

the next, how could it be expected that she would be able, at sixty, to exist upon two pounds and sixpence sterling per annum! That, it may be conceded, is ridiculous. Then we ask, why publish two tables—out of eight—which are admittedly ridiculous?

But beyond this, the statement of which we complain is both flagrantly wrong and exquisitely absurd. It is exquisitely absurd, and speaks volumes as to the failure of the scheme, if the Fund is actually driven to enrol Nurses who can only afford to pay a shilling a month; and, moreover, it abundantly confirms the great argument we have always used against the Fund. And it is flagrantly wrong to tell Nurses—whom it therefore infers to be extremely poor, and presumes to be innocent of business knowledge—that by such a payment they would become members of the Fund, and “protect themselves in case of illness or misfortune.” We call the attention of the members of the Council to this statement, for we are convinced they can neither have authorised it, nor be aware that it has been made. And for the sake of Nurses we trust that they will take the earliest opportunity in their power, both to disavow the announcement, and to restrain its author, if possible, from future misstatements. We must also express our surprise that it has been publicly stated several times that “five hundred,” “two hundred,” and “one hundred and twenty” policies “have been issued”; and also that “an immediate annuity of £30 has been purchased in the Pension Fund”; and also “that £3,500 has been received in premiums already.” We feel sure the Council cannot be aware of these statements, for it is, of course, unnecessary to remind it of the clause in the Regulations of the Fund, which provides that “Until the Society shall have obtained proposals for the grant of one thousand annuity policies no business shall be commenced.”

We cannot devote, however, at present, more space to pointing out the other misleading misstatements which have been made about this Fund, for we wish to draw attention to a most extraordinary assertion, made officially at this meeting at St. Thomas's Hospital. “The Articles of Association even included a provision for establishing a Register, in case the other organisations which were attempting to institute a Register for Nurses should not be able to carry their scheme through to success. The Fund itself thus had the power, although it had no desire or intention unless it was compelled to exercise it, to establish a Register, and to take care that even that branch of the work was not neglected or allowed to fall to the ground.” With the gravest astonishment we have to inform our readers that we have made inquiries, and find

that this astounding statement is actually true. We learn, upon good authority, that this provision for establishing a Register for Nurses was inserted in the Articles of Association of this so-called Pension Fund at the instance of a gentleman, to whom we need not further refer. But the secret is out at last. And now we desire to know, distinctly and definitely, does the Council of the National Pension Fund for Nurses accept this statement? If it does not disavow any intention of carrying out this scheme of spurious Registration thus officially described, we shall have a clear duty to perform. We must warn Nurses what this means—what they will really be doing by joining this innocent looking shilling-a-month Fund.

It must be admitted that we have contented ourselves with few business-like and straightforward criticisms of this scheme. We have hitherto acted thus, because we recognised fully the benevolent intentions, both of the merchant princes who founded this Fund, and of the many highly-respected gentlemen who were acting upon its Council. We desired to perform our duty to Nurses, and then say no more upon the matter. But now we feel we have wrongfully kept silence. Had we been aware of the fact thus announced, we would have acted very differently. We appeal to the Council to save us from a very painful duty. We would remind them that Nurses have, in the clearest possible way, declined to be guided, dictated to, or organised, except by the leaders of the Medical and Nursing world; that Nurses have formed themselves into an Association in order to secure that they shall be Registered by Law, solely and alone upon conditions approved by the Medical profession, and not at the will and bidding of any “outsider.” We would solemnly remind the Medical gentlemen who are members of this Council of the enormous responsibility they will take upon themselves, if they, by word or act, assist in the smallest way to remove Nurses from under the control of their natural leaders—Medical men. We cannot believe that any of the well-known Physicians and Surgeons upon this Council would dream of sanctioning such a fatal step. We therefore confidently expect that these gentlemen will either unanimously retire from the Council, or will give the utmost publicity to their natural condemnation of the speech to which we have now drawn, we trust, sufficient attention.

On the 19th inst., two new Wards were opened at the St. Helen's Providence Free Hospital, the cost of the addition being about £2,000. The Hospital, which, prior to the enlargement, would accommodate twenty-four patients only, will now accommodate eighty-four.

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