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EDITORIAL.

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING, LTD., AND THE STATE REGISTRATION FEE.

In June, 1916, the College of Nursing, Ltd., issued a prospectus, in which, amongst others, under the names of the members of its Council, it made the following pledges to induce nurses to enrol themselves on its voluntary Register:—

1. "If, therefore, you are on the College Register you will automatically and without further fee be placed upon the State Register when the Nurses' Registration Bill is passed."

2. "Because every nurse who is placed upon the College Register is *ipso facto* and without further fee a member of the College, and is entitled to vote for the election of the Council."

Every nurse whose name appears on the College Register has a right to the fulfilment of both pledges.

The first pledge—which should never have been made—the Council of the College is unable to keep, because Parliament declined to constitute the College of Nursing, Ltd., the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession, and to give its Register preference, as the State Register, in the Nurses' Registration Acts.

A frank and honourable recantation of its pledge would have been the right position for the College Council to have adopted under the circumstances. This it has not done, but the Chairman of the Company has issued a letter to members of the College, stating that "a Bill for the State Registration of Nurses was drafted by the College, in which it was provided that in the event of the College Bill becoming an Act of Parliament, all the Nurses on the College Register would automatically become State Registered Nurses without further fee."

Members of the College must not confuse the purely tentative provision included by the College Company in 1919 in a Bill which had little chance of being approved, and was not approved, by Parliament, with the definite pledge above-mentioned, given by it in 1916 as an in-

ducement to nurses to join the College of Nursing, Ltd.

Sir Arthur Stanley, in his circular letter to the members, states that "a certain number of nurses, when joining the College, *may possibly have been under the impression* that whatever Registration Bill became law they would automatically, without further fee, be placed on the State Register," and that therefore, on receipt of a letter from a member stating that she joined the College in this belief, "the Council is willing to pay such initial fee, not exceeding one guinea," when her name has been entered on the State Register.

We are advised that the Council of the College is legally bound to pay the fee charged for admission to the State Register for every nurse on its voluntary Register who applies for registration on the State Register and is accepted by the General Nursing Council.

Sir Arthur Stanley proceeds to say that "the payment of these fees, if demanded by a large number of members, will entail a heavy financial loss to the College," and that the Council "earnestly hope that those members who can afford to pay the fee for their State Registration will not think it necessary to claim back the amount from the College"!

Could audacity go farther?

We hope that members who claim the registration fee required by the State will not forget the second pledge given by the College Council, namely that they are, *ipso facto*, members of the College, and entitled to vote for the election of the Council. This is not affected by the Council discharging its legal obligation to pay the fee required by the General Nursing Council for registration by the State.

It is not the "financial loss" which will have the most damaging effect upon the College in this connection, but the example set to every member by its Governing Body—the Council—in attempting to repudiate its written word of honour.

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