

The Nursing Record

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NOTICE.—Should any difficulty arise in obtaining the "Nursing Record" through local news-agents, it is advisable to order it direct from the Publishers.

EDITORIAL.

WEEK by week we have discussed the diverse aspects of Registration. We have shown what it is; have proved, not only what it will *not* do to certain classes of people, but also what it will effect for Nurses and for Doctors. Last, but not least, we must now discuss the influence it will have for good or evil upon the lives and comfort of the general Public. We place this matter last, merely because, in a professional journal such as this, professional interests must of necessity override all others. But the results of Registration must, we are sure, be more momentous to the sick themselves, than to any class of their attendants. We commence, then, by expressing our conviction that the system cannot possibly do any evil. We, moreover, believe that we shall be able to prove, to the complete satisfaction of every impartial mind, that the legal Registration of Trained Nurses will effect enormous good for the public in many ways.

We may, in the first place, briefly allude to the well-known fact that, for the common weal, Parliament has again and again ordained that the members of other professions shall be "Registered"—in other words, that their names shall be duly inscribed in books, kept correct and published annually "by authority." So that anyone, for example, can purchase a copy of the "Medical Register," or the "Law List," or the "Clergy List," or the "Army List," and, at a glance, be able to discern whether Mr. John Smith, asserting himself to be a doctor or a lawyer, a clergyman or an officer, is so in very truth or not. Our ground needs no strengthening on this point; it is beyond all dispute. But the inference surely is this—if the State has already so frequently and so fully recognised the necessity, for the public good, that the members of the above professions should be Registered by law, there can be no shadow of a doubt that Nurses, whose work is quite as deeply entwined in the daily life of the nation, should have their efficiency guaranteed and discoverable in similar manner.

We may safely assume that, whatsoever is for the benefit of the sick, for the alleviation of their sufferings, the advancement of their recoveries, or the saving of their lives, must be intensely important to all human creatures, every one of whom has been, is now, or is liable to be some day, laid upon a bed of illness. It is universally admitted that skilled nursing can fulfil each of these objects.

But let us consider how equally true it is, that ignorance, in the tending of the sick, may produce precisely the converse effects. It may retard their recovery—even cost them their lives; and, at the least, it may aggravate their sufferings in a thousand easily-conceivable ways. We desire that there shall be no shadow of misapprehension upon this point. We would not for a moment deny that many untrained women nurse their patients with all the tenderness and gentleness of their sex: that they carry out, for those committed to their charge, unselfishly and well, *all they know how to do*. But there comes in the fearful fallacy. How can anyone, with the

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