

The Midwife.

The Pouponniere.

In an interesting article in *Slainte* on "Public Health Work in France," the Countess of Aberdeen describes the "Pouponniere" (Institution for Living Dolls) at Versailles, of which she writes:—

One hundred and thirty fatherless infants are cared for in the Pouponniere. Whenever possible the mothers are admitted also, as breast feeding is insisted upon as the first necessity for the health of the children. When the mothers have sufficient milk to nourish two children a second orphan baby is added to the mother's own child, and each mother admitted is expected to take charge of two infants, and wash, dress, and look after them under supervision. The babies never sleep in the same room as the mother. The most delightful devices for bathing the children, and for all possible conveniences for the mother during the process of bathing and dressing are provided.

Long hours in the open air are also part of the rules of the establishment, and the mothers take out their charges for their daily perambulator ride.

Attached to the institution is a little farm, and the most elaborate precautions have been taken to provide pure milk for the mothers, and for the supplementary feeding of infants whose mothers cannot give them sufficient nourishment. Experts in cattle are commissioned to find the finest possible milk-giving cows. These are tested periodically with tuberculin, and are fed by a dietary laid down as the result of conferences between the doctors of the establishment and the veterinary surgeons. The cowsheds are kept spotlessly clean, and the cows are washed, brushed, and attended to several times a day by specially trained assistants. The animals are never milked in the cowsheds, but are taken to a tiled room devised for the purpose, where no speck of dust or dirt is ever allowed to remain. The milk is cooled down immediately, and then treated according to doctors' orders as may be needed for the use of the infants or their mothers. The cows are never kept longer than two years, in order to make sure that only absolutely healthy animals in their prime are used.

A Babies' Hospital is yet another section of the institution, and here there is an opportunity for the study of infants' diseases; and here, too, there are classes for the training and

instruction of mothers and those in charge of young children.

When the children are a year old the mothers are given a course of training in all branches of household work and management, including cooking, laundry, and sewing; and after a year of such training they find it very easy to secure good places as children's nurses. Meanwhile the little children are confided to the care of families living in houses near the institution, and which are regularly inspected, the mothers paying a small sum for their maintenance. The mothers or elder girls in such families also attend classes for practical instruction in the care and management of young children, and when the children are ill they are taken into the hospital which has already been mentioned.

Association of Inspectors of Midwives.

The first general meeting of the Association of Inspectors of Midwives was held by kind permission of the Midwives' Exhibition authorities in a room of the Horticultural Hall on April 5th. The President, Miss Macrory, M.B., presided.

It was proposed and seconded that the present Committee and officers should be re-elected.

Among questions discussed was one as to whether Inspectors of Midwives who, though holding the L.O.S. certificate, omitted to register, should be eligible for membership, and it was decided that the rule relating to membership, namely, that registered medical practitioners and midwives should alone be eligible, should not be altered, so as to admit unregistered inspectors to the Association.

Information was asked about the formation of associations of midwives.

Other questions discussed were the number of inspections necessary to be paid to each midwife during the year, and whether it is advisable to let the midwives know of the intended visit. The number of inspections per annum varies considerably in different areas from two to five official visits; the majority of inspectors did not consider it advisable to send notices prior to their inspection.

Various methods of keeping reports were shown and discussed, the loose leaf and card systems being the most generally used.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Conference promoters for so kindly placing a room at their disposal.

This Association is a new one, the first meeting being organised last April by Miss du Sautoy. All information concerning membership can be obtained from her at 16, Elm Grove, Taunton, Somerset.

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