

imagine that the editor of the *British Medical Journal*, has had no former dealings with the present officers of the R.B.N.A. We hope he now appreciates the necessity of extreme accuracy when referring to their assertions.

A PLAIN UNVARNISHED TALE.

It will be observed that the report of the Medical Defence Union appeared in the *British Medical Journal*, on May 25th, and it is not until a month later that Mr. Fardon takes the slightest notice of the paragraph in question referring to the R.B.N.A., between which dates this Journal dealt with the conduct of the Executive Committee in relation to the Midwives List, and pointed out in no uncertain manner the high handed, illegal, and intolerable manner in which the question has been dealt with by the clique which governs the R.B.N.A. We have ample evidence before us, that had it not been for the exposure of the whole question in this Journal, Mr. E. A. Fardon and his Committee would not have attempted to shuffle out of the distinct promise given to the Medical Defence Union, that they would with a stroke of the pen transform their "Midwives List," into a "List of Midwifery Nurses."

Observe the tactics. The Council of the Medical Defence Union addressed the Council (the governing body) of the Royal British Nurses' Association, on the Midwife List question in December last. Was this important matter placed on the Agenda of the January Council Meeting? Of course not, and when at the Council Meeting the Chairman, Sir James Crichton Browne, had delivered himself of a characteristic and peculiarly fulsome peroration on the recent deaths in the Royal Family, he announced that "no further business will be done to-day." We may, therefore, conclude that the communication from the Medical Defence Union was "suppressed." The Secretary of the R.B.N.A. having already dealt with the matter and informed Mr. Bateman "that it was unanimously resolved to comply with requests" that is that in the next issue of the roll of members—the "List of Midwives"—should be termed a "List of Midwifery Nurses."

In this connection it would be interesting to know who were "unanimous," because neither the nurses themselves, nor their governing body, the General Council to whom the communication was addressed, were ever consulted.

To prove the determination of the "unanimous" ones to transform "Midwives" into "Midwifery Nurses," in the issues of the *Nurses'*

Journal (the official organ of the R.B.N.A.) for February, March, and April, of this year, will be found an advertisement of the Association's publications, and amongst them this:—

"LIST OF MEMBERS

who have also obtained

CERTIFICATES AS MIDWIFERY NURSES,
1900.

Published separately, price One Penny."

The advertisement in reference to this List having constantly appeared in previous issues, as follows:

"LIST OF MEMBERS

who have also obtained

Certificates qualifying them to act as
MIDWIVES,

1900.

Published separately, price One Penny."

To try now to pose as the protector of the Nurses' interests is just a little late in the day, these advertisements in the *Nurses' Journal* already constitute "an act of injustice to members," and any one who knows the true inwardness of the gross breach of faith with the Nurse founders of the Association, the intimidation of Nurse Barlow, and the conduct of the case of Breay versus Browne, a case so indefensible that Mr. Fardon *dare not go into the witness box*, will read this Pecksniffian paragraph with disgust.

The fact remains that in issuing this "List of Midwives," the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association has exceeded the powers granted it in the Royal Charter—a Midwife is not necessarily a Nurse, any more than she is a Masseuse, a gymnast, or a danseuse, and the Royal Charter only empowers the Association to deal with Nurses. Moreover, the names of the large majority of Nurses placed on it have been published without their consent.

VOLTE FACE.

As we go to press we learn from this month's *Nurses' Journal* that the newly adopted title of "Midwifery Nurse" is to be dropped, and that of "Midwife" reinstated, in the forthcoming R.B.N.A. Roll. We opine that this hasty *volte face* upon the part of Mr. Fardon and his Committee is discreet, in spite of the breach of faith with the Medical Defence Union. One dis honourable action more or less cannot cause much surprise when the past record of the Hon. Officers of this Association is remembered.

The indignation of Mr. Bateman is not so dangerous as an action at law.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)