtained. To-day, then, let us consider briefly a few of the clear and certain advantages of a system of Legal Registration to the calling of Nursing, and to every woman individually engaged therein; remembering that we have defined the term to mean—"A State guarantee to the medical profession and the public that every nurse whose name is found on the register is qualified by training and knowledge to tend the sick efficiently."

It is plain, therefore, that Nursing, which at the present moment is a "calling" unrecognised by the State, because there is no single Act of Parliament or other State document defining it or its followers, will, when a Royal Charter is granted to enforce registration of its members, be elevated instantly into a *profession* recognised by the law of the land; and then will for the first time rank with the other professions authorised by the State; for—as in the case of Medicine, Law, and the Church, the Naval, Military, Diplomatic, and Civil Services—the law will, for the benefit of the community at large, lay down provisions for the knowledge to be possessed by members of the Nursing profession, for the special privileges to be accorded to them, and for the special rights they shall enjoy.

There can be no reasonable doubt that, had the majority following the calling of Nursing been men, it would have been duly recognised by the law as a distinct profession many years ago. We are convinced that it is now on the very eve of such recognition, and would only pause to point out that when this is accomplished it will be the first—as indeed it should be the foremost—female profession con-

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