

## The Midwife.

### Official Inspection of the Babies.

The paternal care of children, which springs from the public school system, is, says the *International Hospital Record*, to be extended backward by the New York City Board of Health to the cradle.

The Bureau of Child Hygiene has perfected plans to send out trained nurses to the homes from which birth certificates are filed, to inspect the conditions of the home and learn if the new arrival is likely to receive proper care. If not, the home will be put on the list for regular visits from a department nurse or doctor or both, as the case seems to call for. The plan will begin with an inspection in those cases where the birth certificate is filed by a midwife, which include some 45 per cent. of the babies born in New York.

This far-reaching scheme is the result of the summer campaigns to carry babies through the hot weather. The doctors say that most of the babies of the poor are quite as strong and healthy at birth as any, but that the summer mortality among them is due to improper feeding and inadequate care. The babies born in the spring, who thus become frail, succumb to the first weeks of very hot weather, the infant death rate jumps up and there is a hue and cry to "save the babies." But the babies in greatest need of care have been lost before the summer work is under way. The new plan is to give them proper care from the week of their arrival, so that they may be fortified against the first descent of hot weather.

It is a beautiful and thoroughgoing scheme, and highly to be commended for its practical good sense. But it leaves an old-fashioned man rather gasping to know what has become of the duties of parenthood, and just why they should end with a birth certificate. It is, however, a clear economic waste to allow children to die because the homes into which they come are unable, from ignorance or poverty, to bring them to healthful maturity. The world has always permitted that kind of waste of the human stock until there seems to be a sort of prescriptive right among babies so born to an early death, and efforts to abridge that right sound intrusive, if not revolutionary. They are, however, based upon sound sense and genuine Christianity, and, if they prove as effective as they should, the plan will become permanent.

### The Central Midwives' Board.

A special meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at Caxton House, Westminster, S.W., on Tuesday, July 27th, when charges alleged against twenty-one midwives were heard. Nineteen of these were *bonâ-fide* midwives, one held the certificate of the Manchester Maternity Hospital and one of the London Obstetrical Society. The charges were mainly of the usual character, viz., failure to comply with the rules, inebriety, failure to take the patient's temperature from inability to read a clinical thermometer, failure to explain that medical advice should be sought in the case of a child suffering from inflammation of the eyes, and of a child suffering from injuries received at birth, failure to notify the local supervising authority when medical assistance had been summoned, and in cases of still-birth.

The results of the deliberations of the Board on these penal cases may be summarised as follows:—Two midwives were refused reinstatement on the Roll, and the name of Jane Folland was ordered to be reinstated; struck off the Roll and certificate cancelled, 10; severely censured, 2; censured, 5; cautioned, 2; allowed to retire, 1; allowed to retire if certificate returned, 1; total, 21.

*Struck off the Roll and Certificate Cancelled.*—Mary Bent, 21008; Elizabeth Brown, 18262; Sarah Elizabeth Ellison, 10470; Sarah Ann Hodgson, 9806; Dinah Hume, 2034; Margaret Jones, 17192; Ellen Locker, 17495; Ruth Miller, 1921; Elizabeth Siddall, 1964; Rachel Whitwam, 20310.

*Severely Censured.*—Emily Dawson, 5616; Ellen Harper, 11628.

*Censured.*—Louisa Blendell, 7039; Elizabeth Hodkin, 2733; Ann Robinson, 19665; Winifred Robinson, 4137; Elizabeth Taylor, 715.

*Cautioned.*—Rosetta Bromley, 3396; Annie Hardstaff, 10124.

*Allowed to Retire.*—Hannah Lee, 20561.

*Allowed to Retire if She Returns her Certificate at Once.*—Ann Smith, 11718.

The Central Midwives' Board at their last monthly meeting considered the statements alleged against a certified midwife in a letter which appeared in the *British Medical Journal* of May 8th, signed "G. P.," together with statements signed respectively by the writer of the letter, and the executive officer of the local supervising authority.

The following resolution was passed after careful consideration of the facts submitted:—

"That, as the midwife has already been reprimanded by the local supervising authority for the error she committed, and as in other respects the statements of "G. P." do not appear to be substantiated, no further action be taken in the matter."

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