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## EDITORIAL.

WE are not surprised to find that our consideration of the subject of Midwives and Monthly Nurses has attracted much attention and evoked considerable comment from those of our readers who are engaged in these departments of work. As opportunity permits, we will deal with the various suggestions, and reply to the many inquiries, which have been made upon the matter. But meanwhile—only expressing our thanks to our kind correspondents—we would pass on to the discussion of the next division of the subject.

As we remarked at first, there has been, and is, no small confusion amongst the public and even in professional circles as to the relative position and work of Midwives and Monthly Nurses. Quite recently a very distinguished Obstetric Physician declared that they were synonymous terms—a statement to which exception has been very widely taken. Thus far, then, we have shown that any scheme of Registration must recognise the great divergences which exist amongst women engaged in maternity duties. We have divided

Midwives into two classes—those who are Obstetricians and nothing more, and those who combine the work of a Midwife with that of a Monthly Nurse. In relation to the latter, it has been clearly shown that such a combination is essential in rural districts; and that for village workers like these the term of training may be—and indeed in the very nature of the case must be—more restricted, than should be enforced for either a Nurse or a Midwife destined to work amongst the general public.

It therefore appears to us that, as the training, the status, and the employment of these two classes of Midwives is widely different, their Registration should be also distinct; in other words, that on the Register they should appear in two distinct and separate classes. Class II. would in such a case, we will presume, comprise the village Midwives and Monthly Nurses. In Class I. would come those who are Midwives and Midwives only. At present, we believe, this latter is not so large a class as some suppose. But if we read aright the signs of the times, it is a section which will tend steadily to increase in numbers and influence, as well as in efficiency and skill; and we believe that nothing will so conduce to such improvement as the proposed scheme of Registration.

At present there is little or nothing definitely known as to the numbers of Midwives at work. Except that in scores of cases every year Medical men are summoned to see women suffering from the effects of the ignorance or the carelessness of their attendants, there is little or nothing known as to the result of Midwives' Midwifery. One is told that, since the commencement of its excellent examinations, the Obstetrical Society of London has granted diplomas to about eight hundred women, each thoroughly qualified, therefore, for her work. But probably no one knows how many of this number are now alive and following the occupation. To our own knowledge some are Matrons and Nurses of General Hospitals, and

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