

nurse acts as a health missionary in the homes of the poor. The professional status of district nurses should, therefore, be such as to encourage women of the highest type, and of sound education to undertake this particular branch of work.

RURAL NURSING ASSOCIATIONS.

There are also County Nursing Associations having the same object. These, in many instances, are founded on the model of what is known as the Holt-Ockley system, under which women of the artisan class are given a few months' instruction in nursing and midwifery, and then employed to nurse the poor in their own homes. The most rudimentary of these rural workers may be called upon to nurse one case at a time, live in the home of the patient, and undertake, in addition to the nursing, the household duties of a labouring woman.

Thus we have employed in district nursing all classes of women from the highly educated gentlewoman to the illiterate cottage help. I consider that a Nurse supplied by the rich to care for the poor should be of the most efficient and educated type. It is no charity to provide for the poor a quality of nursing which is inferior to that utilised by those who can afford to pay. Grades of helpers who take part in the care of the rural poor, who have merely a smattering of practical nursing knowledge, have no right to the title of "trained nurse," and should not be so nominated. As cottage helps to clean and cook and wash no doubt the work of these women is very useful when under the direction of a trained nurse; but they have no more right to the title of trained nurse which is bestowed upon them than have wardmaids, and it appears to me a mistake that Rural Training Societies, recognizing these cottage helps as "nurses," should be affiliated to the Queen's Jubilee Institute.

PRIVATE NURSING.

The branch of Nursing which suffers most from the lack of professional organization and control is that of Private Nursing, for here, truly, Chaos, written with a big C, alone describes its condition in the United Kingdom, and it is here in the open market, where all sorts and conditions of nurses meet and compete without any standard of either education or efficiency.

Private Nurses may be considered under five aspects:—

(1) Those working in Co-operations. A well conducted Co-operation has a trained and experienced Superintendent at its head and the nurses who are members take part in its management. The nurses receive their own fees, less a certain

percentage, usually $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (is. 7d. in £1 is.), which is deducted for secretarial and office expenses. The Nurse boards and lodges herself when not at a case. This is a just and self respecting arrangement of private nursing work. The Nurses Co-operation of London and the Registered Nurses' Society exemplify this class of Society.

(2) Well regulated private nursing institutions attached to hospitals, to which nurses trained in the School attach themselves. They receive a regular and increasing salary, and in some cases a bonus on their earnings. The Nurses are housed and boarded when off duty, the institution, not the nurse, taking the surplus profits, or risk of deficit.

(3) Well regulated nursing institutions other than those attached to hospitals. There are a certain number of private nursing institutions, such as St. John's House, organized entirely in the interests of the nurses, but the majority of these private nursing institutions are conducted on commercial principles, and like the institutions attached to hospitals make a profit from the work of the nurses.

(4) Nurse Farms.—Untrained lay persons have not been slow to realize that there is money to be sweated out of nursing labour, and we have flourishing in our midst "Nurse Farms," organized by unprofessional or semi-professional middlemen. Nurses of good standing do not connect themselves with these institutions, but the middleman is not particular as to the type of person engaged. He consequently finds a use for those who will accept a lower salary than the well certificated nurse, for the women with a few months' training, for those who have, for various reasons, been rejected by the training schools, and for those who, after a few months' training in a special (such as a maternity) hospital, are quite prepared to nurse cases of general diseases. The middleman charges fees commanded by thoroughly qualified nurses, and pays his motley crew as low a salary as they can be induced to accept, and finds this fraudulent business highly profitable.

UNDESIRABLE UNITS.

(5) A few nurses of good standing work entirely on their own account for medical men, who keep them supplied with work, but the private nursing question cannot be disposed of, without reference to the undesirable units, attached to no institution, and subject to no control, who swell the ranks of private nurses, and bring discredit upon them. In most instances the isolated worker is one whom no institution of repute would admit to its staff.

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