

# ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC,

FROM

*The Directors of the General Lying-in-Hospital of Edinburgh.*

**T**HE situation of PREGNANT WOMEN in indigent circumstances claims the attention of the Public in a peculiar manner. They are unable to procure proper assistance during child-bearing, and have not power to enjoy that undisturbed repose after delivery, which is often necessary for their recovery; their offspring is therefore frequently lost, and their own health much impaired.

WITH the view of obviating these evils, Lying-in-Hospitals have been established in almost every enlightened nation, and have been found to be extensively beneficial.

IT is surprising, that, although the poor of Edinburgh are not in more comfortable situations than in other cities, subscriptions for erecting a Lying-in-Hospital have been begun only within these few weeks.

THE proposals for such an institution, published by the Professor of Midwifery, having received the approbation of the *Senatus Academicus* of the University, and the aid of the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council, and of the Royal College of Physicians, several benevolent individuals have concurred in promoting the design. A meeting of the subscribers was held, and the charge of carrying forward the establishment was entrusted to Directors chosen by them.

IN the discharge of this duty, the Directors think it incumbent on them to make the nature of the institution as extensively known as possible; and, for that purpose, submit the following considerations to the attention of the Public.

THE principal object in the erection of this Hospital, is to establish a proper provision for the wives of the working poor, and to afford an asylum to the wives of Soldiers and Sailors, who, remote from their relations, and many of them from their country, are often, during pregnancy and child-bearing, in circumstances truly deplorable.

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THAT assistance is due or ought to be given to such patients alone would be an uncharitable opinion; and therefore the Directors have determined to extend the benefits of the General Lying-in Hospital to unmarried women also.

SEPARATE houses might, perhaps, with more propriety be allotted to them; but, as it is not probable that funds could be obtained for two Hospitals, the Directors have endeavoured, by proper regulations, to prevent any evils which might be supposed to arise from the admission of unmarried women.

WITH these views, abandoned women will be totally excluded from the Hospital. The unmarried patients will be lodged in a part of the building unconnected with the wards appropriated to the married, entering by a separate door, and, if possible, from a different street; and no communication shall be allowed between them. They shall be attended by Midwives alone, except when the assistance of the Physicians of the Hospital may be necessary.

As the admission of certain pregnant unmarried women may thus, they trust, rescue many from despondency, and prevent the rash consequences of despair, or the unhappy effects of public infamy, so too the Directors look forward with satisfaction to the establishment of such a school for the instruction of Midwives, who will by these means be qualified to save many valuable lives in every part of the country.

BESIDES these two classes of women, the Directors have adopted regulations respecting unmarried women, in a condition somewhat better than those, to whom it may afford an opportunity of regaining reputation, by totally concealing their shame.

THE board which will be expected from such women will, they hope, lay the foundation for a fund which will enable them to extend the benefits of this institution to the wives of such tradesmen, &c. who, from the peculiar circumstances of their family, cannot leave their own houses, but who are ill able to procure the assistance and care which may be necessary to their recovery.

A building, on a scale proportioned to the number of patients proposed in Dr Hamilton's plan, capable of being enlarged when the funds will allow, will be begun as soon as the weather is favourable,

THE recommendation of patients by subscribers will be preferred, in proportion to the amount, and according to the date of their subscriptions.

THE success of the General Lying-in Hospital, the Directors trust, will be equal to the important advantages which they hope it will afford to the large and useful portion of the community for which the charity is intended.

EDINBURGH, FEB. 24. 1792.



GENERAL KING-IN HOSPITAL

WE agree to pay to the Treasurer of the General King-in Hospital of Edinburgh, agreeably to the plan published by the Protector of Widows, the sum annexed to our respective names, for the purpose of carrying to necessary and charitable establishments in Scotland.

THOMAS ROBERTSON

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