

quiet, had gathered round the stove, and were amusing themselves with riddles. One little man propounded the momentous question, "What is the difference between a man and a dog?" to which many unsatisfactory answers were returned. Bye-and-by, a little girl of eight, who had been apparently buried in her book, looked up and said gravely "The difference is, that the dog is a faithful creature—man is not." We regret we were unable to make the acquaintance of this little cynic, for whom we predict a brilliant future.

SPEAKING editorially of the question of registration of Nurses and Midwives, discussed at the Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association at Carlisle, the *Medical Times* says:—

"With regard to the Midwives' question, the Association has taken an extraordinary and retrograde step. At previous meetings, the members have emphatically declared against the registration of Midwives, and at the last Annual Meeting they instructed the Council to promote a scheme of legislation for all classes of Nurses, but to oppose any attempt at legislation for Midwives. Nevertheless, the Parliamentary Bills Committee of the Association, after holding one abortive conference on the subject, came to the conclusion that legislation for Nurses was impossible at present, and directed its energies to formulating a scheme of legislation for Midwifery Nurses, which, in fact, was a Bill for the registration of Midwives under another name.

The Branches which have discussed this matter have either yielded a very tentative approval, or have expressed their entire disapproval of both the principles and the details of this measure. The Lancashire and Cheshire Branch went so far as to draft an entirely new Bill on the subject, and one which is hardly, if at all, more satisfactory than that which it supplanted. At the annual meeting of the Association, however, the question was raised in the simplest and clearest manner by an amendment to the report of the Parliamentary Bills' Committee: "that this meeting disapproves of the Draft Bill for Midwifery Nurses, or of any legislation for one special class of Nurses, especially if such legislation would make that class practically independent of medical control." The resolution was ably supported, but was defeated, practically, by the votes of the members of the Council of the Association, in a small meeting. And the position, therefore, of affairs at present is that the Association, in general meeting assembled, has expressed its adherence to the policy of the Parliamentary Bills' Committee—that is to say, to the proposal of legislation which the Association has again and again condemned, and the neglect of instructions which the Association has given. This is passing strange, because it is not only inconsistent with the previous action of the Association, but it also sanctions principles which are destructive of the power of the members at any general meeting.

We feel that the principle referred to, in the resolution we have quoted, is of cardinal importance, because it is obvious that no more fatal step could be

taken, so far as Nurses are concerned, than to split up their calling into three distinct and separate classes; whilst, so far as medical men are interested, the assertion that any class of Nurses can be independent of medical control and direction is a fatal blow at the relations which have hitherto existed between the medical and the Nursing professions; and one which we and all thoughtful persons must realise is fraught with the gravest possibilities of future injury to medical men. It is almost impossible to understand how the Council of the British Medical Association could have taken so dangerous a step, and it is necessary for us to insist upon the fact that the amendment contesting their proceedings was chiefly defeated by their own votes.

The matter must be more fully discussed, and be more widely adjudicated upon, before the dangerous principles to which we have alluded can be allowed to pass unquestioned; but, at any rate, this fact is now plain that the British Medical Association has felt itself unable, and has acknowledged its inability, to deal with the difficult question of the Registration of Nurses. We have often pointed out that, by such legislation, the whole of the difficulties of the Midwives' question would be met and fully settled; and, furthermore, that such legislation could be carried out upon lines which would be at present accepted by the Nursing profession, and would be thoroughly satisfactory to medical men. We therefore earnestly hope that the Incorporated Medical Practitioners' Association will undertake the work which has proved too heavy for the British Medical Association; that it will cause a Bill dealing with the question to be drafted and published as speedily as possible; and that it will not desist from its efforts until the matter of legislation, both for Midwives and for Nurses, has been finally solved and set at rest."

WE commented last week on the unwisdom of the Beaminster Board of Guardians in proposing to appoint a Nurse to the Infirmary on written testimonials, without a personal interview. It now transpires that, on being required to show her original testimonials, the "Nurse" in question admitted that those she had sent were false. Now, we have sometimes been accused of over-statement in our assertion that it is not an unknown thing for Nurses to obtain posts on the recommendation of false testimonials. Here is a case in point where the attempt was made by the "Nurse," though without success. This may not be a case for a Crown prosecution, because the testimonials were marked "copies," but it would seem that the Guardians ought to take some action in the matter to prevent others being swindled by this woman.

THE Aylesbury Board of Guardians seem to believe in letting things alone with regard to

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