

The Nursing Record

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

No. 7.

THURSDAY, MAY 17th, 1888.

VOL. I.

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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.

WE promised in our last number to devote the space at our command to-day to a careful consideration of the question: Has the time come for trained nurses to be registered by law? We now do so mainly because we have good reason to believe that from inability to answer this question in the direct affirmative, even though strict justice altogether prevents them replying to it in the negative, several perfectly honest and most honourable men and women are in doubt how to act at the present juncture. And so it comes to pass that some whose very rectitude and consistency of purpose invests them with peculiar authority are holding aloof and declining to take any part or lot in the great movement now in progress.

We gladly devote our columns, therefore, to a calm and logical survey of the subject, not because we ourselves or many of our readers have the slightest doubt upon the matter, but because for the sake of nurses it is to our minds essential that all who are not helping forward this scheme

from some such doubt as that above expressed, should, as soon as possible, have those doubts dissipated. For if their adhesion and support can be secured, by so much will the progress of registration be advanced, and the great obstacles which honourable opposition can always raise against anything in England be lessened or removed. As regards the purely and palpably selfish objectors to the idea we care but little, for all history and experience teaches that interested and factious opposition sooner or later always receives, as it merits, private discomfiture and public disapproval.

We understand, then, upon good authority that there are a few ladies engaged in responsible positions in the nursing world, and about half their number of gentlemen more or less closely connected with nurse-training schools, who are unanimous in saying that it is not proved to their satisfaction that the time has come for nurses to be registered by law. Now we feel confident that these objectors would not dream of denying that it would be for the public good if every woman was properly trained before she was allowed to offer her services as a private nurse. And if for the public welfare at all, surely the sooner such training is made absolutely essential the better, the safer, and the wiser it would be. From which it inevitably follows that *if* registration could prevent an untrained nurse foisting herself upon the public and the medical profession as "trained," the sooner registration is adopted the better must it be for all concerned. That, we take it, is a logical sequence the validity of which no one will dispute.

It only remains for us, therefore, to prove that registration would have this great preventive effect; and to commence with, it becomes necessary to define most clearly the meaning of a private nurse in this connection. For example, a sick man may be nursed by his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts, and very nice nursing it will probably be; while every one individually of those relations is, for the time being, a private nurse. And no one outside the walls of Colney Hatch, or some similar secluded retreat, will ever be delirious enough to assert that the sick, if they so desire it, may not be nursed by their friends and relations, however little

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