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**Editorial.**

**WOMEN ON HOSPITAL BOARDS.**

THE most interesting paper read at the Brighton Conference last week, from a nurse's point of view was, without doubt, that presented by Miss Louisa Stevenson, a member of the Board of Management of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, on "The Work of Women on Hospital Boards," and which by her courtesy we are able to print in full in another column. We are warm advocates of the principle that women should take their places side by side with men in every public department concerned in the welfare of the nation, and the fact that women have at last realized that duty calls them to take part in the administration of charitable funds on hospital boards, is one that we most heartily welcome. At the same time we may be allowed to remind those of them who aspire to these positions that the administration of hospitals is a very difficult and somewhat serious matter, owing to the variety of interests with which hospital boards have to deal, and of the matters upon which they are called to adjudicate. The interests of the patients, of the medical, the nursing, and

the secretarial and administrative departments must be considered, and the balance evenly held, with regard to the claims of each, in order that these several departments, whose interests are by no means identical, may work harmoniously together, and each receive its rightful share of authority, if the efficient working of the whole institution is to be assured.

The relative position and the aspirations of each of these highly specialized departments need serious study on the part of those who form the central governing body, *i.e.*, the members of the Board of Management. There is some danger lest women, who in the past have shown a lamentable lack of energy in working for representation on hospital boards, should imagine that their sex, as a whole, has been idle in its relation to these institutions.

All over the country earnest women for the last quarter of a century have been working in the nursing and domestic departments of hospitals, and it is owing to their devotion and ability that enormous reforms have been accomplished, and that our hospitals have, through their work, been changed from their positions as institutions which were a national disgrace, to their present condition of efficiency. The

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