

danger to the mother. This is one of those refined cruelties in all these proposals of half education, for while in theory the Midwife is trained only to attend natural births, yet in practice she will be called upon to act in all cases of sudden danger to the mother or child, and when there is not even time to send for help. In 1888, 4,160 women, in England, lost their lives in child-birth; and the Registrar General states that this is much below the actual number. (4) The first Bill proposed that young unmarried women of 21 years of age might be Registered as Midwives. I hope so repulsive a suggestion will be promptly stopped, as no woman under 28 should be permitted to enter.

I hope it has been shown that this Bill gives no protection whatever to "poor lying-in women," and that its references relating to education are extremely vague; it is, in fact, only a Registration Bill. It does not demand an improvement in the present system of education. Because Midwives come from a class who cannot usually pay for a proper period of education, and if the expenses of education increased, their fees would also require to be increased. Now if all the lying-in Hospitals would at once agree to improve the training of Pupil Midwives—and without pressure from Government—some genuine good would follow. But if the bye-laws of the Royal College of Physicians, Ireland, relating to the training and examination of Midwives and Nurse Tenders, were universally adopted, this would in the meantime be sufficient. There each Midwife must show (a) that she has attended lectures for six months, and (b) attended a lying-in Hospital for six months. She agrees to surrender her diploma if found guilty of improper conduct, declares she will not perform any of the operations of Midwifery, and will send for a Doctor when the life of the mother or child are in danger. Perhaps it would be more in the interests of public health if they were trained for one year. Abroad they have to train for two, and in Russia for three years. It is too much to hope that these rules will be adopted. At some places certificates are granted to any woman who certifies only that she has attended twenty-five labours.

As this question of State Registration is just beginning to be discussed; as the Medical profession has not as yet reported upon it; as very diverse opinions have been expressed; and as the interests at issue are many, is it not well to ask—before we commit ourselves to legislation—that Government appoint a Select (Mixed) Committee to take and collect evidence upon the present systems of the education, examination, Registration, supervision, employment, and practice of Midwives at home and abroad, and to report

thereon? In this way an exact understanding would be arrived at. There is not the slightest call for hasty legislation, as the present Bill proposes only to legalise the existing state of affairs.

### THE LONDON HOSPITAL AND ITS NURSES.

[SOME PRESS OPINIONS.]

"It is impossible, in view of what occurred on Wednesday last at the Governors' meeting of the London Hospital, that those to whom the general interests of the medical charities of the metropolis are dear should abstain from expressing regret at the course then adopted by those who represent the managing body of the Institution. That some strong feeling should be experienced and even manifested can occasion no surprise, for unhappily the controversy which has arisen upon the Nursing system of the Hospital has to a large extent assumed a personal character. But that this element should be chiefly imported into the discussion by prominent members of the committee, who speak in a more or less representative character, is greatly to be deplored. We certainly feel bound to deprecate the language by which, according to the report of Wednesday's proceedings, the critics of the Hospital were dealt with. The attack made upon Mrs. Hunter was, in our opinion, certainly unjustifiable. Mrs. Hunter may be mistaken in the view which she takes. We think, for example, that the case of a Probationer Nurse is not so exactly like that of a medical student that the same disciplinary system can be applied to both. The connection of the Probationer Nurse is in some respects so much more intimate with the Institution in which she serves than is that of the student with the hospital, that the attempt to draw a parallel between them, and to argue from the one case to the other, is misleading. To this extent, at least, we incline to think that Mrs. Hunter puts her case too high. But we do not gather that she was met by any of the arguments which perhaps it would have been easy to adduce. On the contrary, her speech was cut short by disorderly interruptions, and even for a personal explanation she found audience only upon the chairman's intervention. Sir E. H. Currie appears to have declared that the whole controversy had had grown out of a feeling of petty spite. His reported language was that 'It was the old story of one woman getting her knife into another woman.' Seeing that Mrs. Hunter has undeniably drawn attention to some weak points in

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