

and Wales were placed in a position to participate actively and at first hand in the whole work of the Committee by having on it an officially recognised representative, one, we should have hoped, holding the dual qualification of nursing and midwifery and, probably, experience in pre- and post-natal hygiene as well. There are many such who could have brought to the deliberations of such a Departmental Committee certain highly expert knowledge and experience which, if the Minister persists in his determination not to appoint a Registered Nurse, must of necessity be lacking when the Report of the Committee to the Minister is drafted. We reproduce the reply to Sir Robert Bolam as it indicates the general views of our Executive Committee on the matter.

Royal British Nurses' Association,  
194, Queen's Gate, London, W.1.  
July 17th, 1928.

W. H. Howes, Esq.,  
Ministry of Health,  
Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

Dear Sir,—

COMMITTEE ON THE TRAINING AND SUPPLY OF MIDWIVES.

I am to convey to you the thanks of my Executive Committee for your letter of 29th June, which received the very careful consideration of that Committee at their Meeting on 13th July. I am instructed to bring to your notice their views, as indicated in the letter to the Minister of Health dated 19th June, of which I enclose a copy herewith. As, so far, only an acknowledgment of the receipt of this letter has been received, my Committee do not know what the Minister may have decided in connection with the suggestion that it may yet be possible to add to the personnel of the Committee a representative of the Registered Nurses of England and Wales.

I am to say that, while my Committee feel very desirous of giving any information and assistance possible to the Ministry, and to the Committee which is to consider the working of the Midwives Acts, they feel that they must make their acceptance of Sir Robert Bolam's invitation contingent upon the appointment of a Registered Nurse to act as a Member of the Committee on the Training and Supply of Midwives. We consider that it is due to the highly qualified Registered Nurses (many of whom hold the dual qualification of certificates in General Nursing and in Midwifery) that they should be acknowledged as competent to participate in the deliberations of such a Committee as this, which has been appointed by the Minister. Further, we believe that any evidence put forward by an Association of Nurses must, of necessity, lose much of its value, unless there can be brought to the consideration of such evidence the same type of expert knowledge and professional experience which should go to the compilation of the evidence which you have requested us to present to the Departmental Committee on the Training and Supply of Midwives.

I am,  
Yours faithfully,  
ISABEL MACDONALD,  
*Secretary.*

There are two important principles involved in the matter. The first pertains to the right of a profession, which has received legal recognition as such by the State, to be recognised by the different Departments of the State, as holding a professional position in the body politic and thereby as possessing a claim to express an opinion on questions which bear relationship to its functions in the national life. And, when the status and responsibilities of the profession are ignored in such matters as this, neither organisations of nurses nor the nurses individually should neglect the task of "educating their masters"; there is far too great a tendency to undervalue the profession of

nursing when it comes to a question of advising ministerial and administrative departments. The failure of the London County Council to appoint Registered Nurses to participate in the Inspection of Nursing Homes was another matter upon which there was a good deal of discussion in the Committee and the feeling was prevalent that the attitude of the Ministry of Health and the London County Council respectively indicated a thinly-veiled contempt either for the work of the Nursing Profession or for the personnel of which it is composed.

If this is so, respect for our profession and, further, our own self-respect demand that we throw down the gauntlet and use our best efforts to show Government departments that we are not content to be regarded as mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, but that we are entitled to bring the head as well as the hands of the nursing profession to the work of improving the race.

From a more domestic aspect of the question there is the principle that knowledge can only shine when it meets knowledge. However carefully compiled, however ably placed before the Committee, evidence from any body of nurses might be, it would be rendered abortive, in greater or less degree, were there not someone possessed of the same class of expert knowledge on the Committee to "let in light" on debatable points which concern such aspects of midwifery as are inextricably bound up with nursing, relationships so close that a very large number of midwifery appointments are open only to those who hold a nursing qualification as well as one in midwifery.

#### (CORRESPONDENCE.

##### A Great Inspiration to Womanhood.

DEAR MISS MACDONALD.—Please give to the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association my heartfelt thanks for their most beautifully expressed message of sympathy in the loss of my beloved mother.

She loved the Nursing Profession and honoured the devotion of the Nurse's life. Therefore, a message from your Association comes with especial comfort, and your tribute to her work and sacrifice for women is greatly appreciated.

My mother's ideal was that women, now fully enfranchised politically, shall make a worthy use of the great power which is theirs.

Though she is released from her labours among us, I know that her example and her faith in women will be a great inspiration to womanhood.

With renewed thanks,

I am,

Yours very truly,

CHRISTABEL PANKHURST.

35, Gloucester Street, S.W.1.

##### Cakes and Candy.

DEAR MISS MACDONALD,

Through the medium of the JOURNAL I wish to thank very warmly all my fellow members who helped me so generously by sending so many nice gifts for the Cake and Candy Stall. Especially would I thank those whose gifts I was unable to acknowledge personally, as no names or addresses were enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

ANTOINETTE SCHULLER.

##### DONATIONS.

GENERAL PURPOSES FUND.—Miss Nevile, E. H. Strange, Esq., M.D., 10s. 6d.; Miss K. N. A. Royds, 10s.; Mrs. Strong, Misses Bedwell, Bloomfield, Clifford, Holford, Orwin, Titherington, 5s.

ISABEL MACDONALD,

*Secretary to the Corporation.*

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