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Editorial.

SPURIOUS NURSING.

WE publish in another column a letter from a correspondent drawing attention to a very real danger in connection with cottage nursing.

We have always strongly held that district nurses should be women of the highest type, educated and refined, not only because of the elevating influence which such women exercise in the homes of the poor, but because their personality removes them from the very real dangers which surround those of a lower type. Those who have worked in rural districts, as district visitors, with their eyes open, know that though, happily, there are many most estimable members of society amongst the working classes, yet in many instances the moral sense is almost completely lacking, and there is scant respect on the part of many of the men for the women of their own class.

We have no hesitation in saying that the risks to which young girls of the labouring classes are subjected when they are sent by rural nursing associations to live in the houses

of their kind are very grave, and it is imperative that this aspect of the case should be realised. It is time that well meaning ladies, with no knowledge of nursing and of the obligations and risks involved in its practice, ceased both to lay down standards of nursing education, which are notoriously insufficient, and to assume the direction of trained nurses. We have always held that the work of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute, which has done so much to bring skilled nursing to the artizan classes in urban districts, could be organized to a much greater extent than heretofore for the care of the rural poor. We see no use in supplying to the working classes women who are nurses in name only, who have not even the smattering of knowledge acquired in a six months' training. We see that the gravest dangers beset the women thus utilised from a moral standpoint, increased by the fact that the salaries paid to them are so inadequate, that the temptation to add to them by indefensible means is a very real one to a woman whose integrity is not of a high order. Titled dames who lightly embark on rural nursing projects will do well to lay these facts to heart; there is ample ground for meditation upon them.

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