

where women's work is concerned. May we assume without presumption that the Committee and Medical Staff at Bart's have been dazzled by the men out of the East—have been told how lucrative is the exploitation of nursing labour? Have they had a peep at that wonderful balance-sheet and noted the huge profits, estimated at not less than £15,000 a year, wrung out of the nursing staff at the London Hospital?"

THE CHALLENGE.

"But," continued the speaker, "this appointment is not a question for any one section of nurses, or, indeed, for trained nurses as apart from the whole community of working women.

"This grave injustice is no unintentional act. Primarily it injures the worthy staff at Bart's, but it is a Challenge, and an intimation to the whole nursing profession that no professional co-operation, no demand on their part for just professional organisation, no protective legislation, no liberty of conscience, no freedom of speech, no degree of self-government shall be theirs—unless those who claim them are prepared to pay the price of no professional promotion. That is the challenge which the autocratic trustees of charitable funds fling down. That is one of the reasons why we are here to ask for justice to-night. 'No professional promotion for registrationists' must be met at once by the demand for immediate legislation to protect nurses from coercion and persecution if they act according to the dictates of conscience for the benefit of the public and their profession."

THE NURSES' HOME.

In relation to the last Clause of the Resolution, Mrs. Fenwick pointed out that for thirty years the housing of Bart's nurses had been a discredit to the House.

The Treasurer, in his report to the Governors in April, 1909, wrote of the Nurses' Home:—

"I need not dwell upon the general unsuitability of the existing accommodation, and the inefficient provision of lavatories and bath-rooms, but I must express the extreme anxiety with which I regard the possibility of a fire occurring in certain parts of the Home, the structural arrangements being such that, in the event of an emergency, the consequences could not fail to be very serious."

As far back as 1886 plans were drawn for the new Nurses' Home, but space was not then available; when it was secured a new Out-patient Department and Quarters for the Resident Medical Staff were found to be imperative. When the latter was opened in 1904 the night nurses were promoted to the insanitary quarters vacated by the resident medical staff.

She believed a resolution stood on the minutes that on the completion of the Out-patient Department no further block should be erected until after the new Nurses' Home, but by 1908 the palatial Pathological Block had been built, and the Nurses' Home Fund of £6,000—£2,000 of which had been collected and given by the Nursing Staff—was borrowed for this purpose. Almost incredible but true. A Home in which the lives of the nurses were safe must be provided.

AN APPEAL TO CÆSAR.

Mrs. Fenwick concluded:

Let us appeal to Cæsar, and to the great body of Governors to enquire into the reason for this appointment, let them know how deeply every Bart's nurse resents the indignity to the memory of Miss Isla Stewart, and the depreciation of her professional status.

With all my heart I support the resolution. In moving it, Bart's nurses are inspired by no ill feeling, but by commendable self-respect. I hope the resolution will receive the warm support of the meeting, and will be carried unanimously.

OPEN DISCUSSION.

The Chairman then invited discussion.

Mr. T. W. Craig, who stated he had come from the country to attend the meeting, said that he spoke not as a medical man, or one who was interested in exploiting nurses, but as the "man in the street." The public had a great interest in the training of nurses, and the question involved was a question of standards. There was a strong feeling on the part of the lay public that they wanted no retrograde step in regard to nursing standards. He hoped the appointment would not be allowed to go through without a strong appeal to Cæsar. The support of brave, independent spirits in the nursing profession was needed to fight a wrong of this kind. He would like to know if, as had been stated, many of the Governors were innocent, who was the guilty party.

The Chairman said that what Governors and Trustees did not know about their own hospitals was perfectly incredible.

Mrs. Turnbull inquired whether any lady Governors were on the Election Committee, and was answered in the negative, though two of the Governors are fully-trained nurses.

Mrs. Shuter said that neither Bart's nurses nor the public would take this affront lying down. They would press for an inquiry and a public report of the result.

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE BART'S LEAGUE.

Miss Cox-Davies (cert. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Matron of the Royal Free Hospital) remarked that a good deal had been said by ladies, holding the certificate of the school, no longer engaged in active work. She spoke as one at present holding the office of Matron of a hospital with a medical school attached, and, as President of the League of St. Bartholomew's Nurses, founded by Miss Isla Stewart, and including nearly 700 nurses holding the certificate of the hospital; as the spokeswoman of these nurses, many of them holding positions as Matrons of important hospitals, who loved their late Matron, and who inspired by her to do so had loyally served the hospital and the medical staff.

Nurses were what their Matron made them, and if Bart's Nurses were without reproach—though at the present moment there were many to throw stones at them—it was due to Miss Stewart's teaching. They worked before the public in hospitals and elsewhere, and their work could speak for itself. Let anyone come and inspect it.

They were there that night to defend the good

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