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Editorial.

THE FIRST NURSING BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

IT is an old and well-accepted saying that "what the North of England thinks to-day the rest of England will think to-morrow;" and we imagine that the important decisions concerning the certification of workhouse nurses in Yorkshire will before long be accepted, not only in this country but in the colonies, as an excellent illustration of that superlative common sense which is characteristic of north-country opinion, and which led to the enunciation of the political dictum just quoted.

As most trained nurses know, there is at present no general standard of training and certification adopted for the nursing profession. Some hold that nursing is still so infantile in its growth that it would be impossible to define a general and universal curriculum of education. Others, however, have argued strongly that until nursing education is systematized, and not only its period but its various details are accurately defined, there can be no hope for any general improvement of the nursing profession; for the simple reason that education must form the foundation on which the whole

structure of professional organization is built.

The analogy of the medical profession in this particular is most instructive. Until 1856, when the first Medical Act was passed, the medical profession in this country was merely composed of a large number of differently qualified and quite unorganized medical men. There were some fifteen or sixteen different bodies empowered by Parliament or Royal Charter to grant qualifications to practice. But every one of these bodies did what seemed best in its own eyes, and demanded just as much—or as little—knowledge from candidates for its diplomas as it pleased. The consequence was, that no two qualifications represented the same amount of medical knowledge or experience. And, indeed, the standard varied from year to year in every place so remarkably, that no one could say that this qualification was better, or worse, than that. Students who failed hopelessly to convince the examiners at one college that they knew anything at all of their profession, passed their examination the following week, and received their diploma, at another college. Some institutions, therefore, flourished exceedingly, and reaped large incomes, by being considered the refuge of the destitute; with the inevitable

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)