

portant for them to have healthy fathers? Does it make no difference to the race if the fathers are broken down from overwork? I am sure the judges' horses are not bred on that plan; but the fact is, the judges are just a little afraid of going too far.

Other interesting developments in the culture of health I will write of later.

L. L. Dock.

### **Defective Infants.**

On Tuesday last Dr. T. N. Kelynack lectured at the Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square, on "Defective Infants," *i.e.*, those which are imperfect, faulty, deficient. Generally speaking, the defectiveness is, he said, dependent upon either (1) arrest, (2) excess, or (3) perversion in the developmental processes occurring during intra-uterine life. Again, defects sometimes appear to arise in connection with injuries or disorders incident to birth, and in some instances defects which really exist at or before birth are not made manifest until a later period.

The most important forms of defectiveness are those met with in connection with the nervous system—mental deficiencies. These were described by the lecturer in detail, and typical illustrations of children suffering from various forms of defectiveness were thrown on the screen with the epidiascope.

### **The Conference on Infantile Mortality.**

Mr. John Burns, President of the Local Government Board, delivered his Presidential Address on Monday evening to the delegates to the National Conference on Infantile Mortality, and congratulated the members assembled in Caxton Hall, Westminster, on the legislative and administrative changes which had either been realised, or brought nearer realisation since last year's Conference, in furtherance of their objects. Mr. Burns emphasised the importance of natural milk for infants as a preventive of infantile mortality, and said he did not believe town life was necessarily bad for children, but they must have good mothering, and plenty of good food at the right time. A woman should not be at work for the six months preceding or following the birth of her child. (If this is ever enforced it will bring us appreciably nearer Mr. H. G. Wells' ideal of the State endowment of motherhood.) The speaker also expressed the hope that the Government's Milk Bill would secure a cleaner milk supply for infants.

### **The Subjection of Nurses' Bill.**

Since our last issue the "Bill to provide for an Official Directory of Nurses," promoted by the 33 gentlemen who compose the Central Hospital Council for London, has been introduced into the House of Lords by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and read a first time. We wonder how many members of the Nursing Profession realise the tremendous significance of this fact.

When the seven financiers of the City of London suddenly launched their scheme for the control of nurses in 1905 we thought that no graver danger could threaten their liberties, but Mr. Sydney Holland and Sir Henry Burdett, the moving spirits of the Central Hospital Council for London, have sprung upon the nursing profession one which is infinitely worse.

That thirty-three men in London should, behind closed doors, draft a penalising Bill for the absolute government of a great body of at least 60,000 professional women, working in the three kingdoms, is such an outrage that words fail us to express the indignation such conduct must inspire in every just minded person. Although it is difficult to realise it, we live in a free country, and this is the twentieth century. We do not believe, therefore, that there is the slightest chance of the present House of Commons permitting this mediæval Bill to become law. At the same time the fact that a noble Lord has been found willing to introduce it into the Upper Chamber, presumably with the best of intentions, sounds a note of warning of which we nurses must at once take heed. From this time forth there must not be the slightest doubt in our minds as to the procedure of the profession-at-large. We must instantly and strenuously oppose and expose such mischievous legislation. The day is long since past when women will meekly and weakly permit themselves to be deprived of liberty of conscience and freedom of action by methods which are as ungenerous as they are obsolete.

The Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses has already communicated with the members of the House of Lords, enclosing expert information on the nursing question, and asking them to be good enough to read a short memorandum presenting the nurses' case for State Registration, and emphasising the fact that the nursing organisations have never been consulted as to the Directory Bill, and that thousands of trained nurses strongly object to its provisions.

The Society has also made a direct appeal to Lord Balfour of Burleigh, asking him to

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