

she has taken an active and dignified part in all work for the educational benefit of women in its capital—and so splendidly has she represented her sex on every occasion, that she has done much to inspire confidence in woman's capacity for public work, and to remove prejudice on the subject. Miss Louisa Stevenson's able paper on the Work of Women on Hospital Boards, read before the Conference of Women Workers at Brighton last October, was published in this Journal on November 3rd, 1900. In it she greatly "heartened up" the nurses present, by declaring herself in favour of a comprehensive system of State Registration for Nurses.

### Nursing Politics.

#### HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.

The following correspondence between the medical Secretaries of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and of the Medical Defence Union, which appeared in last weeks *British Medical Journal*, is supremely typical of the slippery methods by which the former Association is governed under the direction of Mr. Edward Fardon, of Middlesex Hospital, and we should imagine that Mr. A. G. Bateman is the only person at all likely to express any surprise in regard to it.

#### THE ROYAL NURSES' ASSOCIATION AND MIDWIVES.

SIR,—The attention of the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association has been drawn to an article entitled "The Medical Defence Union," in the *British Medical Journal* of May 25th, in which the following paragraph occurs :

"The Royal British Nurses' Association has recognized that a clerical error had been made, and has directed that in future editions a footnote should be appended to each page that these certificates were for the training of nurses and not diplomas qualifying for the practice of midwives."

I am desired to inform you that this statement is a misapprehension of the intention of the Association with regard to the publication of their roll of members and the appended list of midwives.

The Association did not undertake to print such a footnote as is referred to, and could not consent to such an act of injustice to its members.

I shall be much obliged if you will be so good as to correct the mistake that has been made.—I am, etc.,

EDWARD A. FARDON,  
Honorary Medical Secretary.

Orchard Street, W., June 22nd.

SIR,—I am informed by Mr. Fardon that he considers that an error has crept into the review of the annual report of the Medical Defence Union published in the *British Medical Journal* in respect of certain alterations which the Royal British Nurses' Association, at the instigation of the Union, promised to make in their future roll of members. Would you kindly

publish the enclosed letter, which I forwarded to Mr. Fardon on receipt of his communication, which fully explains the position of affairs?—I am, etc.,

A. G. BATEMAN,  
General Secretary, Medical Defence  
Union, Limited.

The Medical Defence Union,  
4, Trafalgar Square, W.C., June 26th.

Medical Defence Union,  
4, Trafalgar Square, W.C.,  
June 26th, 1901.

SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter, but cannot see that in any way we have misinterpreted the promises made by your Council. The Secretary of the R.B.N.A. wrote in letter dated December 13th "it was unanimously resolved to comply with the requests," that is, of the Union. "In the next issue of the roll of members it was resolved that the title of the midwives list should, in accordance with your wishes, be as follows: 'List of Members who have obtained Certificates in Lying-in Institutions' and other Societies as Midwifery Nurses.'" "They will cause to be printed a legible note at the commencement of midwives list, etc., to draw attention to the fact that for a diploma L.O.S. should be read in each case 'certificate L.O.S.'" This, taken in conjunction with our requests, gave a right to the Council of the Union to make the statements referred to in the annual report. Again, on February 1st, attention having been called to the advertisement in the *Nurses' Journal* "list of members who have obtained a certificate qualifying them to act as midwives" being continued, an apology was received from your Secretary, and it was stated that the advertisement in question should read: "Who have obtained certificates from lying-in institutions, etc., as midwifery nurses," and a promise was made that the alterations should be made in the next number, and correctly entered in the *Journals* and *Annual Register* in the future. On the strength of these promises, the statement was made in the annual report, and if the promises have not been kept that is not the fault of our Council. I cannot see that there is any error on our part, and will, of course, have the whole correspondence published in the *British Medical Journal* and *Lancet* in order to prove our *bona fides* in the matter. If you have seen our report you will notice we put the sense of the promises of your society in our statement, not the exact wording, as we had not the opportunity of seeing your new Register, and so added "or words to that effect." The draft report was read by my council before printing, and no exception taken to it.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) A. G. BATEMAN.

Then follows an editorial note that "in the notice of this part of the annual report of the Medical Defence Union, published in the *British Medical Journal*, of May 25th, the words 'or to that effect' were omitted. The importance which might come to be attached to them was not at the time appreciated."

From the above editorial note we should

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)