

The Nursing Record

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

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EDITORIAL.

WE desire this week to draw attention to an important matter connected with the Registration of Trained Nurses. In our second number, we gently criticised a report which had then just been issued by the Sectional Committee appointed by the Hospitals' Association to consider this subject. The leading medical journal—*The Lancet*—in its issue of the 21st inst., published an annotation on the same report, which completely and quietly pulverises it. The document, however, is so important in many ways, that we have reprinted it *in extenso* in another column, together with the article from the *Lancet* to which we refer, and one which has appeared in a leading provincial paper upon the same matter. And we would here digress for a moment, to point out that this action on our part furnishes an excellent example, not only of the usefulness of the Press in general, but of the enormous value to any profession, trade, or calling, of an independent paper devoted solely and entirely to its own interests.

This journal—which is the first established, and at present the only one devoted exclusively to nurses and nursing matters—is thus able in one number to bring before its readers a document of the highest importance, and the criticisms upon it from the pages of an expensive medical paper and of a leading provincial contemporary, a report which they

might otherwise never have heard of at all, and most influential medical and lay opinions upon it, which many would otherwise have been unable to peruse.

We shall probably notice this report again, but for the present content ourselves with pointing out one additional fact to be gleaned from its somewhat confused conclusions. It declaims against a general system of registration, and as it has been accepted and approved by the council of that body, it follows that the Hospitals' Association has now definitely renounced its original intention to institute that very system. This savours strongly of the ancient story of the fox's opinion of the grapes he could not himself procure.

Many of our readers will remember that its "fiasco"—as the *Lancet* calls it—in this matter became the starting point of the present movement and of the formation of the British Nurses' Association. But overlooking this little analogy, it makes one thing quite certain. The retirement of the Hospitals' Association from the field of registration leaves the ground quite clear and open for the British Nurses' Association to continue its work on the subject, unhampered, it is to be hoped, in future by opposition from the first-named body. For our part, we may here say we consider it a thousand pities that these two Associations cannot live and prosper in peace and quietness with each other. There is work enough and to spare for both to do in this wide world, without clashing on the one side or interference on the other.

Speaking quietly and judicially, we must state our opinion, that for the present state of affairs the Hospitals' Association is only and alone to blame. It was founded, in its own words, "to consider and discuss matters connected with hospital management." In its whole programme, which is wide enough in all conscience to satisfy the most ambitious philanthropist interested in hospitals, we find no word implying interference with nursing or medical matters. And considering that the Association only contains among its few members about half-a-dozen medical men, there is not a shadow of excuse for its attempts either to legislate for nurses itself, or to hinder a purely professional body like the British

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