

The Nursing Record

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

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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.

ONCE more we return to the consideration of Mr. Bonham-Carter's pamphlet upon the Registration of Nurses, which we reprinted, in full, in our twenty-third number. In our twenty-fourth issue, we proved that his first argument was untenable; and last week we discussed, so far as our space would permit us, his second point—that a General Register cannot afford, either to Doctors or to the public, the information which employers of Nurses ought to require. We pointed out that this "information," of course, ought to be whether the Nurse was properly trained or not; that the public, and even Medical men, cannot off-hand decide whether any given woman is a skilled Nurse; that a Legal Register could and would furnish that information at a glance, because no woman's name would be placed thereon unless she had given the most

satisfactory evidence, to competent authorities, that she was in every way qualified to tend the sick. And we showed that this was all the information the public required, because everyone who employed a Nurse could judge for himself, without the assistance of any book, whether she was kind, attentive, and patient. Consequently, we remarked that the whole argument, upon which such stress is laid by Mr. Bonham-Carter—that a General Register for Nurses is valueless, because it will not guarantee their "moral qualities"—falls to the ground, and is altogether beside the question.

But there are two or three sentences more, upon this point, to which we have devoted the closest and most critical attention, and yet have completely failed to understand their meaning. Continuing from the final extract we quoted last week, the pamphlet proceeds:—"Then comes the further difficulty as to keeping up the value of the Registration. Nurses are not exceptional in being subject to great deterioration, if not kept up to the mark by pressure from outside; and the character of their work renders them more subject to temptations and vicissitudes, tending to deterioration, than others." We do not altogether agree with Mr. Bonham-Carter here, but rather than seem hypercritical, leave this and pass on.

"In every-day life, those who know what they are about require, before engaging a Nurse, recent evidence, and evidence which must be of a confidential kind, as to moral qualities, and the nature and degree of these qualities. Is it possible that a legal Register can be made capable of obtaining and affording such information? The nature of the evidence required, and the legal character of the Register, appears to preclude any such result." We quite agree with Mr. Bonham-Carter. For it is quite as impossible for a Register to afford such information about a Nurse, as it would be for it to state the colour of her eyes, or the number and quality of her teeth; only we contend that the former is every whit as foreign to the purpose and usefulness of a Register as the latter would be.

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