

British Nurses' Association to obtain representation on the Midwives' Board, which, if the Midwives' Bill now before Parliament becomes law, will constitute the central governing body, appear to us most unwarrantable. The Royal Charter by which this Association is incorporated clearly limits its functions to the "founding and maintenance of schemes for the benefit of Nurses," and confers upon it no power to deal with midwives. Further, the Hon. Officers of the Association have already proved themselves incapable of advancing the professional interests of nurses, and it would therefore be manifestly unwise to give them any control over midwives, and, indeed, the correspondence last year between the Council of the Medical Defence Union and Mr. Fardon, Hon. Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association affords illuminating and irrefutable evidence of their readiness to renounce the indisputable rights of the 250 nurses belonging to the Association who are qualified to act as midwives, without even going through the formality of consulting them in the matter. The majority of those concerned heard for the first time of the transaction through the medium of this journal, when certain members of the Association expressed themselves so strongly that Mr. Fardon's promise to the Medical Defence Union with regard to the Roll of Members was never carried into effect. We have no hesitation in saying however that Mr. Fardon and his colleagues have shown themselves unable to appreciate, or to safeguard, the interests of their own members who are midwives, and therefore that it would be unsafe to grant them any control over the large body of practising midwives who will come within the scope of the new act. If they endeavour to fulfil the obligations which devolve upon them under the Charter, they have plenty of work ready to hand without seeking to go outside the powers which it confers. Lastly, the usual procedure of the Medical Honorary Officers of the Nurses' Association in using it for the subjugation of the nurse members, supports the supposition that a medical man, not a nurse member, would be appointed as the representative of the Association on the Midwives' Board. There is already ample, indeed over, representation of medical interests on the Midwives' Board. It appears to us to need strengthening in the direction of representation of qualified midwives.

### Annotations.

#### THE NEW YORK STATE NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

There has been considerable discussion in the New York State Association of Nurses as to the best lines upon which to organize, namely, whether membership shall be on the individual basis, or whether individuals shall be represented by voting delegates appointed by their respective Alumnæ Associations. It was finally decided at a recent meeting that Alumnæ Associations should join as such and be represented by their appointed delegates, and that individuals also, should have the right to vote until there are twenty-five such members in any one locality, when it is expected that they will organize and be represented by delegates. Another point which was debated was the relation of medical practitioners to the Association, the discussion being raised on a clause which was brought up under which doctors were excluded from holding office. There was evidently a strong feeling in favour of this clause. "I believe in limiting the trustees to the regular members—namely, the nurses," said one member. "The medical profession cannot safely be trusted with office in a nurses' association," said another. "The experience of other nurses' associations shows that when they have had members of the medical profession as officers it has been a detriment to the association, and to the nurses as women," spoke up a third. "I endorse what the member has said," announced another nurse, "and I am the daughter of a physician." So the clause was carried, and the New York State Nurses will organize their own Association. We commend their opinions on the subject to the Hon. Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association, who have provided an object lesson which has been taken to heart both in Canada, as we reported some years ago, and now in the United States also.

#### THE TRAGEDIES OF CHILDHOOD.

Childhood is supposed, mistakenly we believe in many instances, to be a happy time, yet it is sad beyond words to find reported within a few days no less than four cases of suicide amongst children, two of them being boys, one a little girl of eleven, and one a girl of thirteen. This growing tendency to suicide amongst children is one of the most terrible developments of modern times.

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