

Annotations.

THE NURSES' CO-OPERATION.

An article which appeared under this heading in a contemporary last week has aroused considerable interest, and, amongst those behind the scenes, considerable amusement. The article in question states that The Nurses' Co-operation is, from a business point of view, in a somewhat unsatisfactory condition. The Co-operation last year obtained excellent premises as a nurses' club, by means of a gift from the late Lady Howard de Walden, a loan of £1,500 from the same source, and some £8,000 which represented the profits made by the Co-operation during the last eight years. With characteristic inaccuracy and ignorance the article in question commenced by speaking of "the twentieth annual report," of the Co-operation, whereas that organisation has only been in existence for ten years. The article is deliberately and delusively alarmist in order to urge the nurses to "strengthen" the committee of management and place upon it "men of business, of position, and experience." In other words—for we know these little tactics well—we gather that Sir Henry Burdett desires to have his finger in this pie; and we can only say that the nurses would be most foolish to let him meddle with and muddle their affairs. The figures that are given in the article are as ridiculous as the fears that are expressed are visionary. The Co-operation is making a profit of at least £1,500 a year after paying its office and working expenses. The present Committee have proved their abilities by their very successful management of its affairs; and the Co-operation could afford to lose £500 a year upon its Club, and still have an ample margin of profit, not only to provide a sinking fund for the leasehold premises, but also to pay off their loan in seven years, instead of in the twenty one years for which it was granted. Sir Henry Burdett had a club once on a time at his own offices—the Victoria Commemoration Club he called it!—and a most pitiable fiasco it was. The Committee of the Co-operation can hardly wish their Club to have so melancholy a career and ending. And the nurses would do well to remember that Sir Henry Burdett already owes them much. Certainly his title and no small part of his income is due to the manner in which he has utilised the nursing profession.

There are not a few who consider that, for

the small services he has rendered, he has already been very amply repaid. So our advice to the members of the Nurses' Co-operation would be that they should continue to trust those who have made their organisation so successful, and that they should decline to be frightened into putting their affairs into other hands.

THE BOURNVILLE VILLAGE TRUST.

The firm of Cadbury has long been known for the high principles upon which its business arrangements are conducted, and as a natural sequence for the excellence of its goods. These large employers of labour are also remarkable for their belief, by no means a common one, that they have a responsibility as to the conditions in which their employes live, and have given much consideration to the best solution of the housing problem. Mr. George Cadbury has now put into a practical form the principles which he holds, and, with a rare generosity, has made over to a Trust 330 acres of his estate at Bourneville, near Birmingham, for the purpose of founding a Home Colony for his workpeople. The cottages built under the control of the Trust are either sold at cost price or let to weekly tenants.

The value of this gift is not alone its monetary one, though that amounts to £170,000—£180,000, but the care and thought demonstrated by Mr. Cadbury to ensure to his workpeople healthful, happy, and hygienic conditions of life are no small contribution to the solution of problems which beset this nation.

In considering the income to be made from either land or capital the owners should recognise the duty in the one case of maintaining the property from which they draw their wealth in an efficient condition, and in the other of securing to their workpeople decent accommodation, before they are justified in making huge profits. There are some landowners who realize their responsibility in this respect, and model villages and a happy tenantry testify to the good result. There are other landlords, witness some of our London slums, who have no conscience in the matter, and in the sordid and unhealthy conditions in which their tenants live, revolt and viciousness are bred. In the ranks of manufacturers Mr. George Cadbury is the first who has attempted to grapple with the housing question on a wide and well considered basis, and he deserves the thanks not only of his own workpeople, but of the community at large.

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