

### The Midwives' Bill.

THE Bill to secure the better training of midwives and to regulate their practice, was introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Tatton Egerton on February 2nd, and has been set down for a second reading on February 28th. We are unable to print the Bill *in extenso*, but those who are interested in it—and this number surely includes all nurses who are qualified as midwives, and who are therefore vitally affected by it—may read it in the *Lancet* of February 17th.

It is thought unlikely, although the Bill is down for a second reading on February 28th, that it will be taken, as the House does not, as a rule, sit until two o'clock on Ash Wednesday, which falls on the 28th, and the first order of the day is the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, a contentious measure which will inevitably give rise to prolonged discussion.

We do not think that it will be a matter for regret if the Midwives' Bill is not read for a second time, for, as we have often stated, we consider that the time has gone by for the recognition and registration of specialists, and midwives should either register their qualification as medical women or as trained nurses. Further, the standard required of midwives under the Bill is too low to be satisfactory, and a vital defect is that there is no provision for the representation, on the Board, of midwives themselves, so that they will be governed by a Board possessed of drastic disciplinary powers, and composed of persons whose interests are by no means always identical with their own. That such an unfair method of government is contemplated proves the slight esteem in which midwives are held, and the feeling that it is safe to domineer over them, is a fact which does not augur well for their liberty of action in the future. It is true that of the two persons appointed on to the Central Midwives' Board, by the Lord President of the Council, one is to be a woman, but it by no means follows that she is to be a midwife, and, even so, her voice and vote, on any matter affecting her professionally, could be easily swamped by those of her six male colleagues—a most serious condition, for no profession can be considered in a healthy state of development unless it is self-governing. We have grave doubts, however, whether the Bill will be carried in its present form. We hope not, and that when it is brought forward, it will be recognized that it is unstatesmanlike to tinker with specialities, and that legislation, to be effective, must take into consideration the whole nursing question. Those who advocate the registration of midwives will, in our opinion, be well advised to adopt a wider standpoint and to turn their attention to the necessity for the registration of trained nurses.

### Nursing Echoes.

\* \* *All communications must be duly authenticated with name and address, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith, and should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Upper Wimpole Street, W.*



It is a pity the so-called women's papers do not verify the information of unprofessional persons, when writing on nursing affairs. For instance, *The Queen*, in an inspired article on the arrangements of the Yeomanry Hospital, says:—"One of the nursing Sisters, Miss Johnstone, has already seen military service in Greece, having been

sent thither by the Princess of Wales in response to the request of the Crown Princess of Greece."

THIS statement is quite inaccurate. All the nurses chosen for service from England in the Græco-Turkish War—of which Miss Gertrude Johnstone was one—were selected by the Superintendent of Nursing, Mrs. Bedford Fenwick. Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales requested Mrs. Fenwick to select four nurses for the Crown Princess of Greece, and these ladies were Miss Alice Davies, King's College Hospital; and Sisters Isabel Carter, Katherine Stollard, and Ellen Tillott, of the Registered Nurses' Society.

AGAIN, in the *Girls' Own Paper* we find, in an article headed "The Life of a Nurse," half a column devoted to eulogising Sir Henry Burdett's Nurses' Club, at which "everything looks so spotless one might be miles in the country." This institution fizzled out more than a year ago.

A SPECIAL meeting of delegates from temperance, friendly, and trade union societies has been held at Hammersmith to consider a very remarkable state of things. It was stated that when Miss Alice J. Beatty, whose case against a medical man created such bitterness in medical circles, and who was a resident in the parish, became ill and applied at the West London Hospital for attendance, she was informed that "the Committee had placed a minute on their books, stating that, should occasion at any time arise whereby Miss Beatty should at any time require medical attendance, she should not get any treatment whatsoever from the Institution."

THE Demonstration Committee gave her a letter of recommendation, but Miss Beatty was again

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