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IMPORTANT NOTICE.—Those of our subscribers who wish to notify change of address must send such notification in order that it may reach the publishers NOT LATER than the Monday morning before publishing, otherwise the change cannot be made.

EDITORIAL.

THE REGISTRATION OF MIDWIVES.

THE Bill for the Registration of Midwives, which was expected to come before the House of Commons for its second reading last week, was, at the last moment, postponed by its promoters until March. There has been aroused, we are informed, so widely diffused and so powerful a feeling against the Bill, that there is now little, if any, chance of its passage into law, either this Session or in any future one. The medical papers contain long accounts of meetings of medical men held in all parts of the United Kingdom, to consider the provisions of the measure. With only the rarest exceptions, these representative gatherings—of those best qualified to understand the subject—have condemned the Bill, root and branch; while the very exceptions to which we refer have equally effectually crushed its principles or its proposals with faint praise.

To such an extent has this feeling been aroused, that we are informed upon excellent authority that its influence may even be felt in the General Medical Council. That august body—established by law as a kind of Medical Parliament, and composed of representatives of every University and Medical Corporation in these islands—was, by the last Medical Act, recruited by three medical men, elected by the votes of their brethren in England and Wales. One of these gentlemen, who is also a Member of Parliament, was originally persuaded to "back the Bill"—that is to say, to permit his name to be placed on the back of the printed Bill, as approving of its constitution and objects. That he has now withdrawn his name from this prominent connection with the measure is highly significant of the state of professional opinion on the subject, which he has probably discovered to exist. Another of the three, who has also, for some inexplicable reason, taken an active part in pushing the Bill, has, we are informed, announced his intention to continue his support. It is, therefore, openly stated that at the election of new members, which takes place this year, another gentleman will become a candidate against him, and that the Midwives' Bill will be made the test question by many hundreds, if not thousands, of medical men throughout the country. We shall, therefore, have the clearest proofs given of the exact strength of the opposition to, and the support for, this Bill amongst English medical men, and our information leads us to believe that the results will be very striking indeed.

All this turmoil and trouble has been roused, be it remembered, by a departure from a principle which we hold to be radically just, as well as eminently sensible, and which certainly we have advocated with all our power from the first issue

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