

August until May next to draw up regulations, the medical members having the same powers as the other members. Are midwives to have representation on this committee? It is most essential that they should do so. Otherwise they will in all probability be crushed out of existence. Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer listen to the views of the midwives, as he has done to those of the medical profession?

It is not surprising that midwives are considerably alarmed as to their position in the future. The whole position really hinges on the question, Shall we, or shall we not, be definitely mentioned and recognised in the National Insurance Bill as employable in connection with the maternity benefit, and will our fees be assured in connection with that scheme? If not, we had better at once turn our attention to another means of livelihood, for if a doctor is to attend every case, paid through the Health Committees, or approved societies, our means of self support by midwifery will be gone. In connection with the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society, quoted by Mr. Lloyd George in his speech in the House of Commons as having arranged a most successful maternity benefit, the sum of thirty shillings is allowed on the production of a certificate of the child's birth, signed by the medical practitioner or midwife in attendance. This plan has been proved to work admirably. Why not incorporate it in the State scheme?

Meanwhile the answer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in reply to a question as to whether the employment of nurses and midwives was contemplated in cases of sickness and maternity under the National Insurance Bill, is not very reassuring. It was that this would be a matter for the approved society or the local Health Committee to arrange. It follows we must press for definite recognition in the Bill, and on the local Health Committees.

LEGAL AND ILLEGAL MIDWIFERY.

One more point. Midwives, as I have shown, are probably the most underpaid of all skilled women workers, when they lawfully practice their profession. But there is an unlawful side to midwifery practice, an unlawful use of the knowledge of which a midwife has become possessed, which is probably the most lucrative of any. To put the position quite plainly, the choice is this. A fee of five shillings—if she gets this, there is no security that she will—to the midwife who lawfully practises her calling for each case of ten days' duration. A fee of £5, willingly paid down "to help a woman over her trouble," quarter day approaching, the rent owing and nothing in hand to pay it with. Is it surprising if the

moral rectitude of some midwives is insufficient to prevent them from succumbing to temptation when so bitter an alternative is put before them?

To attain comparative affluence is easy. The method simple, the risk slight.

Honourable practice may involve starvation. Now choose.

A Question in the House.

In the House of Commons on Friday, June 2nd, the Earl of Kerry (U., Derbyshire West) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the employment of nurses and midwives was contemplated in cases of sickness and maternity under the National Insurance Bill, and, if so, whether the choice in each case would lie with the patient?

Mr. Lloyd George replied that this would be a matter for the approved society or the local Health Committee, as the case might be, to arrange.

The Central Midwives Board.

The next Examination of the Central Midwives' Board will be held on June 14th, in London, at the Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C.; in Birmingham, Bristol, and Leeds at the University; in Manchester at Victoria University; and at Newcastle-on-Tyne at the University of Durham College of Medicine. The Oral Examination follows a few days later in each case.

Infantile Mortality.

According to the latest returns of the Registrar-General, 94,828 infants under one year of age died last year in England and Wales, and out of a total of half a million deaths, one in every five was that of a baby. And by far the largest proportion of these deaths was attributed to digestive troubles, caused, undoubtedly, by improper feeding. Milk is, or should be, the one and only food of infants, and unless it is supplied pure and kept pure in the home, great danger may arise from its use. To promote a clean milk supply, a series of leaflets on the subject has been published by the National League for Physical Education and Improvement. We are asked to state that, in view of the hot weather, free copies will be sent to all who apply to the Secretary of the League, at 4, Tavistock Square, W.C., if postage is enclosed.

A Verdict of "Not Guilty."

At the Old Bailey recently Mr. Justice Darling directed the jury to return a verdict of not guilty in the case of Annie Marion Sadler, certified midwife, charged with murder in connection with performing an illegal operation. A further case against Mrs. Sadler was postponed till the next session.

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