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Editorial.

THE NURSE PAYS.

WHEN will the philanthropic public learn that true philanthropy consists in paying for their charitable projects, and not, as unfortunately is often the case, where nursing the sick poor is concerned, in utilizing a considerable part of the earnings of hard working nurses in order to finance their benevolent schemes. Nursing institutions not unfrequently support a district nursing branch partially at least, out of the earnings of their private nursing staffs, and hospitals follow this example by farming out nurses at a profitable price—paying the nurses less than half they earn—and appropriating the rest in support of the charity. Nurses are not as a rule good women of business, and although they chafe, and grumble, at their money being used in this way, they take no effective steps to cure the evil. The remedy which lies to their hand is that they should organise themselves into co-operative societies, paying a small percentage, for the maintenance of an office and officers, and receiving otherwise the whole of their earnings. We do not know of

any other section of working women who would consent to the sequestration and manipulation of their earnings in the way in which trained nurses have submitted for the last fifty years.

We drew attention last week to one instance of the misuse of nurses' earnings for the prosecution of charitable projects, and this week we again publish, in another column, two further examples of the same thing. We desire to draw the attention of Committees which sanction such an expenditure of nurses' earnings to the injustice of the practice, believing that in many instances it arises from want of thought rather than want of heart. The years in which nurses can make money are shorter than those of most other working women, and unless they receive all they earn it is impossible for them to provide for illness and old age. We cannot too earnestly appeal to all nursing institutions to place the financial arrangements of their private nursing staffs on an equitable basis. In the case of hospitals which maintain a private nursing staff the accounts of this staff should be kept entirely distinct from those of the institution, and any balance at the end of the year should be divided between its members.

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