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# Nursing <sup>THE</sup> Record.

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

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## EDITORIAL.

### COMMISSIONS.

A LARGE country Hospital is advertising, like so many others at present, for a Matron. Unlike the Cardiff Infirmary—upon the advertisement of which we commented last week—this Institution leaves no room for doubt as to its intention to conform to modern requirements in the matter of the nursing ability of its Matron. Candidates, it is stated, "must produce evidence of having received a thorough Hospital training, of their competency to undertake the control and instruction of the Nursing Staff." This is clearly as it should be, and we, therefore, feel the less hesitation in pointing out to its Board-of Management a very grave mistake

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which is, apparently, in contemplation. It is announced that the salary is "£80 for the first year; £90 for the second, and £100 per year afterwards, and a commission on Probationers' fees." The italics are ours, because these words represent a principle which we believe to be not only indefensible in theory, but actually dangerous in practice. We have never seen this announcement made before, and we are only aware of two Hospitals where the system has been carried out, and with results which completely confirm our belief in its mischievous effects. It will be well, therefore, to consider this question carefully.

To pay a Matron a commission on anything, of course, means simply this—that the Charity proposes to pay her a smaller direct salary than her services are worth, and to raise the amount to the usual remuneration by means of an indirect subsidy. To begin with, we hold that this introduces a principle into Hospital management which is fatal to all efficiency. From very considerable experience we say, unhesitatingly, that if the system of commissions be once allowed in a charitable Institution, it will inevitably spread into every department; that it cannot be permitted in one, and be, with any show of justice, refused in another. And where officials are allowed to take commissions, it is notorious that servants take bribes; then financial control becomes impossible, and, consequently, all efficiency is destroyed. History has taught this lesson again and again, in times of war as well as in times of peace. But, descending to particulars, we would contend that to give a Matron a commission on the fees of the Probationers is as

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