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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.

SOME weeks ago (in our twenty-eighth number) we published an article upon the Charges for Private Nurses, written by Miss Alice Dannatt, to whom we have been indebted for so many interesting contributions to our columns. We resolved at once to devote as much space as we could spare to the further consideration of the subject thus broached, and we much regret that the variety of urgent matters which have since then demanded our notice, has hitherto prevented us from carrying out this intention.

The basis of Miss Dannatt's argument was mainly summarised thus:—"The middle class, sometimes by their large sums, more constantly by their 'many littles,' are the main support of

our Hospitals, but they are not eligible for admittance as patients, nor can the majority afford the high fee now charged by some Hospitals; therefore they are worse off than either the rich or the poor. The rich can secure all they wish for of scientific knowledge and trained skill; the poor also have all this help in our Hospitals, and often too the poor have district Nurses sent to them." And from this Miss Dannatt argued that these Hospitals, by charging from thirty shillings to two guineas a week for their Private Nurses, practically did nothing to assist the class from which so much of their support was derived, because, especially in cases of prolonged illness, these charges are more than most of this class can afford. The matter is a most important one, and, so far as we are aware, it has not been ventilated before. It behoves us, therefore, to consider it fully, and at the same time judiciously; because while on the one hand it is doubtless of the greatest moment to the class of patients for which Miss Dannatt pleads so well, on the other hand it is a question of no less importance from a pecuniary point of view, not only to Hospitals, but also to Private Nurses as a body.

Let us now, therefore, discuss the question by inquiring, first of all, into its history; next observe the cause of its development into its present condition; and from this review endeavour to glean some knowledge as to its future progress. Then, it appears to us, we shall better be able, not only to realise the effects of any reforms which may be, or are suggested, but the probability also of those reforms coming within the domain of practical politics.

Some months ago (in our seventeenth number), while discussing a cognate subject, we recounted the history of the rise and progress of Private Nursing. We pointed out that, as we now understand the term, it is a thing entirely of modern growth, because skilled Nursing itself is only now in its earliest youth; that it is within the memory of us all, how different a position a Trained Nurse holds to-day, in the private household, from that which

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