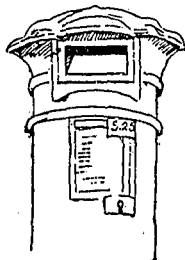


## Letters to the Editor.

## NOTES, QUERIES, &amp;c.



*Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.*

## BATTLEDORE AND SHUTTLECOCK.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

DEAR MADAM,—All power is so absolutely in the hands of the medical officers in the Royal British Nurses Association that it seems almost hopeless for the nurse members to do anything. The latest example of the determination of the medical men to dominate the Association is amply proved in this midwife question. As the case stands the nurses have not only not been consulted, but all information of the arrangements made between the Medical Defence Union and the Association has been withheld in the most illegal and high-handed manner. But as the Obstetrical Society takes money from the nurses for examining them, and giving them a Certificate to practise Midwifery, *not to qualify them as Maternity Nurses*, what may I ask is their position in this affair?

Two years ago, entirely contrary to the feelings of the majority of the members of the R.B.N.A., who, of course, were never consulted, Mr. Fardon and Co. decreed that a separate List of Midwives, or—as they advertised it—"a List of Members who have obtained Certificates qualifying them to act as Midwives," should be incorporated in the published Roll of Members, and, moreover, they issued this list of midwives separately, price one penny. For two years this List has appeared. If objectionable it at least was *true*. Now, again without the consent of the nurse members—and upon pressure from the Medical Defence Union—Mr. Fardon and Co. have decided to state in the forthcoming issue of the Roll, what is *not true*. They intend to issue this List of Midwives; but in a foot note to inform those interested that those nurses holding the Certificate of Midwifery of the Obstetrical Society are not qualified to act as Midwives, but merely as Midwifery Nurses.

What are Midwifery Nurses? No such hybrid exists; and in attempting to prove by this futile title that the nurse members of the R.B.N.A., who hold the Certificate of Midwifery issued by the Obstetrical Society, and for which they paid *one guinea*, are not qualified midwives, the medical officers of the R.B.N.A. are placing themselves in a very tight corner.

The nurse member situated in the centre of the three contentious and opposing medical factions—the Obstetrical Society, which sells Certificates of Midwifery, the Medical Defence Union, which objects to these sales as "infamous conduct," and the wobbling medical element which controls the R.B.N.A., which wants "to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds"—is in a most undignified position. It is a veritable game of

battledore and shuttlecock. Surely some of the women thus played with have sufficient courage left to demand the title and privileges for which they have paid *guineas*, both to the Obstetrical Society and the Royal British Nurses Association.

Yours truly,

A MANCHESTER MIDWIFE.

[The truth is that the majority of the nurse members of the R.B.N.A. do not understand the question. The hon. officers have taken action illegally, as usual, and as the nurse members have realised that the only chance of self-interest is to submit, they will probably submit to this last indignity as they have done on former occasions when justice demanded courage and financial risk. It is instructive to note that not one word of the betrayal of the nurses' professional interests by the Executive Committee, has been inserted in the official monthly organ of the R.B.N.A. and the *Nurses' Journal*.—ED.]

## OUR PRIZE PUZZLE.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

Miss Bromley acknowledges with many thanks, the cheque for one guinea as Prize in the Puzzle Competition for May.

116, Hazelville Road, Hornsey Lane, N.

## THE NATIONAL ANTI-VIVISECTION SOCIETY.

*To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."*

MADAM,—With regard to the Parliamentary return just issued on experiments upon living animals, may I be permitted to point out:—

1. That this return is compiled from reports furnished to the Home Office by the Vivisectioners themselves. My authority for this statement is Hansard, 8th of July, 1897. It is not very likely that any vivisectioner will voluntarily accuse himself of cruelty or a breach of the law.

2. That the inspector who makes this return cannot possibly know what happens in a laboratory when he is not present, and that as there are 247 licensed vivisectioners, and only two inspectors, it necessarily follows that there is no machinery provided by the present law to prevent any amount of torture being inflicted on animals in laboratories.

3. That there remains, therefore, no safeguard against the infliction of torture, but the individual opinions and dispositions of the vivisectioners, and they receive their licences and certificates avowedly on the basis of their scientific attainments only.

4. Scientific attainments are not necessarily accompanied by a tender heart, and it is paradoxical to suggest that the habit of vivisectioning animals secures a man from becoming indifferent to the sufferings of animals.

I hope you will allow your readers to consider these four points, which I am sure you must admit are worthy of attention if this question is to be approached reasonably and without prejudice.

Your obedient servant,

STEPHEN COLERIDGE.

92, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

June 4th, 1901.

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