

expressing its disapproval of the proposed Bill for the legislation of midwives, refrains from making any suggestions as to a standard to be laid down to be required of midwives. This standard is to be determined *after the bill is passed.*

A MEDICAL WOMAN'S VIEW.

WE are glad to observe that *at last* (one week before the Midwives' Bill is to be brought before the House for its second reading) a medical woman has publicly expressed her opinion upon it; Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., having addressed an exhaustive letter to the *Times* upon the subject. Status carries with it responsibility, and we have many times wondered, during the years that this agitation has been going on, at the silence of medical women on the question.

Mrs. Garrett Anderson points out that "medical women would suffer more than medical men by the creation of a class of independent midwives armed with a diploma. Everything the midwife did which was open to adverse criticism would damage the medical woman's reputation nearly as much as it would that of the midwife. Both the women would be known as "lady doctors," and they would practically be considered to stand upon one level. The promoters of the Bill are probably astute enough to recognize how much midwives are likely to gain in public esteem by the steady and thorough way in which medical women have been trained for the last 25 years. The midwives will garner in part of the credit resulting from this sound training, while it is not to be expected that their work as a whole will in return lift up the reputation of the qualified medical women."

We entirely sympathize with this point of view, more especially as the nursing profession stands in somewhat the same relation to midwives as the medical women. Repudiated by the latter, they will adopt, as many of them have already adopted, the title of nurse, and the nursing profession will be held responsible for all the delinquencies of women with three months' training. The question of fees which a midwife can command is one which exercises the mind of the medical profession, and Mrs. Garrett Anderson seems to fear that midwives will not be content to receive 5s. fees for attending midwifery cases for some eight or ten days. "I heard recently," she says, "of a midwife in a north country town, who makes her rounds in a brougham, her coachman being her husband, until recently a working miner!" The fees which a midwife receives, should, in our opinion, be settled entirely by what she can command, and any arbitrary rules regulating this point, must, on the face of it, be absurd.

Mrs. Garrett Anderson's solution for the settlement of the oldest and worst "gamps," namely, that they should be given "compensation to the extent of a pension of five shillings a week" does

not commend itself to us, as this would be quite insufficient to support them, while it would render them ineligible for admission into a "comfortable workhouse."

We cannot either commend the suggestion to choose a respectable woman of some intelligence and good health, and send her to a local centre for three months' training. A woman with this amount of training would, in our opinion, make an indifferent monthly nurse, while to entrust her with the responsibilities of a midwife is, we think, quite indefensible. At the same time there is much in the letter worthy of note, and we advise our readers to procure and read it.

AN INFLUENTIAL DEPUTATION.

ON Monday last an influential deputation from the Association for Promoting the Compulsory Registration of Midwives, waited upon the Duke of Devonshire, to ask for the support of the Government to the Midwives' Registration Bill. The deputation included the Hon. A. de Tatton Egerton, M.P., Mr. Heywood Johnstone, M.P., Mr. Walter Hazell, M.P., Mr. Charles Schwann, M.P., and Sir John Williams, Lady Balfour of Burleigh, Lady Mary Glynn, Dr. Annie McCall (representing medical women), Miss K. Twining (representing the Incorporated Midwives' Institute), Mrs. Alfred Booth (representing the National Union of Women Workers), Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttleton (representing the Women's Liberal Union Association), Miss E. Shaw Lefevre and Mrs. Buchanan (representing the Women's National Liberal Association), Mrs. Hogg (representing the Women's Industrial Council), Lady Trevelyan and Mrs. Charles McLaren (representing the Women's Liberal Federation), and Mrs. W. Bruce, Hon. Secretary of the deputation. The object of the deputation was to ask for the support of the Government to the Midwives' Registration Bill, which is put down for a second reading in the House of Commons on May 11th. Mr. J. B. Balfour, Dr. Champneys, Mr. G. F. Rounieu, Coroner for West Surrey, and Mrs. Alfred Booth spoke in support of the Bill.

The Duke of Devonshire in replying inquired what position had been adopted by the promoters of the Bill with regard to the alternative proposals of the General Medical Council.

Mr. Heywood Johnstone, M.P. said that the difference between the Association and the British Medical Council were not vital, and could be dealt with in committee. They did not object to change the word registration for licensing. Upon the point as to whether the license should be for one year only, or a continuous one, the committee had quite an open mind.

The Duke of Devonshire said that he thought the Bill had a very small chance of being brought forward on May 11th as he believed all the Wednesdays had been taken for Government business.

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