

side of a hospital knows what fiends in human form these creatures are. They are positively inhuman in their treatment of suffering patients, and it is not going too far to say that their conduct constitutes a grave scandal."

And Mr. F. E. Seton in the *Pall Mall Gazette* says:—"it would be as reasonable to describe cooks as a noble body of women who go through the world seeking to feed the hungry as to describe nurses as devoted women seeking to relieve human suffering. Each is, in most cases, a girl with no means, trying to earn her living. . . . Ask leading London doctors for their opinion. I have heard them describe nurses as 'perfect fools,' 'fit only to be kitchen-maids,' and so forth. And the lay public frequently describe them to each other as 'she-devils,' which is, of course, very vulgar and exaggerated."

When one calls to mind the many women one has known who have devoted, and are devoting themselves to the care of the sick one feels hotly indignant at such strictures, but we must remember that nurses themselves are much to blame for such attacks. Their predecessors won for them the reputation and honourable position in public estimation they received, and the special duty devolving upon this generation was to carry on that work a step further and to demand protection by registration and organization, of competent nurses, and their differentiation from quacks who pose as and bring disgrace upon the members of a profession to which they do not belong.

A faithful minority have accepted and done their utmost to discharge this duty, but owing to the negligence of many nurses in shirking this responsibility whether from indolence, apathy, or self interest, numbers of women who are ignorant, incompetent, or criminal pose as nurses, and the public estimate the genuine article largely from their acquaintance with the spurious one, so that it is possible for nurses to be described in the Press in the terms we have quoted above without exciting even a ripple of protest in return.

At a recent meeting of the Wigan Board of Guardians the Visiting Committee recommended that the salaries of eleven nurses, or assistants at the Billinge Workhouse should be increased, and Dr. Benson said it was a step in the right direction. Billinge was not a place at which it was conducive for nurses to stay, being quiet and lonely. The Board had spent pounds and pounds in advertising, and were

throwing away every week what would pay as much, if not more than would pay the difference. The Board must offer some inducement to the nurses to stay; they would have to give what might be termed trade union price.

In the discussion which followed Mrs. Johnson observed that she understood from the nurses that compared with being at Wigan they were quite £3 a year out of pocket because of the effect upon their clothing by the material used for softening the hard water. Mr. Watts said the Board had advertised for 6 or 8 weeks and had not had a single application. For the past three or four months they had had to specially engage nurses from Manchester and Liverpool. The recommendation of the Visiting Committee was accepted.

The payment received by some poor law medical officers of their skilled services cannot be regarded as excessive if we are to judge from a letter recently addressed to the Mutford and Lothingland (Lowestoft and district) Guardians in connection with their order prohibiting operations in the Infirmary. Dr. Boswell wrote:—

"I would like to point out that if none are done it will deprive the nurses of a great deal of interest in their work; this will increase the discontent among them. The patients in the Infirmary include the incurable, chronic, and undesirable cases from every institution and place in the district, and when, very occasionally, an acute case occurs it gives the nurses some interest to work for. I have only had to do some twenty to twenty-five major operations, requiring a general anæsthetic, during the last five and a half years. I have been paid no fee for these, except, of course, my salary, three farthings per attendance with medicine, &c., supplied by me."

Commenting upon a letter in a contemporary by "One who knows the misery" as to the nurses' food, five Sisters, and thirteen nurses at the City Hospital, Parkhill, Liverpool, have sent a signed letter to the paper to say "We hereby state we have no complaints to make. Our food is simple, good and wholesome. Luxuries we do not expect in any institution."

It is to be regretted that in a cathedral city of the size and importance of Worcester, and in spite of an appeal sent out by the Bishop, who is the President, the General Infirmary should be so ill supported by the city and county that it has been decided to reduce the number

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