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# THE Nursing Record.

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

No. 132.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9th, 1890.

VOL. 5.

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## EDITORIAL.

THE charges against the London Hospital are now before the public, through the medium of the Blue Book of the evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Lords. There has, we learn, been a very large demand for this volume, and upon all hands the greatest astonishment is expressed that, with such serious allegations against their management, the Committee should have endeavoured to burke discussion and whitewash themselves and their officials. A growing feeling of irritation is also being shown that some journals should have attempted to hush up scandals which it is so vitally important to the welfare of the sick should be widely known and speedily stamped out. Probably this is the explanation of an article in which appears from the pen of the Matron, in this month's issue of the *New Review*, entitled, "Trained Nursing at the London Hospital." Its ostensible object is to show that improvements have been made in the Nursing department during the past ten years; but of course it is

intended, and will be generally taken, to be the Matron's defence against the "recent attack" upon her management. We take this, the earliest opportunity, therefore, of bringing its arguments to the notice of our readers.

It commences by stating that in 1880 "the total number of the Nursing Staff was one hundred and twenty-eight, and there were no Ward-maids. Scrubbers were employed to clean the grates and to scrub the floors." Everything else devolved upon the Nurses, and these, "out of their scanty wages," sometimes paid the scrubbers to do part of their work. In reference to this and to all the remaining assertions of improvement, the only possible primary comment is that, seeing how matters have advanced in every other Hospital in the country within the last ten years, it would have been a marvellous instance of official ineptitude if no improvements at all had taken place at the largest institution in the kingdom.

To take the example which the Matron has elected to produce as the first improvement under her *régime*, a brief review of the unvarnished facts of the case will be not only interesting, but instructive. In 1880 the Hospital was supplied with scrubbers or lobby women, who certainly belonged to the class of charwoman, but who for that very reason knew their work and performed it well. And the Matron has curiously omitted to remind her readers that the Nurses at that day were generally women accustomed by their home lives to similar duties, and to whom, therefore, scrubbing tables and lockers was neither very hard nor unusual labour. In this fact indeed lies the key to the whole necessity of improvement in this direction. Because when gentlewomen, unused to menial work of any kind, undertook Nursing, it became essential not only for their sakes, but also for the mere secur-

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