

The Nursing Record

"QUI NON PROFICIT, DEFICIT."

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Contents.

OUR ALBUM.—MISS HELEN FOGGO-THOMSON ...	129
EDITORIAL	129
LECTURES TO NURSES ON ANTISEPTICS IN SURGERY. —III. By E. STANMORE BISHOP, F.R.C.S. Eng.	131
DISTRICT NURSING IN INDIA. By MISS E. L. MITCHISON	132
OBSTETRIC NURSING. By "OBSTETRICA" ...	133
NURSING ECHOES	136
EXTERIORS AND INTERIORS	139
HOSPITAL INTELLIGENCE	140
WOMEN AND THEIR WORK	141
"NURSING RECORD" BENEVOLENT FUND...	142
CORRESPONDENCE	143
REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS	143
VACANT APPOINTMENTS, WANTED, &c. ...	144
COMPETITIVE PRIZE ESSAY	144
NOTICES	144

EDITORIAL.

WE commenced last week to consider the difficult, because hitherto undefined, subject of the position of Midwives in relation to the question of Registration, and pointed out the uncontrovertible, but generally forgotten, fact that there are Midwives *and* Midwives. We briefly described the manner in which probably five thousand women—and more—live and pursue this calling in country villages throughout these kingdoms, and therefrom deduced the conclusion that to attempt to prevent such women undertaking the care of their friends and neighbours, by an Act of Parliament, would completely disorganise village life, would cause untold miseries to hundreds of thousands, and would, in short, arouse little less than a great rural rebellion.

No Government, we believe, would have the hardihood to propose legislation on such lines, and certainly no British Parliament would ever sanction it. Times without number the Legislature of this country has declined to ratify penal clauses against quacks and pretenders in other professions, and has steadfastly refused to restrict the liberty of the subject in such matters. It therefore needs no further argument to prove that there is no possibility that the practice of Midwifery by unlicensed people will ever be made a criminal offence in England. On the other hand, it is common knowledge amongst Medical men that an incalculable amount of suffering is caused, and that many lives are sacrificed every year, in consequence of the ignorance or carelessness of so-called Midwives. And so the great practical question arises, as to what can be done in the way of prevention, short of the prison cell.

It appears to us that there certainly is such a measure of protection possible, and that it is to be found in the careful application of the system of Registration. Leaving for future consideration the class of Midwives who act as specialists, so to speak, in that branch, we would first discuss the

OUR ALBUM.



MISS HELEN FOGGO-THOMSON.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)