

who would tend to enter into competition with the medical men in the poorer districts, and who would be inclined, in view of their better and no doubt more expensive training, to charge fees approaching those charged by duly-qualified medical practitioners. The *Lancet* adds: "By all means let us strive to improve the status of the midwife, but let us always remember that the most highly-trained midwife must be immeasurably inferior in her amount of knowledge to the qualified medical man." This is entirely our own view of the case. The limitations of a midwife do not admit of her acting as an independent practitioner. She works knowing that in case of need the medical profession is behind her, and therefore she must always realise that she works in subordination to it. It is needful also to add that the "educated gentlewoman" midwife, who it is proposed shall receive 18 months' training in general nursing and six months' instructions in midwifery, must not pose as a thoroughly trained nurse.

At the recent annual meeting of the Nurses' Home and Training-School, 2, Granville Road, Newcastle, the thirty-first annual report of the Committee which was presented was of a very satisfactory character. "The nursing institution," it stated, "is keeping up its long and well-earned reputation, the fact being evidenced by the extent to which its nurses are in request. To-day there is not a large town which has not one or more recognised centres from which nurses can be had, yet for all this the staff of the institution is kept almost constantly employed. There are times of special pressure when they cannot meet the calls made upon them, though for a time during the past winter the calls were fewer than usual, owing to the general healthiness of the season. The Committee are thankful that there has been no case of serious illness among the nurses during the past year. During the year 1902 the cases nursed were as follows:—Medical and massage, 390; surgical, 92; maternity, 73; mental, 32; infectious, 109; total, 696. In addition to these, sixteen hospitals and districts have been supplied temporarily with nurses. The Committee feel that the prosperity and good management of the home is mainly due to the conscientious and untiring industry of the Matron (Miss Emery) and the Assistant Matron, her Sister."

"*Qui s'excuse, s'accuse*" receives illustration in the lengthy letter which Dr. David Newman has found it necessary to address to the *Lancet* in justification of his line of action in relation to the Glasgow and West of Scotland Co-operation of Trained Nurses. The letter, we are bound to say, appears to us disingenuous, an opinion which, we think, must be shared by all who have followed the controversy resulting in the bondage of the members of a self-supporting association. That nurses are

always to be found who will support those who effect their subordination we are well aware; so long as their own fees are secured to them they will exhibit absolute irresponsibility as to their public obligations; but this cannot condone the conduct of the medical chairman of a Nurses' Co-operation in thrusting through a constitution which leaves them a Co-operation only, in name and converts them into a society soliciting public alms.

Mrs. Campbell, of Tullichewan, has issued a circular in which she states that the deficit in the annual expenditure of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses (Scottish Branch) has averaged about £600 in the last five years, and for the year ending October 15th, 1902, the deficit amounted (from decrease of donations) to £830 5s. 11d. The small amount of capital available to pay the deficit is nearly exhausted, and she asks Glasgow to do its share in the present national effort for the Scottish training centre of this charity. Contributions may be sent to Mr. Thomas Balmain, hon. treasurer for Glasgow, British Linen Company's Bank. Of the £30,000 aimed at, £9,095 5s. 5d. has already been received. The sum received from Glasgow to date is £154 10s.

The inquiry at Granard Workhouse by the Local Government Medical Inspector is throwing a lurid light into nursing by "religious" and other matters in Ireland. One witness, John Haanigan by name, said there were seven other old inmates in the same ward with him, and they had only two basins for washing, but one of those was solely used by a cripple for bathing his sores. Before Dr. Kenny made his report they had not got baths for two years. There was no one to look after them till the doctor reported. A woman came to clean up the ward every morning now, but she used only to come once a week with clean sheets and linen.

We sympathise with the nurses of Belfast, who feel that the conduct of Miss Glendenning, in relation to her action against Professor Byers, reported last week, has brought discredit upon their profession as a whole. Without doubt unworthy conduct on the part of anyone who assumes the title of trained nurse is injurious to all nurses. But, having read the leading article in the *Belfast News Letter* referring to this case, we are bound to say that we consider it a fair criticism, and we do not think that Belfast nurses have occasion to "feel much aggrieved" by its tone, as they state in a letter addressed to that journal, signed by three of their number. No doubt the nurses feel justly sore at the episode. When the wave of indignation it has aroused in them has subsided they will be able to judge Press criticisms upon it more dispassionately, and therefore more justly.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)