

is evidently ignorant of the fact, we must here state for its benefit that for unsigned matter the editor is responsible; but for a signed article, no one except the one individual who wrote it is in any way to be held liable. Therefore, for articles published under the names of our contributors, only these ladies severally are responsible—not the *Nursing Record*, not the British Nurses' Association, nor the nursing profession, nor the hospitals they are attached to, nor the patients at those hospitals, nor the friends of those patients, nor the population of England, Ireland and Scotland; but only and solely those ladies themselves!

But to return to the article we are now considering.

"Yet we can scarcely credit the rumour, seeing that the declared object of the British Nurses' Association is to raise nursing to the level of a profession."

That seems fairly clear; and our contemporary, we gather, considers the rumour to be what it would probably call a "biased fact." But, oh! what does the next sentence mean?—

"If this be its object, how can the promoters allow *their* paper (the italics are ours) to join the *Lancet* in its attempt (*sic*) to deprive nurses of the munificent co-operation of the merchant princes by wrecking the National Pension Fund for Nurses."

We cannot congratulate the readers of our contemporary on the estimation in which their education and intelligence are held by the editor. In one sentence he "hardly credits" any connection at all between the *Nursing Record* and the promoters of the British Nurses' Association, and in the very next he calmly calls it "their paper," and accuses them of making an "attempt" at "wrecking the National Pension Fund for Nurses." That is the statement we complain of. We do not, and never shall, object to any fair criticism, however keen; but we do object most strongly to falsehoods being stated as facts. Our contemporary knows as well as anybody can, and from enquiries made by its agents it knows better than most people, that this journal is the sole property of the firm whose names appear as proprietors on the cover. Our contemporary, therefore, was wilfully misleading its readers by calling it the paper of the British Nurses' Association, when it knew, moreover, that there was not the slightest connection of any kind, direct or indirect, between the *Nursing Record* and that association. As we announced in our first issue, we believe that that association will be of the greatest benefit to nurses. To put the matter quite frankly, we believe that it is certain of success, and that in time it will include all the leading members of the nursing profession. We see, therefore, quite plainly that it is for our own interests to support it by every means in our power, more especially as our contemporary first ignored and now maligns it. At the same time, as an independent journal, we reserve our right to criticise

its actions, and if we consider them in any way detrimental to nurses we shall honestly say so; and for that sufficient reason we shall always maintain and insist upon our complete independence of any body, clique, or association whatsoever.

Our prevision has been already amply justified. We have been favoured by articles which for diction and material will compare most favourably with those appearing in the pages of any of our contemporaries, and the writers of which it appears do not contribute to the columns of our present critic, which fact, perhaps, explains the indignation shown and "regret" expressed.

Finally we come to the charge that this paper has been "joining the *Lancet*" to wreck the National Pension Fund for Nurses. That, again, is a statement absolutely without a vestige of truth. The *Lancet* wrote two calmly reasoned articles which we transferred to our columns, knowing that many of our readers would be glad to know its opinion, but unable to obtain the paper for themselves. We are not concerned to defend the action of the *Lancet*; it is quite able to defend itself if it thinks it worth the trouble. For our part, we have only inserted one short article on the subject, of which the major part was occupied by quotations from the prospectus of the fund, and in thanking Mr. H. C. Burdett, the founder as he is called, for the trouble he has taken in the matter, and the remainder in advising nurses in such an important matter to hear many opinions before deciding on their course of action. It is, therefore, utterly untrue that we have made any attempt even in the smallest degree to "wreck" the scheme. It is, moreover, to our mind, perfectly plain that our contemporary believes the scheme will fail, or it would not be so afraid of a "wreck" before the fund is three weeks old. The matter lies in a nut-shell. If nurses can afford to join the pension fund and think it will pay them to do so, they will do so whatever any body or any paper says against it. If nurses cannot afford to pay the premiums, they cannot join whether they wish to do so or not. In our humble opinion our contemporary is ill-advised if it wishes the fund to succeed to frighten away intending subscribers by hints of impending shipwreck. In any case we hope it will withdraw the deliberate misstatements it has made as to our position and action in the matter.

#### NATIONAL PENSION FUND FOR NURSES.

(Continued from page 30).

HAVING supplemented and considerably strengthened our remarks so far by the two lengthy extracts from the *Lancet* given in our last issue, we cannot now do better than consider a matter which is an all—if not the most—important one, and it is as follows: "Unless a

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