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EDITORIAL.

THUS far, the consideration which for some weeks past we have been devoting to the question of the Registration of Midwives and Monthly Nurses has led us to the conclusion that there must almost inevitably be two distinct classes formed and recognised by the scheme—those who work in rural districts amongst their friends and neighbours, combining the functions of Midwife, Monthly Nurse and housekeeper; and those who are employed in one or other of the two former capacities by the general public in large towns or cities. It furthermore appeared plain that those women who are comprised in the former class should, in order efficiently to perform the duties which will devolve upon them, receive some regular instruction in the details of general nursing besides and beyond a thorough training for the special work they intend to undertake.

How then should the Midwives of the latter class be educated? Upon the assumption which has been hitherto advanced—that Registration will, by defining their position and their powers, give vastly increased status to Midwives, both as a

class and individually—it may surely be argued that a constant elevation of the standard of general and professional education amongst Midwives is certain to ensue. Of course, there will of necessity be differences in the extent of their knowledge between individual Midwives, exactly as there must ever be differences amongst them in physical strength and stature. Some will as certainly rise far above any fixed standard as others will be found to fall below it.

The question to be considered now, however, is not so much the details as the principles upon which the training of Midwives should be based.

At present it is, we believe, a fact that there is no recognised system or scheme of education for a Midwife in any part of the United Kingdom. In Scotland, which is considerably in advance of the rest of the Kingdom in this matter, it is essential, before any woman can present herself for examination, that she shall have attended a considerable number of confinements and been present at a certain number of Obstetric demonstrations. In Ireland, nearly the same rules, but in a lessened measure, are in force. But in England the necessary amount of practical experience is very small, and so long as the candidate can satisfy the examiners as to her technical knowledge, no stipulation is made as to the manner or the place in which the learning was gained, nor as to the time expended in its acquisition.

The first step to be taken would therefore appear to be the institution of a regular curriculum of study through which each would-be Midwife must pass before she can present herself for her Obstetric examination.

In discussing this subject we would make a bold forecast of the future. We would, at the risk of offending a certain small section who believe they magnify their art by affecting to contemn "mere Nurses' work," assert our conviction that a Midwife who is not also thoroughly versed in the details of Nursing, and competent if neces-

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