

hard, but in these times of radical upheaval ideals are quickly destroyed. The rank which St. Bartholomew's now holds amongst training schools for nurses is a valuable asset to the hospital.

Not without toil and stress and anxious care has this position been attained. And health and life have been given in the process of reaching this, so high a standard. Is it all for nothing that such noble sacrifice has been given? Shall the influence of one alien in tradition and spirit be allowed to undermine and to undo the fine work that has taken the best years of many lives to accomplish?

I do not say that the high honour yielded to the Bart's nurse is more deserved by her than by nurses attached to other schools. I do but emphasise the point that the honour has been given—given ungrudgingly. And speaking from that point I would venture to urge that it lies with the existing Staff, men and women, attached to the Hospital, to maintain that position of honour.

If now, at this crisis, St. Bartholomew's men and women are timid or careless, much honour will assuredly slip away from them. If they permit this great wrong to be done, the hospital must lose prestige and credit. St. Bartholomew's may degenerate from a blessed House of Healing into a factory where the bodies of the poor are taken in for more or less successful repair. A factory where the patients count as numbers, and the nurses are classed as hands. A factory where all humanity is crushed down in the machinery of organisation, of financial exploitation, and where the welfare of the poor and sick is lost sight of under the self-advertising methods of wire-pullers and of the man who turns the handle.

To us outside who are given a wider view than is obtained by the inmates, it appears that the custodians hold the citadel, but the sappers and miners are at work, and an emissary from a hostile camp has gained a foothold and is to have the loan of the keys! It sounds like a bombastic confidence trick on the part of the custodians. Nevertheless we are assured that the error has been committed inadvertently, and in sleepy good faith, the victims not perceiving the motive of the wire-pullers.

It is for the large body of men and women interested in the welfare of the hospital to warn these custodians, and to put before them the train of disastrous results that must inevitably follow if the ill-advised decision is upheld.

Nor, I venture to submit, should the public and the subscribers allow this great injury to be done to an institution almost national in its character.

No attempt can be honourably made to bolster up a financial deficit by the exploitation of nurses' labour. The public has a right to demand that the nurses sent out from a hospital for private nursing shall be completely trained, as they are from St. Bartholomew's Hospital. The cheap device displayed in the announcement from the London Hospital that nurses are returned to the wards between their private cases can only deceive the unwary. Such visits, occasional and fitful as they must be, cannot complete a nurse's training. The acknowledgment that such snatches of experience are necessary ought to demonstrate the insufficiency of a two years' certificate, which necessitates the practice. In fact, this system of returning nurses on the private staff, to the wards, resembles the plan adopted in the elementary schools of arranging for the poorer pupils to attend as "half-timers." Such pupils earn money outside, for their necessitous parents, and "return to their classes" between whiles, to complete their education. In the rough and tumble of working class life the system answers. But we do not find that these poor "half-timers" are ever elevated to the position of Superintendents of Schools, nor given charge as Inspectors of Schools.

Were the grand old hospital of St. Bartholomew's to be destroyed by fire or by earthquake, tens of thousands of loyal supporters would join forces in re-building and in restoring her. But if at this crisis, through ineptitude and carelessness, the prestige and credit of the hospital be lost, no power on earth, nothing short of an act of God can ever restore our great hospital to the present proud position it holds in the hearts and minds of the English people. Its great reputation is founded on the good faith and benevolence of its Governors—and the high standard of skill and loyalty of the medical and nursing staffs. The prestige of the Nursing School cannot be betrayed without disastrous results to the reputation of all concerned.

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BART'S NURSES BULLIED.

The savage onslaught made on Bart's nurses for daring to appeal to Cæsar, by Sir Henry Burdett, a Governor of the Hospital, in the pseudo professional journals he controls, is an object lesson in the boundless autocracy of the professional philanthropist, where women and liberty of conscience are concerned.

Let us hope his fellow Governors will dissociate themselves from this form of intimidation.

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