

The Certified Midwives' Total Abstinence League.

DR. KELYNACK ON TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

At the Chapter House, St. Paul's, January 27th, Dr. Annie McCall presided over a meeting of the Certified Midwives' Total Abstinence League, when a lecture was given by Dr. Kelynack, on the medical and nursing aspect of the alcohol problem. Dr. McCall opened the meeting by expressing regret for the unavoidable absence of Miss Alice Gregory and Dr. Mary Roche. She strongly urged total abstinence, and remarked that she had been an abstainer for thirty years, and had never regretted it.

Dr. Kelynack addressed his hearers as "fellow workers in the healing art," and said that under the shadow of that venerable Cathedral, in the hub of the universe, it was fitting to discuss a subject which was one of vital importance to the profession, and at this period, which was one of the mile stones of English History, we should face our individual responsibility in the matter of total abstinence. In ancient days disease was looked upon as the work of evil spirits, later as calamity, and still later as the visitation of God, but in the growing light of science, we know it to be an enemy of our own making, and it was right for the teachers and leaders of the profession, to point out to those under their care the evils of alcohol. Our forefathers introduced alcohol to increase health, to withstand the invasion of disease, and as a source of strength to the growing child. Scientific knowledge now asserts that alcohol is a race poison. The lecturer said he believed the best way to impress a moral truth was to appeal to a motive, and there were two motives which should run through life. First, duty to self; secondly, to others. From the first point of view. In these days the lives of doctors and nurses must of necessity be serious and arduous; never "on the loose," always so to speak "on duty," and they cannot afford by any act to limit their powers. Everything points to total abstinence as a factor in efficiency. Nurses and midwives must have efficient brains and minds, capable of discrimination, rapid judgment, able to separate good from bad, better from best. Research has proved that alcohol in even small quantities lowers power of brain and nerves, and the result may be loss of life and the loss of professional character, so that for a nurse's own well being she should put the best into the work she has in hand. Secondly, in regard to others. There was still much ignorance and superstition in regard to this question. Among the poorer classes mothers still believe it to be good for their children, in spite of a great deal of teaching to

the contrary. Expectant mothers were still dosed and drugged, regardless of the fact that an alcoholic mother produces an alcoholic child. The lecturer therefore called upon the meeting, as leaders, custodians, and guides to public health to take action in this matter, more especially as in the present day many influences render women liable to yield to drink—the stress and strain of life, the lust of pleasure, competition, all of which fall with crushing force upon women. He concluded his lecture by an appeal to his audience to use life's little day for the highest and best interests of science.

Miss Docwra then said a few words, and after a vote of thanks proposed by Miss Ritchie to Dr. Kelynack and the Dean of St. Paul's, the meeting closed.

Pretty little brooch badges were on sale for the modest sum of 3d.—blue enamel for midwives and white for monthly nurses. They appeared to be in great request.

H. H.

Reflections.

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

Mr. W. T. Farr has made good use of the £10 which, as a Freeman of Swansea, he has annually received. He has forwarded a cheque for £100 to the Hospital, as he had always intended that the money should be given to charity.

The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, in proposing the adoption of the report and financial statement, at the annual meeting of the Children's Hospital, said it had given the Lady Mayoress and himself the greatest pleasure to go through the hospital and to see the splendid condition of every department, and the evidences of the best treatment received by the children from the doctors, the matron, and the nurses, and the kindness shown to them. Referring to the finances, he said it was a matter which all would deplore, that whilst there had been an increased number of both in-patients and of out-patients, there had been a falling off in the subscriptions during the year. Perhaps this might be explained to some extent by the bad times through which Liverpool had been passing, and he hoped the matter would right itself in a short time. It was also to be regretted that the debit balance had been increased to over £2,000, but remembering the good work they had done in the past he had no doubt they would again emerge from their difficulty. That they were justified in spending the money they had done was proved by the fact that no sooner had they opened the fourth ward than there was an overwhelming demand for beds therein. He fully approved of giving the parents and relatives an opportunity of contributing something, for he felt they had a duty to the hospital as well as the public.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)