

Infants' Health Exhibition.

Midwives and nurses are especially interested in all that concerns infants' health, and there was much for them to learn at the Infants' Health Exhibition, opened in Bedford by Mrs. Alston on May 24th, and continued to May 29th. The Exhibition was arranged by the Infants' Feeding and Hygiene Committee of the Bedfordshire Hospital Guild, of which the President is Dr. Gifford Nash, and the Hon. Secretary Miss Stacy, M.B. The Committee had the active assistance of Miss Hoyle, the Inspector of Midwives for the County Council, Miss Gabriel, Mrs. Mulvaney, and Mrs. Alfred Paine. The sections included (1) a Literature Stall, charts, books, and pamphlets dealing with domestic hygiene and the care of infants; (2) a Cottage Bedroom, with all simple requisites for mother and baby; (3) Necessaries and Comforts for Infants and Children.

THE OPENING.

Dr. Gifford Nash presided at the opening session, and said that the Exhibition had been arranged with the objects of promoting a knowledge of hygiene, preventing infantile mortality, and teaching the proper feeding of infants. It was intended to educate mothers, and those who were brought into contact with mothers, among the poor. Even doctors would find the Exhibition instructive. The need of such exhibitions and committees became very apparent when it was realised that 120 out of every 1,000 babies born in the urban districts of Bedfordshire die in their infancy.

Mrs. Alston, in declaring the Exhibition open, said she did not think she had ever seen anything quite like it before. In it they had every means of teaching Bedfordshire mothers how to bring up their babies well. She hoped they would learn a good deal and be rewarded by seeing their children flourish.

THE EXHIBITS.

The exhibits were numerous and interesting, and notable for their inexpensiveness. The damp-proof paper for the protection of the mother's bed is an efficient substitute for mackintosh, and costs only 9d. for a roll of twelve yards. A clothes line with a whistle attached was another useful contrivance for the mother.

The Cottage Bedroom had a fire in the grate protected by a fire-guard, a clothes-horse carrying a screen served as a protection from draughts, there was a low rush-bottomed chair for the nurse, a zinc bath was provided for the baby's daily tub, and a pail for soiled garments.

An earthenware ginger-beer bottle took the place of a more expensive one for the baby's cot. Baby's cupboard was made of an orange-box fitted with shelves, and cost just 11d. The jug containing his milk supply was kept covered with muslin, weighted with beads.

A cot made out of an orange-box raised on legs, had its mattress and pillow stuffed with chaff, and the blankets were travellers' samples, and therefore cheap, and newspapers between the blankets afforded additional warmth. Altogether the Exhibition was admirable, and remarkable for

many useful contrivances. Information was also supplied as to "The Bedford Babies' Welcome," a maternity provident society, of which Mrs. Westaway is Secretary.

The British Medical Association and the C.M.B.

The following resolution will be considered by the Representative Meeting of the British Medical Association at Belfast in July as a recommendation from the Council:—

"That the Representative Meeting approve the action of the Council in endeavouring to secure representation of the British Medical Association on the Central Midwives' Board."

In authorising the Medical-Political Committee to prepare and submit evidence on behalf of the Association before the Departmental Committee of the Privy Council, the Council of the B.M.A. added the following instruction:—

"And to urge the advisability of representation on the Central Midwives' Board."

Certainly, as the Society representative of the medical profession, the Association has strong claims to such representation.

Scotland and the Midwives' Act.

At a recent meeting of the Scottish Committee of the British Medical Association, held in Glasgow, it was resolved that the Midwives' Act as present in force in England should not be extended to Scotland, and that the Council should be asked to oppose any such extension.

An Unqualified Midwife.

At an inquest conducted by Mr. Troutbeck, with reference to the death of the infant son of a labourer at Battersea, it transpired that the woman who attended the mother, Mrs. Clara Rollings, of Linda Road, Battersea, had never been trained, though she had done nursing for 36 years. Medical evidence showed that death was due to blood poisoning, and that the septic condition might have been set up through the use of a pair of household scissors used at the time of the confinement, presumably for severing the cord, by Mrs. Rollings. The Coroner said Mrs. Rollings was exactly the kind of woman that one associated with Mrs. Gamp at her worst, 50 years ago. The jury, after retiring, returned a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony, and held that Mrs. Rollings should be severely censured for having failed to advise the calling in of a doctor. The Coroner said he was informed that on a former occasion Mrs. Rollings had promised the County Council inspector that she would cease to attend cases. The condition of affairs was such that the Council might possibly think it their duty to take further action under the provisions of the Midwives' Act.

The Goldsmiths' Company has forwarded £50 to the British Lying-in Hospital, Endell Street.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)