

Nursing Politics.

THE REGISTER SUPPRESSED.

THE Register of Trained Nurses of the Royal British Nurses' Association has been suppressed by the Executive Committee, upon the suggestion of the Medical Hon. Officers, and this without the consent of the governing body! or of the unfortunate nurses who have paid upwards of £3,000 in fees, for the benefit of placing their names on a voluntary Register, issued by a Society incorporated by Royal Charter.

THIS suppression of a distinct professional benefit is no surprise to those who opposed the domination of the medical element in the Nurses' Association. It is part of the scheme inspired by Dr. Bezly Thorne in 1894, and so ably supported during the past few years by the Hon. Officers; and in depriving the nurses of their professional Register a most unscrupulous attack has been made upon their personal rights and professional liberties.

THE plain truth is that the intense jealousy of a few third-rate medical men of the progress and influence of highly-educated and well-trained nurses, is becoming a very serious question for the public; and the "squashing" of the Nurses' Register by the medical element in the Royal British Nurses' Association is the latest proof of the unscrupulous and bitter intensity of this deplorable feeling.

THE intimidation of the Matrons who protested against this assumption of absolute power by the Hon. Officers is now ancient history. These men drafted the new code of bye-laws, other men in high places accepted them, and one and all denied a fair hearing to the conscientious objectors. These bye-laws were forced upon the members who founded the Association, and wholesale resignations have been, of course, the result.

THE Register is snuffed out, and in its place Mr. Fardon and his colleagues have issued a "Roll of Members," a publication which is highly significant for those who care to study it. From careful analysis we find that during the year 1898, after the new bye-laws were thrust upon the members, no less than *three hundred and eighty names have disappeared from the list!!* About *two hundred* members have resigned, and the remaining nurses have caused their names to be removed from the Register, either by resignation, or by declining to communicate with the present managers of the Association.

BESIDES this wholesale secession from the Association, *one hundred and fifty-two* names still remain upon the so-called "Roll," entered without any address as "uncommunicated," and numbers of names of those are also printed who have refused to pay their annual subscription for two or three years past; so that had all these nurses' names been omitted from the list, it would prove that upwards of *one fourth* of the whole of the nurse members had severed their connection with the Association in 1898. Now we understand why "resignations" are never reported in the "Official Organ" as they should be month by month.

THEN we come to the year's work, to accomplish which hundreds of pounds are spent, and for which appeals to the "charitable" are constantly made. The grand number of *seventy-nine* new members have joined the R.B.N.A. during the year 1898.

- 4 Matrons.
- 28 Private Nurses—
- 6 from Middlesex Hospital.
- 5 " St. George's Hospital.
- 4 " Chartered Nurses' Society.
- 3 " Royal Free Hospital.
- 3 " London Temperance Hospital.
- 3 " New Zealand.
- 2 " Chelsea Infirmary.
- 2 " Devon and Exeter Hospital.
- 2 " Sussex County Hospital.
- 2 District Nurses.
- 1 from Gt. Northern Hospital.
- 1 " Park Fever Hospital.
- 1 " Poplar and Stepney Sick Asylum.
- 1 " Royal Infirmary, Glasgow.
- 1 " County Hospital, Lincoln.
- 1 " Newcastle-on-Tyne Infirmary.
- 1 " St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester.
- 1 " Staffordshire Union Infirmary.
- 1 " General Infirmary, Bedford.
- 1 " The Sanatorium, Blackpool.
- 1 " School Sanatorium, St. Andrew's.
- 1 " New South Wales!

IT will be observed that the nurses from the leading training schools have refused to join the Association under the present management, and they are to be sincerely congratulated upon their unanimous determination not to place themselves in a false position. So long as the Royal British Nurses' Association denies to the nurse members a self-respecting Constitution and just personal rights, just so long should trained nurses give it a very wide berth indeed.

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