

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.

LAST week we commenced to consider the important question raised in the twenty-eighth number of this journal by Miss Dannatt—the charges to be paid by the public for private Nurses supplied by Hospitals. Our esteemed contributor considered that by charging from thirty shillings to two guineas a week for the Nurses they sent out, the Hospitals were not maintaining the *raison d'être* of their Nurses' Homes; had "lost sight of their original intention" to benefit middle-class people in establishing such departments. We showed, however, that inasmuch as Hospitals originally undertook this work chiefly in order to meet the demands made upon their Nursing Staffs to attend private patients of their Medical Officers who needed specially skilled care,

this indictment was not sustainable—in fact, that Hospitals were not so much to blame in the matter as at first sight they might seem to be. But that measure of fairness having been accorded, and the necessary correction having been made, we come to the really crucial and extremely important point thus ventilated. Are the charges for their private Nurses exacted by Hospitals justifiable or not?

Now, at first sight, it would appear that this is a very simple matter to decide. When, however, it is carefully considered, difficulties are found to abound upon every side. To do justice to the subject, therefore, it becomes necessary to discuss it from several standpoints. Miss Dannatt takes up eloquently and well the patients' view of the question. But here even, it must be remembered, she pleads for the patients only of one particular section of the general public—the "middle and lower middle class," to whom the charges in question make the employment of a Hospital Nurse almost, if not quite, prohibitory. The poor, of course, can go into Hospitals or Infirmarys, while to the richer members of society, one or two guineas a week, more or less, are of little or no consequence. Yet this middle-class none can deny deserve far more sympathy in their troubles and trials, in their sufferings and privations from disease, accident or adversity than they usually receive. We fully grant and admit, nay, we emphasize this strongly. But none the less do we find that in this matter there are other interested parties, whose position must be in strict justice fully considered.

The question, then, of how much a Hospital should charge for its private Nurses in the first place is one of the greatest possible importance to the Institution; next to its private Nurses; next to its Staff Nurses; next to other public and private Nursing Institutions and their employées; and lastly to the richer public also. The subject then, it at once appears, is not so simple and uncomplicated, nor are remedies or reforms so easy to suggest, as might be at first supposed. We feel

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