

General Meeting, at which they voted against every amendment proposed by the Matrons and their supporters shows what would be our fate if their reactionary Re-drafted Bill were ever to become law: we should be like toads under a harrow; and that women could be found so devoid of all professional self-respect as to support the medical officers and their Executive Committee in voting away their own direct representation on the Central Board which is to make the regulations under which they will be compelled to work is almost incredible, and the angry spirit exhibited by these obsequious women cannot be realised excepting by those present. But to my mind the worst episode took place after the meeting, when but few were left in the room, when one of the doctors came up to a lady standing near me and attacked her in the most outrageously rude manner, saying, "You nurses behaved disgracefully," and "I will never employ another trained nurse." Upon the lady insulted, asking him politely for his name, he shouted, "I refuse to give it to you."

Now, you were present, and I feel sure you will do the little group who supported Miss Burr and Miss Forrest the justice to say that we considered the obnoxious clauses in the most quiet and reasonable manner, and that we had a perfect right to vote according to our consciences, not one word was said by us to which exception could be taken, and if we had permitted the proposed unjust disfranchisement of the whole nursing profession to pass unchallenged, we should have failed in our duty to the profession as a whole, and be unworthy of any professional status whatever.

I consider the intimidation of the nurse members who voted against the high-handed suggestions of the Executive Committee, after the termination of the business, one of the most disgraceful episodes in the history of the R.B.N.A., and that it ought to be known. Personally, I shall decline to have anything further to do with an association conducted in so domineering a fashion.

Yours truly,

ONE OF THE RANK AND FILE.

[Several members of the R.B.N.A. who attended the Special General Meeting suggest resignation. Our advice to them is not to resign. The Nurses' Association was founded *by nurses for nurses*, their work won the Royal Charter, and their money paid for it. For years past every nurse member who has dared to *think* or *speak* in opposition to Dr. Bezly Thorne's policy of medical autocracy in the Nurses' Association, has found herself quietly shelved, and if the lists of names on the nominated General Council and Executive Committee are scanned, the same *safe* women are to be found renominated by the hon. officers and re-elected year after year. The medical policy is anti-registration, and anti-registration the Association remains for years. Urged by the force of public opinion, registration becomes the order of the day. A reasonable amount of direct representation of the nurses is proposed on the Central Board defined in a Registration Bill. The obedient Council vote for it. Six of the seven direct representatives are swept off by the powers that be, and we find the majority of the nominated

clique voting to relinquish the rights of their colleagues as well as their own. As we have pointed out for years, the Royal British Nurses' Association, governed, as it is, by a small clique of intolerant medical men, is a standing danger to the well-being of the Nursing profession as a whole; and it is well that during the past few years self-governing societies of nurses have organised which are quite strong enough to expose the tactics of the Executive Committee of the R.B.N.A., and demand protection from a Liberal Government from the injustice of the men who control it. We do not believe that either the General Medical Council or the British Medical Association would uphold the *personal intimidation* of nurses by medical men, and the sooner some one puts the whole matter before them the better. Members of Parliament shall most certainly have the whole history of the R.B.N.A. from start to finish.—ED.]

#### HOW TO WASH THE BABY.

To the Editor of the "British Journal of Nursing."

DEAR MADAM,—I have been very interested in the correspondence on the washing of babies in the Journal, for there is no doubt that an interchange of experience between nurses is very educative and instructive.

I agree with Miss Kenealy that the more a premature child is left alone the better. I should oil it, and then wrap it up in cotton wool, each limb being separately swathed. I should then wrap it up in flannel, and supply it with a hot-water bottle, and if an incubator is not used, should keep it very snug and warm in its cot, and take it up as little as possible to feed it. It is a mistake, I think, to handle a premature infant much.

My experience, however, has not led me to question the value of the thorough bath as advocated by Miss Harvey for the new-born normal infant, and I have washed many and been responsible for the care of some 1,600 or 1,700, and have never known of any ill result. I think if the face and head are washed first before the child is put into the bath, the second bath advised by Miss Harvey is a counsel of perfection, although I like the plan, otherwise I entirely agree with her. I cannot help thinking that the soapy water advocated by Miss Kenealy in place of soaping the child before it is put into the bath, would, if strong enough to be efficacious, leave the skin of the child very sticky and stiff, and consequently uncomfortable. The skin of a new-born infant is a very tender thing, and even the skin of many adults cannot stand soapy water unless it is subsequently removed. I do not like the idea of the zinc ointment advocated by Miss Kenealy, as, when used for the backs of adults, for which some nurses like it, I have found it very bad for sheets. Zinc powder is no doubt good for drying the cord, but its use has, I think, rightly been largely abandoned in favour of more aseptic methods of treatment, and it has certainly another disadvantage which is that without great care on the part of the nurse, some of it is apt to be scattered on the child's abdomen and to dry the delicate skin of that. I have never in any way relied on it to

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