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THE

No. 234.

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Editorial.

HOSPITAL CERTIFICATES I.

HE march of Nursing progress has now brought—as, some three years ago, we prophesied would, sooner or later, be the case—the question of Hospital Certificates into public prominence. The greatest good must result from reforms and improvements in this direction, because it is beyond dispute that the present system is fraught with the most serious evils, both for the public and for the profession, while it is decidedly detrimental to Hospitals themselves.

A Hospital Certificate is to a Nurse what a degree is to a clergyman, or a diploma to a medical man—a testimonial as to education and knowledge. This is a fact which must be frequently overlooked, because, otherwise, it would be impossible to defend the lax and careless manner in which these documents are sometimes granted to unworthy persons. To the average lay mind, however, the possession by a Nurse of a gorgeously engrossed piece of parchment is proof positive that the possessor has proved herself to be, in every way, efficient and trustworthy as an attendant upon the sick. There can be no doubt that this interpretation is exactly that which such an official-looking document ought to deserve; but how widely diverse is the reality from the ideal it need but a very brief consideration to show. In the first place, it must be remembered that Hospital Certificates are not, in any way, of public authority. No University can confer a degree, no Corporation can

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