

OUR Editorial, of a fortnight ago, "The Nurse Pays," has aroused attention in many quarters. We desire to make it plain that nothing is further from our desire than to injure the feelings of persons working, doubtless, with most excellent intentions on the Committees of District Nurses and Private Nursing Homes, but, as we possess the right, so we intend to use it, of speaking quite plainly concerning the many abuses which flourish in our midst. We own, quite frankly, that Nurse Farms, whether conducted as commercial speculations, or, worse still, under the cloak of charity, are our special detestation. The middleman, or, to speak more correctly, the *middlewoman*—for it is usually a woman who conducts and benefits by this species of sweating—is a disgrace to the profession of Nursing. Within the last decade, Nurse "Farms" have sprung up all over the west end of London like loathsome fungi, bringing disgrace and contempt upon trained Nurses as a class, but supported, one regrets to own, not only by the uninitiated public, but by the patronage of some who should know better. The abuse has flourished in every form and shape, from a few of the great Hospitals of the Metropolis, which send out their pupils as "thoroughly trained Nurses" to compete with experienced certificated women, to Institutions of Mr. This or M's. That, untrained persons, male or female, who engage inferior and inexperienced Nurses, paying them a minimum wage, and demanding from the ignorant public a maximum fee, and the Home Hospital Nurse Farm, where the head may be an excellent housewife, but who, probably, has never spent a day in a Hospital in her life. The latter lady is usually too fine to keep a boarding-house, for which her experience fits her, so she poses as a Nurse, taking into her disorganised establishment sick persons, and claiming high fees for the benefits of skilled nursing, the details of which she is totally ignorant, and which she cannot, therefore, bestow.

In connection with this subject, the following kindly and truthful letter from the *Glasgow Herald* is interesting:—

"THE GLASGOW SICK POOR AND PRIVATE NURSING ASSOCIATION.

Blythswood, November 30, 1893.

Sir,—Will you kindly allow me to call the attention of your readers to the claims of the Glasgow Sick Poor and Private Nursing Association on the benevolence of the public? The work of this Association is conducted on two distinct lines—(1) Visiting the sick poor daily in their own homes by the district Nurses; (2) providing trained private Nurses for those who can afford to pay for them. The former branch is conducted gratuitously, and the surplus derived from the latter is devoted entirely to the carrying on of this great work. The income thus afforded is not sufficient to overtake in any degree the overwhelming amount of sickness and distress in this great city, and we therefore trust to the public for increased support. Additional district Nurses are greatly needed in some of the more crowded parts of Glasgow—such

as Cowcaddens and Bridgeton—and additional funds would enable us to provide these at once. The applications for free attendance are carefully investigated by the Glasgow Charity Organisation Society, and a staff of 15 medical men, organised by Dr. Cowan Lees (one for each district) give their services in the more serious cases as reported by the Nurses. We have now fifteen trained Nurses (seven of whom are Queen Victoria Jubilee Nurses) and nine assistant Nurses, and the work of these brave, devoted women is a severe tax on their strength and energy; 61,363 visits have been paid during the past year, and they have spent 36,056 hours on duty. When in addition to the amount of work accomplished we remember its harrassing and distressing nature, we can to some extent realise the severity of the strain. It should be borne in mind that besides their professional services, the Nurses are called upon to perform much hard menial work, and that they bring comparative comfort and brightness to many dark and cheerless homes. All the Nurses of our Association, whether district or private, are required to have a minimum hospital training of two years. I appeal with confidence to your readers for help and sympathy in this good work. It is conducted on entirely undenominational lines, and help is given according to necessity only. Further particulars may be obtained from the Lady Superintendent, Miss Wood, at the Home, 218, Bath Street, Glasgow; and subscriptions and donations will be received by Mr. D. S. Carson, C.A., 209, West George Street, Glasgow.—I am, &c.,

AUGUSTA BLYTHSWOOD.

N.B.—This Association is the only one in Glasgow that is devoted to nursing the sick poor."

LADY BLYTHSWOOD makes no secret of the fact that the surplus earnings of the Private Nurses are used to provide District Nurses for the poor of Glasgow, and we feel sure that the real meaning of that fact has only to be brought to her notice, and to that of the great commercial millionaires of that city, to ensure that this injustice shall be removed. Think what it means, that these women wage earners, the arduous character of whose "duties" prevents a long continuance of labour—who find it almost impossible to earn and save even a scanty provision for old age—are actually paying out of their meagre earnings for the nursing of the indigent poor of one of the most wealthy cities in the Empire. Lady BLYTHSWOOD pays a just compliment to the work of the "brave and devoted women" who nurse in the districts; but no word is spoken of the generosity of those private Nurses who labour often day and night amidst the richer classes, and whose earnings are made to contribute so largely towards the support of "this good work."

WE have only one word to add. Quite lately, we stood on a high hill looking down over the great and rich city on the Clyde; little could be defined through the dense and smoke-laden atmosphere—murderous smoke belching forth unrestrainedly from scores and hundreds of manufacturing chimneys; smoke by which the capitalist, who dwells in the west, gathers in great wealth and freedom; smoke by which those who dwell in its midst gather a

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