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# Nursing <sup>THE</sup> Record.

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## EDITORIAL.

### THE REGISTRATION OF MIDWIVES.—IV.

THE Bill which we have been discussing commences by the statement, that "it is expedient that provision be made for the Registration of persons officially qualified to practise as Midwives in England and Wales." Now, granting the expediency, which we most freely and frankly do, we desire to ask why, in the name of the most ordinary common sense, it is considered "expedient" that this regulation of Midwives should only take place in England and Wales? Are not the promoters aware that the employment of Midwives is much more common in Ireland, and even in Scotland, than in the rest of the British Isles? If the safety of women and infants demands skilled attention in one part of the country, why should not an equal protection be accorded to those living in every other geographical division? This instance of "glaring injustice to old Ireland" might be commended to the careful consideration of any enterprising member in search of a real "grievance"; while we cannot but believe that every representative from the other side of the Tweed will be fired with indignation at the proposal that the Imperial

Parliament should legislate irrespective of the needs of Scotland. The restriction is so marked, so strange, so unaccountable, that imagination is lost in wonderment. Can it be possible that there is a deep and dangerous political game being planned under the guise of this innocent—this most innocent—Midwives Registration Bill? Is it an attempt to introduce that thin edge of the wedge, which is so notoriously effective, in a renewed effort to obtain a disruption of the British Empire? It is certainly a strange coincidence that the members who have most strenuously supported this measure are notoriously thorough-going adherents of Mr. Gladstone, and anxious for Home Rule to be granted to Ireland, and then to Scotland, and then, perhaps, to England and Wales—if indeed Wales and then Birmingham have not previously demanded Home Rule for themselves. It is sad to think of such dark duplicity, but the chain of reasoning is perfectly plain. Once establish the principle and let it be accepted, and minor details must inevitably follow. Take the harmful necessary Midwife, who is so intimately associated with the real home-ruler—the mistress of the house. Proclaim from the house-top that it is expedient that the Midwife must be strictly controlled, but only in England and Wales; that legislation is necessary for the supervision of those who take care of the home-rulers in this part of the country, but that those who take care of the home-rulers in another part of the island can wait until some more convenient day to obtain another Act providing for their supervision. Let it be granted that this piecemeal and parochial legislation is advantageous in the case of home-rulers; and behold the principle is conceded, and minor details such as the meeting of home-rulers in separate parts of the country to carry out home-rule can be easily settled. Sadly and solemnly we warn the

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