

12. *Penalty for Wilful Falsification of Register.*—Any person appointed to keep the register of midwives, wilfully making or causing to be made any falsification in any matter relating to the register of midwives shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be liable to a fine not exceeding ten pounds, or to be imprisoned with or without hard labor for any term not exceeding three months.

13. *Prosecution of Offences.*—Any offences under this Act punishable on summary prosecution may be prosecuted, and any fine under this Act recoverable on summary conviction may be recovered, in manner provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Acts.

The expenses of any prosecution shall be defrayed out of the county fund of the district where the prosecution takes place.

14. *Appeal.*—(1) An appeal shall be allowed to the Privy Council should any disagreement arise between the General Medical Council and the Midwives Board respecting the carrying out of the provisions of the Act, or of any of them.

(2) Where any woman deems herself aggrieved by any order, conviction, judgment, or determination of or by any matter or thing done under this Act by any court of summary jurisdiction, such woman may appeal therefrom to any Court of Quarter Sessions.

15. *Act not to Apply to Medical Practitioners.*—Nothing in this Act respecting midwives shall apply to legally-qualified medical practitioners.

16. *Extent of Act.*—This Act shall not extend to Scotland or Ireland.

[The bill is backed by Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. Schwann, Sir Frederick FitzWygram, Mr. Skewes-Cox, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Fenwick, Sir James Woodhouse, Mr. Harrison, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Graham, Mr. Bill and Mr. Heywood Johnstone, and was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, February 9th, 1897].

THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE OF INDIAN HEMP.

In the *Lancet* for January 23rd, there is an article on this subject by Mr. C. R. Marshall, who remarks that the want of uniformity in the preparations of Indian hemp has so often led to serious consequences in practice that many practitioners have discarded the drug as worthless or dangerous. Others, finding it of benefit in certain diseases, have expressed a hope that some means of standardizing the preparations would be discovered or the active principle of the plant isolated. Of the two conditions, the isolation of the active ingredient is the more likely to lead to uniform results in treatment. Quite recently such a pure, active product has been obtained, and the mystery which has hitherto enveloped Indian hemp seems in a fair way to being cleared up. Many points still need investigation, the most important from a medical point of view being the gradual change which cannabis compounds undergo by keeping. Both by practical experience and by scientific experiment it has been shown that the active ingredient gradually loses its power, and at present we know of no means of preventing this. A very interesting case of this loss of activity is described by Thomas Smith. He found that cannabin, which, when freshly prepared, produced a narcotic effect in doses of two-thirds of a grain, after exposure to the air for three years became absolutely inert. In India, it is said, dealers in this drug refuse to buy the old crops after the new ones are gathered, and after two years the crops are publicly burned in the presence of an excise officer. The cause of this growing inertness is probably due, as Leib Lapin suggests, to the oxidation of the active ingredient. He mentions experiments in support of this view, but these are not sufficiently convincing.