

That Midwives will be licensed to attend Natural Labours only.—Who will be first to seek assistance: the registered Midwife, shielded by Act of Parliament, or the unregistered, with all the responsibility of her every act upon her own shoulders? And who is to say when a particular labour ceased to be natural? When death has taken place there will be simply conjecture versus the Midwife's statement. A Certified Midwife, anxious to maintain her prestige as a thoroughly competent woman, will be sorely tempted to let unnatural events take their course in the hope that Nature will right itself, knowing full well that if a Doctor come at the last he takes the responsibility of the death, and if no Doctor come her assertion must be received by the coroner. What class of women will register? Surely not conscientious ladies to do Midwifery and Monthly Nursing. No! but a very inferior class, who, armed with protection, and tempted by the pressing offers of money, will yield to the temptation, so constantly urged upon Doctors, to procure abortion. Yes! the Act will scatter broadcast ergot and other ecobolics now held fast by the Poisons Act. Thus, the door will be opened to legalising abortion-procuring and stillborns, as it is opened for legalising alleged over-lain children.

That the Bill will raise the Status of the Profession.—What a poor bait to hold out—the creating of a lower grade to raise the profession, when all the efforts made for many years have been in the direction of compelling all medical men to qualify in all branches. Was not the L.S.A., with his smattering of medicine and ignorance of surgery, considered so unfit to be in the profession, that a very strong point was raised against the system of partial qualification in the passing of the Act of 1886? Yet now it is proposed to throw overboard all those arguments, and to add another imperfect and lower grade of Practitioners to the already multifarious qualifications. Was not the license of Licentiates of Midwifery of London abolished, because they did not know where Midwifery practice left off, and where medicine and surgery commenced? Look at the status of the profession now! Did the Army and Navy Doctors ever hold a more degrading position than at the present time? Look at men of the highest qualifications glad to attend Midwifery at seven shillings and sixpence and ten shillings and sixpence, in order to eke out a miserable existence. Is their status to be raised by taking away what little they have? No! There is but one way of raising the status of the profession, and that is by unity—a house divided against itself is sure to fall. There are two sections of the medical profession constantly fighting each other—one, the section for genuine advance-

ment, by wiping out men who hold but imperfect qualifications; the other, who, always sailing under false colours, hoist the threadbare flag of the poor: the status of the profession—the public howl for it. What is the result of the work of this last section? Self-glorification and cheap advertisement, provident dispensaries, with consultants attending and giving advice and medicine for fourpence, and visiting for a trifle, to raise the status of the profession. Paying Hospitals, where a deaf ear is frequently turned to the cry of the really necessitous poor, who are consequently driven to seek the Workhouse Infirmary, that their places may be filled by a socially better, but less deserving class. Let not fancied philanthropists and so-called charitably-disposed persons deceive themselves by thinking that they are doing a Christian work in thus crying out, that they may be known of men. No! rather let them turn their attention from social questions to things pathological, in order that this country may be saved from playing second fiddle to foreign nations in this science.

Dr. J. H. Aveling has been good enough to send me a pamphlet expressing his views, for which I thank him. After reading it I came to the conclusion that it is a fair specimen of the arguments of the supporters of the Bill. By its contradictory statements it stands self-condemned, thus: "The Bill will, therefore, cause a diminution of the number of Midwives at present practising. It will also reduce the number who will practise in the future, for it will be more difficult for women to adopt the calling, on account of the necessary preliminary expenditure of time and money." In almost the same breath he says—"We want a ready and *inexpensive* method of instructing women in elementary Midwifery." There is scarcely a sentence in his pamphlet that cannot be shown to be a fallacy, either by this pamphlet or a little common sense.

NURSING ECHOES.

I AM asked to remind those of my readers who are on the General Council of the British Nurses' Association that the first Quarterly Meeting for this year will be held on Friday week, the 9th instant, at five p.m., at 20, Hanover Square. The formal Agenda sent to us for advertisement is: (1) Report from the Executive Committee; (2) To consider alterations in the conditions of membership,



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