

Nurses' Journal in the issues for February, March, and April, of this year, copies of which lie before us and which we advise those concerned to order from their office, price 2d., before they accept Mr Fardon's explanations on the subject.

For the last six months the Midwives' List has been offered for sale from the Royal British Nurses' Association office, under the *new title*, as follows:—

List of Members
who have obtained
"Certificates as MIDWIFERY NURSES,"
not, be it observed,
"Certificates qualifying them to act as
MIDWIVES,"

which were the words formerly used.

Of course, when Mr. Fardon was taken severely to task by this journal last month for this unjustifiable action, hurried meetings were called, consultations took place, the whole matter was discussed, the danger realised, and an "authoritative denial" put forth. It is quite easy to deny what is said, but not so easy to disprove what is *written*, and we claim that the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association not only *intended* to deprive the members of the term "Midwife," but that they *did it* by substituting for it the title of "Midwifery Nurse," and advertising the change of title in their own official organ in the months of February, March, and April, in the present year, as promised to Mr. Bateman. No amount of wriggling or specious argument will alter this *fact*. It is printed in black and white, and cannot be explained away.

To return to the General Council meeting, we are glad to observe that the chairman, Dr. Godson, read a letter from Dr. Cullingworth emphasising our contention that the L.O.S. certificates are not awarded for training and examination in *nursing*, but are granted to those who have passed an examination in *midwifery* specially instituted for *midwives*.

To make a long story short, Mr. Fardon, forced by public opinion to place the matter before the Governing Body of the Royal British Nurses' Association, came to the meeting thoroughly brought to heel, and proceeded to move a formal resolution on the subject, that the following be the title and footnote attached to the forthcoming List of Midwives:—

Title.—"List of members who have also obtained certificates of special training as midwives."

Note.—"Previous to June, 1895, the certificate

granted by the London Obstetrical Society was called by this body a 'diploma.' Since 1895 the word 'certificate' has been substituted, and it should be so understood in the following List."

Miss Thorold, of course, seconded Mr. Fardon's resolution, and it was carried. Thus the title of "midwife" has been retained.

THE MORAL.

The moral of these Middlesex methods of embroiling the R.B.N.A. in contentious questions is typical and twofold.

(1) That matters of grave professional importance to the nurse members are still arranged by the hon. medical officers, and their packed executive, without any reference to the general body of members who have a right to a vote, according to their Royal Charter.

Proof: "The Midwives' List was compiled and printed, and the names of nurse members published therein side by side with midwives who are *not* nurses, *without the consent of the nurses themselves*."

(2) Such autocratic actions upon the part of the hon. officers and their committee are not even reported in the *Nurses' Journal*, the official organ of the R.B.N.A.

Proof: Six issues of the *Nurses' Journal* have appeared this year, from January to June, and the important correspondence, and the decisions arrived at between Mr. Fardon and Mr. Bateman, have not once been alluded to in its columns. The whole matter was withheld from the general body of members, until the publicity given to it in the *British Medical Journal* and the NURSING RECORD compelled Mr. Fardon to bring it before the Governing, and, therefore, responsible, body of the Royal British Nurses' Association.

Surely after this latest exposure the nurses must realise how false and undesirable is their position under the present *régime*! The question suggests itself: "Why do nurses holding honourable positions accept official responsibility in an association where they are kept in the dark as to its affairs, and are thus made responsible for the wrongdoing and injustice, which they deprecate? It is to be hoped that this is the last time—it is by no means the first—that Mr. Fardon will be permitted to drag the reputation of British Nurses through the mire. In perfectly plain language in the public press Mr. Bateman has accused him and his supporters of dishonourable dealing. It is not an enviable reputation to have in the body politic that in a corporate capacity—the word of the Nurses' Association is not to be relied upon.

British nurses have themselves to blame if they permit their honour to be tarnished. It is their duty to see that it is in clean keeping.

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