

standing on a different footing altogether with regard to the employment of their nurses. The first and essential principle of such societies is that they shall be formed for the benefit of nurses; that the latter shall, by means of a central office, be enabled to obtain employment and receive their own earnings, less a certain small percentage deducted in order to pay the working expenses of the scheme. The percentage, which has been found in practice to be necessary, is seven and a half—that is to say, as nearly as possible, one shilling and sevenpence on each guinea earned; and this has been found sufficient to defray the office rent, working expenses, and salaries.

The next principle is a logical outcome of the first—that the society being formed and conducted for the sole benefit of the members, the officials should be paid fixed and adequate salaries, and should not, of course, be permitted to make any direct or indirect profits out of the business. This, indeed, is so obvious that it is quite impossible to imagine that it can be seriously questioned.

The third principle, which will equally commend itself to all fair-minded people, is that members of such a co-operative Society should certainly possess a fair share in the management of their own affairs. In this matter, we are well aware that there are special difficulties; that nurses are not well versed in matters of business; that their work occupies most of their time and attention; and that they might often be prevented from attending Committee meetings. Still, we regard the principle as beyond dispute, because if it were denied that the members had an inherent right to be represented by certain of their number on the managing body of their co-operation, it might be logically argued that they could be also kept in ignorance as to its financial affairs and its general work—which would be eminently absurd. It is, of course, undeniable that the whole affairs of any co-operative Society should be made known to all its members; they should, for example, be informed of the exact work accomplished by their Society each year, and of its precise financial condition. Such information is usually published in the shape of an annual report, together with the accounts of the previous year, properly audited by chartered accountants.

The co-operations hitherto started have been chiefly commenced by professional people, who at first were naturally self-

appointed; but it is probable that, as time goes on, their management will always be deputed to small committees of medical men and nurses, annually elected by the members of the various Societies. Hitherto, such Committees have been, and probably always will be, purely honorary bodies, receiving no payment for their valuable oversight over the affairs of the Society. The Secretaries and other officials are paid fixed salaries, the amounts of which are determined from time to time by the different Committees.

The principles of management we have explained will, we presume, be accepted as unquestionable from every point of view. And, in our judgment, no co-operation of nurses can claim to be honourably managed, nor even to fulfil the objects of its existence, unless it fulfils such conditions—unless it is worked for the sole benefit and profit of the nurse-members—the latter being afforded full information concerning its affairs, and always given a fair share in its management.

Annotations.

GRUMBLING.

DO nurses consider the right to grumble one of the privileges and prerogatives of their profession? We are somewhat inclined to think so. If an unprejudiced outsider were to play eavesdropper in a nurses' sitting room he would surely arrive at the conclusion that the nurses of that institution were the most ill-used beings possible, and that prompt representation of their woes to the Committee was an urgent necessity. The eavesdropper aforementioned will do well to pause, however, before he rushes into a crusade of this sort, for he will find upon further investigation that most of the grievances descanted upon with such vigour are more imaginary than real, and that the nurses themselves would be the first to resent any interference in their interest. It is only their little way, he will find after a while, and is not to be taken seriously. It seems, somehow, to be part of the unwritten code of the nursing profession that it is the correct thing to grumble at everything and everybody, and the fact that a probationer indulges in a good all round grumble is often held to be a distinct mark of professional progress. The probationer who holds that the matron has her best interests at heart, that her ward sister takes pains to

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