

children, managers of newspapers receiving advertisements for adoption, or the care of nurse children, should be required by law to send a copy of such advertisement, with the name and address of the advertiser, to the Local Inspector responsible for Infant Life Protection.

He shows first the difficulty of single girls of the poorer classes in finding proper care, other than in the workhouse, during their confinements, but that, difficult as the conditions are for a girl in the time preceding her confinement, they are as nothing to those which lie before her as a mother. It is a grave reflection that the people proffering help are those likely to be her worst enemies. At a time of her life when wise counsels, warm sympathy, and a wide understanding might shape the whole course of her future for good, the girl runs the great risk of falling into the hands of unprincipled people, who see in her an easy prey to their low and selfish instinct of greed.

The practices current in some "maternity homes" which many women enter, in the belief that things will be made easy for them, and that fate will intervene to save them from any further responsibility of motherhood, cannot be too severely condemned. That this is one of the inducements offered by the proprietors of some homes has been proved in the course of the Society's inquiries.

We have not space to deal at length with the chapters on "The Offer of the Baby Farmer," "The Price on a Child's Head," "Does the Premium Protect?" "What of Weekly Payments?" "Children Taken for 'Love,'" and "Sensations of the System." We advise all midwives and nurses to procure and study this book, written by one thoroughly conversant with the subject. We note with interest that the author looks forward to the day, which will surely come, for the appointment of a Minister for Children. May that day, he says, soon come. It will be the day of the great deliverance.

### The Woolwich Home for Mothers and Babies.

A project is on foot to enlarge the work initiated by the Council for the Promotion of the Higher Training of Midwives, at Woolwich, on the lines originally laid down.

It is proposed to open some beds for children and women in a separate building, and with a separate staff, but under the same management as the Home for Mothers and Babies. This maternity hospital, which was founded by the Council in 1905, is refusing applications for beds daily from lack of room; the Council is, therefore, anxious to increase the number of its maternity beds by housing some of the staff under a different roof, and at the same time to provide one of the small feeding hospitals advocated by the *Times*. In these general wards the future district midwives will receive their preliminary training in the nursing and handling of sick people, before they proceed to the more difficult science of midwifery.

The Council is appealing for financial help in order to carry out its work in a very poor neighbourhood.

### The Training of Midwives.

Mrs. Wallace Bruce, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. A. L. Leon, Hon. Treasurer, and Sir John Williams, M.D., have addressed a letter to the press drawing attention to the work of the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives, and appeal for funds to extend and complete that work. They state that a very large number of women ought to be trained in midwifery by the year 1910, and this must be done largely by funds provided by private generosity, as great numbers of suitable women cannot afford the cost of training, which is about £25 for each midwife. It is impossible to exaggerate the blessing that competent attendance in child birth means to poor women and to their children.

All information may be obtained from the Secretary of the Society, Dacre House, Dean Farrar Street, Westminster, S.W.

The Society is doing admirable work, and has our sympathy in its desire to train women efficiently as midwives, but we do not think that the supply of an efficient number of midwives will be greatly affected by the work of training. The question is a much larger one, and concerns the prospects of the midwife when trained, and these could not well be worse.

Take the County of Hertfordshire for instance. In a memorandum recently issued by Countess Cowper, Chairman of the Provisional Committee of the County Nursing Association, it is stated that the midwives in the county during 1907 earned an average of 4s. 4½d. per week each. Subtracting the earnings of the three women who do make a livelihood, the remainder earn, on an average, three shillings a week. What encouragement, therefore, is there to women to take up midwifery as a means of livelihood, for, even if they receive their training free, free training always involves a pledge to work as a midwife for a certain period; to work, therefore, at an unremunerative occupation when a more remunerative one might be undertaken.

The real crux of the adequate supply of midwives is the question of payment, and behind this the question of organisation. If women could look forward to the reasonable hope of a fair income or salary when trained the question of training would right itself, as they would be willing to expend money on fitting themselves for the work.

As there is no reasonable hope of the rural districts where midwives are most needed being able to support them, the only prospect of dealing effectively with the situation is that they should be placed, and partially supported, by a central association. We have always believed that the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute is the Society most suited to deal with this matter, and to receive donations which might form an endowment fund for the maintenance of midwives in necessitous districts.

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