

very conclusively that—if one may parody an old rhyme—

The fault of the Fund was the fault of the Dutch,  
They give too little and they want too much.

These gentlemen imagine—rightly or wrongly—that the public subscribe to Hospitals for the assistance of the sick poor and not in order that new and uselessly expensive Insurance Offices may be bolstered up. Consequently, they have not considered themselves justified, as trustees of public funds, in paying the Royal National Pension Fund, premiums, for Annuities for their Nurses, which are from twenty-five to thirty per cent. higher than old-established and wealthy Insurance Offices demand. This is, we imagine, quite intelligible, but this aspect of the case does not seem to have occurred to the Council of the Fund. Because, at the recent meeting a gentleman—for whom personally we entertain the greatest respect, because he has, in conjunction with other members of his family, practically founded this Fund by several princely donations—went out of his way, as spokesman of the Council to make the following remarks :—

“The Council of the Pension Fund has always been loth to divert from the Hospitals directly to the Nurses any of the gifts of the benevolent; but unless they can see on the part of the London officials more interest in securing pensions for their old servants, they may be compelled to make a more direct appeal to the public, which might possibly result in the Hospitals getting less, and the Nurses more, of the public money. The quantity of funds to be distributed in charity and good works throughout the year is, unfortunately, not unlimited, and during the last year or two has not been an increasing one.”

These words cannot be taken seriously, for they mean in plain English, “Your money or your life. Either affiliate with, and pay into, the Fund, or the Fund will try to drain away your life’s-blood by diverting to its coffers the subscriptions upon which you exist.” The threat might have been sublime, but it has overstepped the chasm and is only ridiculous. We cannot believe that the idea originated with the speaker. We imagine that the voice was the voice of the chairman, but the words were those of another.

But, be that how it may, the Hospitals know now what the Council of the Fund would do if they could. They have fair warning that, unless they forthwith pay tribute to the Pension Fund, they may expect an active campaign against them. At present, some of the Hospitals seem to

have an extraordinary dread of a certain Pumblechookian busybody. We advise them to pluck up courage, and follow the example of the Nurses. Mr. BURDETT attempted to legislate for, and dictate to, them; but they quietly took the matter into their own hands, and have calmly ignored him ever since. He has fretted and fumed, and caused a great deal of dissension and bad feeling, but all that he has effected is to help forward the movement to which he is opposed. The story of the London, and King’s College, Hospitals shows how advantageous is his alliance. These Institutions supported him strongly against the Royal British Nurses’ Association. In requital for their assistance, he took a prominent part in carrying out one of the proposals of the Association, and starting the Nurses’ Co-operation, which will in due course, inevitably abolish the Private Nursing Department of the London Hospital, and all other Institutions which “sweat” their Nurses. We cordially approve of the principle of co-operation, but, like others, we have derived the greatest amusement from the fact that certain Institutions are being quietly hoisted with their own pet petard. Then, again, Mr. BURDETT made, upon oath, before the Lords’ Select Committee, statements so reflecting upon the management of King’s College Hospital, that we understand very serious harm has been done to that Institution. That the statements are alleged to be untrue must have made it seem the more hard to the authorities of King’s College Hospital that they should be thus treated by their friend. And neither the London, nor King’s College, Hospital, is yet aware of the total amount of their indebtedness to him.

#### “SIGNIFICANT.”

A CORRESPONDENT writes: “Is it not strange that no mention has ever been made in the *Hospital* about the Medical Act passed by the Cape Parliament last year?” Considering Mr. HENRY C. BURDETT’S speeches and writings of five years ago, and his futile attempt to bring about Registration of Nurses under the control of lay authorities; considering his strenuous opposition to the system as soon as professional people undertook it, and the unmeasured abuse which the *Hospital* has ever since poured upon the Royal British Nurses’ Association; considering that members of that Association were largely instrumental in bringing about this, the first legislation for the Nursing profession, and that it will inevitably be followed by similar enactments in every part of the world, Mr. HENRY C. BURDETT’S discomfiture and mortification at the news which we were the first English paper to receive and publish, must have been considerable. And the sullen silence of the *Hospital* on the subject

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