

the Royal British Nurses' Association has adopted a non-progressive policy in dealing with our business, and is utilising our organisation for the purposes of retrogression, instead of progression and co-operation. We earlier members still stick to our original policy—co-operation amongst Nurses, progress and reform in Nursing matters. I have conclusively proved that this was the policy of our Association in 1894, and it is the one upon which the Royal British Nurses' Association must stand or fall.

As a member of the General Council of the Association, I cannot close my letter without a protest against the conduct of business from the chair on the 10th inst., at the General Council Meeting, whereby we members of the "Governing Body," and "final court of appeal," were forbidden to exercise our right of free speech and judgment concerning Miss Barlow's case, nor that we have been summoned to meet on the 28th inst. to condemn this lady's action *unheard*, and that after she has been exonerated in the High Courts of Justice.

I earnestly hope that a bold and determined stand will be made by the members to claim that right and justice shall be maintained in the Association, and that the foundation upon which great constitutional laws are built, "That a man is innocent until he is proved guilty," shall be our standard. It will be a sorry day for British Nurses when they adopt any other code.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours truly,

MARY BURR,

Member Royal British Nurses' Association and
Member of General Council.

The Training of Midwives and Monthly Nurses.

BY MISS MARGARET BREAY.

(Continued from page 29.)

THERE should always be in connection with a Lying-In Home an isolation block, containing a small ward, ward kitchen, rooms for day and night Nurse, and lavatory, so that a case can, if necessary, be completely cut off from those in the general block.

The Nurses' quarters should be quiet, and, if possible, some little distance from the wards and administrative block. Their hours in bed are uncertain, frequently they are up at night and have to get what sleep they can in the day time, and as much quiet as possible should be secured to them. From this rule I would except the Lady Superintendent, whose rooms should be situated where she can be quite easy of access both night and day.

The officers of the Home consist of the Visiting Staff and the Resident Medical Officer, the Lady Superintendent and several resident

Midwives. One of these latter should be responsible for teaching the pupils who are in the House, the others for acting as district Midwives. They should be persons with general training, who have shown a special aptitude for midwifery, and should be possessed of a large store of patience. This will be greatly in requisition with a constant change of pupils. The Lady Superintendent, besides being trained in medical and surgical work, and competent to superintend the midwifery, will probably also have to act as housekeeper. Two mornings in the week, at least, she will have to devote to seeing future patients, and finding out as much of their previous history as possible, so as to advise them to come into the Home in preference to being attended outside, should any complications be likely to occur, and also to book their addresses and the probable date of their confinement, and to receive the fees payable in advance. It is an advantage if she can dispense. She will also have to instruct the pupils, both practically and theoretically, and she must hold herself in readiness to go to the assistance of the Nurses either in the House or district at any time in the twenty-four hours. If she does this it is often possible to avoid sending for medical assistance, and furthermore, in this way she will gain a great insight into the capacity of her pupils.

Next with regard to the pupils themselves. In age they should certainly not be under seven or eight-and-twenty, it is better that they should be about thirty. A training in midwifery entails a considerable amount of district work. They should, therefore, be women with a keen sense of responsibility, whose conscientious discharge of their duties can be relied upon, as some of their work must necessarily go unsupervised, and thoroughness in every detail, desirable in all Nurses, is essential in Midwives and monthly Nurses. With all Nurses worthy of the name, they should never be content to do any work in less than the best possible way. They should be physically strong, and possessed of a large fund of endurance and dogged determination. They should be persons of natural gifts enabling them to become self-reliant, self-controlled, and self-sacrificing, otherwise they have mistaken their vocation. They should cultivate habits of close observation, and they should, both personally and in their work, be absolutely, scrupulously, surgically clean. They should further acquire large-hearted and kindly sympathy and tact in dealing with patients in their own houses, always remembering that the important person in the sick room is the patient, not the Nurse, a fact which some of the Nurses

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)