

mental nurses. From conversation I have had with a very cute medical superintendent of an asylum, I believe it is quite true that the Medico-Psychological Society do not care to risk the expense of bringing out a register of mental nurses examined and registered by themselves. I am told that to start, and keep corrected, and issue annually such a register would be very costly; but my friend tells me that it is not so much the actual expense of issuing the register which the Medico-Psychological Society dread, as the responsibility for the conduct and professional efficiency of the male and female attendants, once they are registered. The history of the Royal British Nurses' Association has been sufficiently significant, and we all know of at least two glaring cases in which the names of women remain on our register who have forfeited all right to remain on the roll. Is it not true that the very persons who would relapse professionally, and ought to be removed from the register, are just those who would not hesitate to contest the attempt to deprive them of the protection which the register affords? In my opinion, therefore, the hesitation upon the part of the Medico-Psychological Society, to take the public responsibility of the professional control of attendants whom they have certified, is indisputable proof of the gross injustice which it will be to the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association, to be classed with, and made responsible for, the conduct, in the opinion of the public, of hundreds of uneducated male attendants, drawn from a class from which the majority of our leading nurse training schools have long ceased to admit nurse probationers.

In Ireland we feel very strongly on this point, and rather than be classed with these male attendants there is little doubt that we shall remove our names from the Register, and work 'tooth and nail' for a Bill. The mere suggestion of this new departure proves how dangerous is the position of members of an Association who have been deprived of all power in the Governing Body."

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT.

At a recent meeting of the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylum District held at the County Hall, Spring Gardens, under the presidency of Mr. R. M. Hensley, the General Purposes Committee presented a report relating to the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act. They were of opinion that an application should be made to the Local Government Board to obtain an amendment of this Act; so that it might be optional to all members of the female subordinate staff, who had taken service under the Board since September 29th, 1896, or who might do so in the future, whether or no they would contribute to and benefit from the Superannuation Fund. They were also of opinion that the amendment should empower the Managers to give a superannuation allowance to any Medical Superintendent, Matron, Nurse, or Asylum Attendant who resigned or ceased to hold office after the age of fifty, and who had been in the service of the Board for not less than fifteen years, and that authority should be given to the

Managers by the amendment to require the resignation of any such officer, should they deem it advisable, after the age of fifty. They recommended further that the President of the Local Government Board be asked to receive a deputation of the Managers in order that the advisability of supporting the proposed amendments might be urged upon that body.

The Chairman moved the adoption of the recommendations, and pointed out that the case of the nurses was a very strong one, as nurses, as a rule, only took service under the Board for a short time, with the object of gaining special experience. The recommendations were agreed to.

A resolution was then passed that a Bill be drafted and introduced into Parliament giving effect to these amendments, and that it should be worded so that, if necessary, it might be brought forward as a private member's Bill, if the Local Government Board decided not to bring it forward in its official capacity. These proposed amendments to the present Bill appear to remedy all the injustices which we have had occasion to point out in the NURSING RECORD. It is much to be regretted that this Bill was hurried through Parliament without time for due consideration, and we heartily congratulate the Asylums Board upon its present action in this matter.

A CLERK'S BILL.

At a dinner at the Holborn Restaurant last week a gold casket containing a cheque for £1,160 was presented to Mr. Rutherglen, clerk to the Kensington Guardians, as a "recognition of his untiring efforts to secure the passing of the Poor-Law Superannuation Act of 1896." A diamond ornament was also presented to Mrs. Rutherglen. No doubt the Act is a most popular one amongst the permanent officials of the Poor Law, but, as we have before pointed out, it is based upon the principle of "robbing Peter to pay Paul," and no better proof could be given that it is felt to press hardly upon nurses, who are compelled to subscribe to a fund from which it is most improbable that they will benefit, than the fact that members of the Metropolitan Asylums' Board are combining to obtain an alteration of the Act in so far as it affects nurses, and that a committee of infirmiry matrons are co-operating for the same ends.

STATE REGISTRATION FOR NURSES.

We shall deal next week, in this column, with the remedy suggested by Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, for the protection of trained nurses and the public from "Nurses à la Mode," in her reply to Lady Priestley in the current issue of the *Nineteenth Century*.

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