

We are glad to see that medical men are at last grasping the fact that midwives are not even satisfied with posing as "registered practitioners," and do not hesitate without general training to act as nurses. Dr. G. E. Yarrow refers to the injustice of this question in last weeks' *British Medical Journal*.

In writing on the midwife question, "women," he says, "without any previous knowledge of the duties of a sick room attendant are taken into the various lying-in hospitals, and after a six or eight weeks' training (?) are sent out with certificates to compete with nurses who have devoted three years in acquiring a knowledge of their duties at general hospitals, and have been examined before taking their certificates; and it is a well-known fact that these so-called monthly nurses do not limit their services to attendance on maternity cases, but accept anything that offers itself in the way of nursing. A fair illustration of this fact recently came under my notice. A woman called at an institution where she had received two months training to inquire if any engagement were known likely to suit her. Asked if she had attended any cases since she had left the institution, she replied she had had no maternity cases, but had been well employed at others, and had just left a nursing case of ovariectomy, for which she had been paid eight guineas per month. Comment is unnecessary."

Whilst glad to find Dr. Yarrow in sympathy with opinions so long expressed in this journal, we must make one comment, or at least ask a question. Who was the medical practitioner who engaged or permitted this nurse fraud to attend his patient, and to risk her life by so doing? If medical men would unite to insist upon the state registration of three years trained and certificated nurses such scandals would soon cease to exist, and the public receive rightful protection from fraudulent nurses.

At a recent meeting of the Newton Abbot Board of Guardians the only applicant for the vacant post of nurse was one who had hitherto held the position of asylum attendant. Dr. Ley wisely pointed out that the duties of an asylum attendant and a workhouse nurse were very different things, and suggested that she should be asked if she had had any nursing experience at all. It was agreed that this should be done, and that if the reply were satisfactory the applicant should be asked to attend before the Board. Dr. Ley evidently agrees with the nurse members of the R.B.N.A., that experience as an asylum attendant does not entitle a woman to rank as a trained nurse. We know of no one

who thinks it does except those medical members of the Nurses' Association, who, in casting about them for a means of filling the depleted coffers of this Society, which their mismanagement had emptied, thought that they had found a solution of the difficulty in offering to register asylum attendants as trained nurses at a guinea a head. That they were not qualified as trained nurses was a matter of minor importance. Happily the nurses themselves thought otherwise.

## Croydon Infirmary Controversy.

### DECISION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

At the meeting of the Croydon Board of Guardians on Tuesday a formal letter was read sanctioning by the Local Government Board the application of the Guardians to appoint a Superintendent of Nurses. The Local Government Board made no comment on the general facts in the dispute between the Guardians and the Matron of the Infirmary.

Mr. Shirley thought this letter most satisfactory to all the members. The Board had been twitted in the public press that they would have to climb down. This letter proved the Board would not have to climb down but were climbing up.

The list of duties of the new "Superintendent of Nurses" prepared by the Special Subcommittee was then submitted to the Board for approval, which gave this officer entire control of the nurses when on duty in the wards, and in the Home, and constituted the Matron's position a sinecure.

Of course, discipline in the nursing department under such an arrangement will be impossible, and the nurses are likely to suffer professionally, as no reputable hospital or nursing society will admit on to their staffs women nurtured in a hot bed of disorganization, actually compelled to ignore the Matron of the institution, and, presumably, launched into the nursing world on their so-called certificates without her signature. Our advice to women is to avoid the Croydon Infirmary—training there can be none—as no woman with an ounce of self respect or loyalty to her sex will consent to occupy the anomalous position of Superintendent of Nurses under the present authorities. We deeply regret to observe that in these test cases, in which Miss Julian at Croydon, and Miss Rogers at East Preston, have had the courage to resist coercion for conscience sake, that they have received no support from the Local Government Board. A rapid decline in the tone of Infirmary nursing must result if this policy continues.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)