

I want my letters brought before the General Council on this subject, which I suppose cannot be, before another year, or at least six months.

Yours truly,
 GEORGINA B. MACVITIE,
 M.R.B.N.A.

[Those of our readers who read carefully the correspondence between Miss Macvitie, member R.B.N.A., and Miss G. A. Leigh, the secretary of that society, in our last issue will be somewhat astounded by the attitude assumed towards an old and experienced trained nurse by a paid and unprofessional official.

It will be observed that a member of the R.B.N.A. writes an official letter, addressing it to the secretary and desiring it to be brought before the executive committee, on a point of much professional interest. Instead of receiving, as she should have done, a formal acknowledgment of her letter, or a statement that her letter would of course be placed before the committee at its next meeting, Miss G. A. Leigh, who is not an honorary officer nor a trained nurse, writes back an informal letter, and invites Miss Macvitie to call at the office, and writes, "I will give you full particulars relating to the midwife question." Miss Macvitie, a trained nurse and a diplomaed midwife, apparently does not see what is to be gained by such an interview, and replies politely objecting to the insertion of the "Note" proposed by Mr. Fardon and seconded by Miss Thorold, which was accepted at a recent meeting of the General Council of the R.B.N.A., which she considers "qualifies" her Diploma of Midwifery. To this letter she receives the extraordinary reply from Miss Leigh—printed above—actually asking her if she is to understand from Miss Macvitie's letter that she wishes her name removed from the "List of Midwives," which is in the press, and desiring an answer by "return of post," "in order that I may make this omission before the proof is finished!"

The whole correspondence on the part of the paid secretary of the R.B.N.A. is most unofficial and impertinent, and we are pleased to observe that Miss Macvitie has replied desiring that her letters shall be brought before the next General Council Meeting. But this correspondence throws a lurid light on the conduct of business in the office of the R.B.N.A. Here we have a Royal Chartered Corporation professing to deal with the professional affairs and status of trained nurses and midwives, apparently entirely in the hands of an official, who seems strangely oblivious of her position as the servant of the members, and whose ponderous efforts to patronise her employers is quite Gilbertian. A member sends an official letter to the Committee, the paid secretary replies evading the request, and then apparently upon her own initiative calmly proposes to delete the member's name from the Roll, without any reference to the Executive Committee at all. The whole thing is a public scandal. Miss Macvitie should demand that the whole correspondence should appear in the official organ of the R.B.N.A.—Ed.]

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—I think the members of the R.B.N.A. have to thank Miss Macvitie for her plucky stand over the shuffling on the Midwives' question; and many will

agree with her that it is a thousand pities that we nurses were ever placed in a separate "Midwives' List," as now we must be dragged into the very bitter controversy always raging in the medical press on this question. The registration of midwives many nurses approved of, but of that terrible Bill that was brought forward last year, not to register midwives, but to license them annually, and to put them in a very defenceless position by its penal clauses, no trained nurse can approve, or, indeed, any midwife of sense either, as it was dangerous to personal liberty, and seemed framed to deal with a class of criminals instead of respectable midwifery practitioners. It is impossible to believe that if they knew more of the question, the persons who comprise the association for the Compulsory Registration of Midwives, would support such restrictive ticket-of-leave legislation. Now that Mr. Fardon and his friends have inserted this "Midwives' List" in the R.B.N.A. roll, they must stick to it, and support the title "midwife." "Midwifery nurse" means nothing, and nurses don't see why medical men should repudiate "midwives" and try to do away with them by calling them "nurses." They are not, as you say, nurses, and the whole thing seems child's play. Thanking you for the firm stand you have made in this matter,

I remain,
 Yours sincerely,
 AN R.B.N.A. MIDWIFE.

To the Editor of the "Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—There seems no end to the folly of the medical management of the R.B.N.A. Fancy dragging it into the "midwife" cauldron! What do nurses gain by such a policy? Nothing—indeed, nothing but trouble. As the matter stands now, members of the R.B.N.A. who are *thoroughly trained nurses*, and in addition hold the Diploma of the London Obstetrical Society, are in a far worse plight than outside midwives and nurses, whose names do not appear in the R.B.N.A. list, because they are free, and we are to be depreciated by a footnote attempting to explain that a "Diploma" is merely a "certificate." It cost me about £30 to get this L.O.S. Diploma. We seem quite helpless. What is to be done?

Yours gratefully,
 A DIS-DIPLOMAED MIDWIFE.

[No member of the R.B.N.A. is absolutely helpless, although it is of course almost impossible under the present management to get a hearing. We should advise you to communicate with the Executive Committee, and also to insist upon your views, being printed in your own official organ the *Nurses Journal*. It is ridiculous that members should be obliged to express themselves through this journal when they pay for issuing their own paper. But we know from personal experience that letters are suppressed by the so-called Editorial Committee, as when we were bitterly attacked by Mr. Brudenell Carter in its columns our reply was *excluded*. We have received a number of letters on this matter, one too long to print this week, from Miss Alice Beatty, whose name is on this much-criticised list; they will appear in our next issue. We wish our correspondents would sign their names. Since the decision in the historic Barlow case, members of the R.B.N.A. have nothing to fear from straightforward complaints.—Ed.]

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)