

He asserts that Nurse ALICE GOMEZ was sent to Worthing as a private Nurse for a case of typhoid fever in 1893, having joined the Hospital as a Probationer in July, 1891, and when, therefore, she had not fulfilled the term of training. It is a matter for much regret that the Committee of the Brompton Consumption Hospital should send out to private cases Nurses of such limited experience. The conclusion of the Lords' Select Committee on Hospitals was that private Nurses, sent out by public institutions, ought to have previously received, at least, three years' careful training, and the Royal British Nurses' Association, in arriving at an identical judgment, expresses the views of the Medical and Nursing professions upon the matter. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the Committee of the Brompton Hospital will refuse, in future, to send out any of its Nursing staff, who has had less than this amount of professional experience.

It is also alleged that Nurse GOMEZ was paid at the rate of £10 for the first year and of £18 for the second year of her Hospital work, and that large profits were, therefore, made by utilizing her services outside the Institution. This the officials practically denied, stating that "the largest sum ever received for her services was 15s. per week." In reply to this, a letter from the late Matron of the Worthing Infirmary has been published, which contains the following most significant words:—"The Brompton Hospital received two guineas per week for Nurse ALICE'S services while at the Worthing Infirmary. I was not told that she was a Probationer still, so, of course, supposed her to have finished her training."

In other words, the Brompton Hospital authorities are now accused of a very grave offence, and the public are deeply interested in the settlement of the matter, seeing that it is their interests which are involved. The Worthing Infirmary, it appears, applied to the Brompton Hospital for a trained Nurse, and they paid the customary charge for such services, believing that they had been treated with ordinary justice, and had been supplied with the skilled worker for whom they sought, and for whom they paid. Instead of this, it would appear, that they received a Probationer, who had never been trained in a general Hospital at all, whose acquaintance with the nursing of typhoid fever was of a very limited character, and who was paid by her employers about 7s. a week, while the Worthing Infirmary were charged for her services at the rate of two guineas a week—the Brompton Hospital authorities, therefore, making a clear profit of 500 per cent. by the transaction.

These facts are made more serious, so far as the public are concerned, by the statement of the Secretary of the Hospital to a representative of the *Star* that "it was for the purpose of learning the nursing of typhoid cases that she (the Nurse) went

to Worthing." In fact, therefore, when applied to for a trained Nurse, the Brompton Hospital sent a pupil in order that she might gain experience in a branch of work unknown to her, and yet insisted upon the Worthing Infirmary paying for her services as though she were a thoroughly skilled and efficient Nurse.

We are well aware that the Institution in question by no means stands alone in this method of procedure, but we earnestly hope that when the attention of its Committee is drawn to the actual deception of the sick, and excessive sweating of its Nurses involved in this system of sending out to a defenceless public, who rely upon the good faith of the Institution to which they apply in their hour of need, semi-trained pupils as though they are thoroughly-trained Nurses, an immediate order will be given to the officials that in future the recommendations of the House of Lords' Committee must be carried out, and that only those who have been trained for three years may be sent out as private Nurses—these women being paid more liberal salaries, and in addition a sliding scale percentage upon their earnings. No one would more deeply regret it than ourselves, but the deception, to which we have alluded, is so utterly unjustifiable, considering the issues of life and death, which are generally at stake, that sooner or later very serious legal proceedings will probably be instituted by someone similarly treated; and incalculable damage would then be caused in the loss of public confidence in the implicated Hospital.

A NEW DANGER.

The manner in which co-operations, amongst private Nurses, are springing up on every side, is an excellent illustration of the truth that it is possible to have too much of even a good thing. Because, unfortunately, the low standard of training and experience, required for membership by some of the new bodies, embodies a new danger to the public, and a new disadvantage to well-trained women. We are informed that in one of these Institutions one year's training is expected, but is not vigorously insisted upon; and, if rumour be correct, a lady, whose lodging-house has not been an unqualified success, now offers to open it for a Nursing Co-operation—anyone being eligible, apparently, for admission to this "desirable residence." The public are slowly becoming awake to the gravity of the dangers to which they are exposed, but, during the process of enlightenment, irreparable injury is being wrought to the sick and to the good name of the Nursing profession by the many ignorant and unprincipled persons who now term themselves, and obtain work as, trained Nurses. With the principle of Co-operation we are in most cordial agreement, but some means must speedily be found to make the public understand that all are not Nurses who call themselves so, even if they hail from Co-operative homes, or much discredit will soon be reflected upon that most desirable method of combination.

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