

The Midwife.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE SCHEMES.

A Sessional Meeting of the Royal Sanitary Institute was held at 90, Buckingham Palace Road on Tuesday, March 9th, at which an extremely interesting and instructive paper was read by Dr. E. W. Hope, D.Sc., M.O.H. for the City and Port of Liverpool.

To all those who think fundamentally, and we may reasonably add *imperially*, the question is one of vital importance. This great northern city has the well-merited reputation of being in the forefront of social service activities, and Dr. Hope is evidently one of those who both think and act fundamentally; this he manifested in his opening remark, "Infant welfare, comprising as it does maternal welfare and ante-natal hygiene, is one of the most important and far-reaching obligations which rest upon sanitary authorities. Although it may not be fully realised, the subject is nevertheless the well-spring of all sanitary operations, great or small." He urged the great necessity of the co-operation of voluntary agencies with the local sanitary administrators and the Government Departments, statutory powers, he maintained, being powerful aids not possessed by voluntary agencies. Co-ordination, he insisted, must be aimed at. With this opinion we are in perfect accord. Referring to the memorandum issued by the Local Government Board last July, Dr. Hope said that the first reference was, as it ought to be, to the arrangements for the local supervision of midwives, as the midwife is naturally an important factor in a complete scheme for infant and maternity welfare, and ante-natal hygiene. There are 208 midwives working in the city who are, with very few exceptions, fully-trained women. Through the encouragement of the M.O.H. they have formed themselves into an Association, the advantage of which has been proved to be great, namely, that the midwives as a body are more closely linked up with sanitary administration than they ever were before. To themselves also the advantage is apparent, for they can, and do, arrange for themselves special courses of instruction. They all fully appreciate the importance of ante-natal hygiene, a large number of them systematically instruct their patients, some of them even hold classes of instruction in personal hygiene, care of infancy, including clothing, feeding, &c.

It was very interesting to learn that there are no less than five *Corporation* Infant Welfare Centres in Liverpool, the chief feature of which is the provision for the distribution of a suitable food for infants whose mothers are unable to suckle them. Expectant or nursing mothers, also,

who are suffering from malnutrition may be sent there by midwives or doctors, and they also receive certain quantities of milk daily at a cheap rate, or in some cases free of charge. The average daily number of infants fed at these depots during the year is 1,100. As Dr. Hope described, graphically and in detail, all the methods in practice for the ante-natal, natal and post-natal care of mothers and infants, we could not help feeling that Liverpool richly deserves its reputation as a progressive city in social service.

When women leave the Lying-in Hospital, the "Mothers' Visitors," working under the Liverpool Ladies' Sanitary Association, are notified, and they visit them until the babies are about twelve-months old. So comprehensive is the scheme for post-natal hygiene, that it comprises the keeping in touch with young children as they grow older. Briefly, the ideal of a perfect system of care of the child, from the pre-natal period to school age, when it comes under the care of the school doctor and the school nurse, is fully materialised. Among those who took part in the lively discussion which followed were Dr. J. S. Fairbairn, F.R.C.S., F.R.P.S., General Lying-in Hospital, Lambeth; Dr. Eustace Hill, B.Sc., M.O.H., Durham County Council; Dr. Eric C. Pritchard, M.A., M.R.C.P., Hon. Physician Infant Consultations, St. Marylebone General Dispensary; Dr. Arthur Newsholme, C.B., F.R.C.P., ably filled the post of Chairman.

THE BRITISH HOSPITAL FOR MOTHERS AND BABIES.

The Local Government Records and Museums Committee of the London County Council at its meeting on Tuesday last stated that on June 30th, 1914, they reported on a draft scheme of the Charity Commissioners relating to the British Lying-in Hospital and the Home for Mothers and Babies. It was proposed to amalgamate the British Lying-in Hospital Charity with the Home for Mothers and Babies in Wood Street, Woolwich, under the title of the British Hospital for Mothers and Babies. The British Lying-in Hospital consists of premises in Endell Street and Betterton Street, Long Acre, and it appeared possible that the amalgamation would shift the area of benefit from the central districts to the outskirts of the county, and that persons resident outside the county would participate in the benefits of the charity to a larger extent than heretofore. The area of benefit of the charity was not specifically stated, and after consulting the Education Committee and the Midwives Act Committee, they asked the Charity Commissioners to amend the draft scheme—(i) by restricting the benefits of the charity to residents within the County of London; or (ii) by making it clear that there are no limitations in the area of benefit, and that the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)