

The Committee of the Hop Picking Mission Committee, whose objects are the extension of women's work amongst immigrant hop pickers, and the organisation of temporary hospitals, nursing, clubs, coffee stalls, and general mission and social work in connection with this section of the community, give, in their report, an interesting account of the work effected, and as they are appealing for the help of nurses, a short notice of its contents may be appreciated by our readers. The committee of the Kent Nursing Institution last year gave effective help to the work by providing a nurse for the pickers of East Malling; unfortunately, in the course of her duties the nurse contracted blood poisoning, but subsequently recovered. The work of the nurses is very much appreciated, and that it is needed will be seen from the statement of the vicar of Farleigh West, who says that the nurse in that parish was kept at work from morning till night, there being several severe cases needing constant visiting, and two deaths. From another parish the report comes that there were nine maternity cases, and but for the nurse's skill and ministrations, life must have been lost. At Peckham East, where four nurses were at work, between 400 and 500 cases were attended, some of whom had to be removed to the infirmary. There were four deaths. It is thus evident that there is a great opening for the services of nurses, and those who are not now engaged in regular work might usefully give a few weeks each year to the poorest of the population, who at this season flock to the hop fields.

The St. Helen's Hospital is managed on somewhat unusual lines, inasmuch as it has no medical staff, but every patient who enters engages his own medical man and pays a shilling a day to the institution, unless he is an annual subscriber of a penny a week. Mr. J. Fenwick Allen told the story of its foundation to the boys and girls of St. Helen's in a series of letters in a local paper, and these letters have now been published in a small booklet. The pioneers of the institution were Mr. Allen himself, Mr. A. J. Kurtz, and Mrs. Martha Walker.

The latter, to whom great credit is given by Mr. Allen, must, says the *British Medical Journal*, have been a curious and lovable character. She was originally a governess, but had married young, and had lived much in the Colonies, where, being early widowed, she had done a great deal of nursing. She ran the little makeshift hospital single-handed for a long time, baths, clean linen, fresh air being her panaceas for everything. She was recommended to Mr. Allen by a nursing home, the superintendent of which said of her: "She is a skilful nurse of great experience, but we cannot do with her here; she has two manias—excessive cleanliness and excessive benevolence." This character proved true in all respects, and it was her

mania for cleanliness which eventually led to her leaving the institution. She insisted on putting fresh sheets on every bed every day, and even "Sister Dora," who was then at the zenith of her reputation, failed to convince her that she was thus causing unnecessary expense. The work began in a tumbledown building, and with one patient, who, like all his successors, was a paying patient. The principle of payment thus begun has been steadily maintained ever since. Mrs. Walker rapidly became very popular with the people, and the idea that everyone, sick or well, should pay 1d. a week towards the upkeep of the hospital was originally started as a mark of affectionate gratitude to her. Of late years, of course, the institution has received large donations from other sources, but the voluntary payments of 1d. still form a most important part of the income of the hospital. The people in the neighbourhood, indeed, take their responsibilities so seriously that in May nearly all the works resolved to pay an extra 1d. a week a head in order to wipe out the £3,000 debt left on the new building. The support which this hospital, of over 100 beds, receives in this way is the more remarkable because there is now an entirely free hospital in the same neighbourhood.

The Cottage Hospital, Douglas, which was built and endowed in 1888 by the Countess of Home, is an institution doing excellent work; it is situated amongst the beautiful Lanarkshire Hills, the surrounding scenery comprising a vast panorama of undulating woodland. It is in the midst of a mining district, so that its fourteen beds are well utilised. The Matron is Miss Day, who was trained at St. Pancras Infirmary, and afterwards worked as a Queen's Nurse in Edinburgh. She is still on the roll of Queen's Nurses, as she supervises the district work in the neighbourhood of the Douglas Hospital.

By the liberality of the Earl and Countess of Home, a detached pavilion for the accommodation of consumptive patients has now been added, which will accommodate four patients, each having a separate room. There is a very commodious verandah facing south, the ends being enclosed with glass to afford protection from the east winds. The interior is very prettily decorated in pale green and white, the floors being covered with dark linoleum.

As this new pavilion necessitates the employment of an additional nurse on the hospital staff, with the object of providing for her salary by means of an invested fund, a bazaar was recently held in the grounds of Douglas Castle, the desire of the promoters being to raise a fund, of which the interest on its investment would be sufficient for the salary of the nurse in future. The bazaar was opened by Lord Dunglass, the future Earl of Home, and realised nearly £600, the hospital staff con-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)