

The Midwife.

The State Endowment of Motherhood.

During the Conference of the Sanitary Institute at Belfast last week, a Conference of Women on Hygiene was held at which the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. R. J. M'Mordie presided, when Dr. Eric Pritchard, M.A., presented a paper on the State Endowment of Motherhood.

The lecturer said that a splendid point in Mr. Lloyd George's Bill for State Insurance was that the mother was to be endowed not in her capacity of wife but in her capacity of mother. In spite of all that had been done there was a large wastage due to poverty, and a well organised system of endowment would reduce the mortality by eliminating that of which poverty was the direct cause. Many a mother was reduced to despair before her confinement, and the sense of security and confidence given by a satisfactory endowment scheme would result in improved growth and development of the children before and after birth.

The time was not ripe for the serious consideration of communal establishments for the rearing of infants and young children, but there was general agreement that the Bill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer offered no adequate provision for safeguarding the welfare of the babies.

The chief practical argument against communal lying-in establishments, and public nurseries on a large scale was that the mortality amongst infants rose whenever they were segregated in large numbers. Dirt and mismanagement were now the cause of fatalities among infants in institutions just as they were of blood poisoning in hospitals fifty years ago.

There was a widespread and sentimental objection to the abolition of the family as a social unit, but muddle, dirt, stupidity, and inefficiency constituted the environment of the great mass of homes they were anxious to preserve.

Dr. Pritchard urged that the aim of maternity endowment should be to provide every lying-in woman who desired it with the services of a capable midwife free of cost. Health visitors should pay domiciliary visits to expecting mothers both before and after the child's birth, and both midwives and health visitors should have the power to give food, clothing, and other things necessary for the welfare of the State's new citizen.

Dr. Prudence Gaffikin said that four months' care and rest were essential before birth to give the new citizen the best chance of life. While education and training were excellent things for the care of children the best of all was an inherent quality in the mother.

The strain at present imposed on many mothers, who work hard, and live sparsely, until impending labour forces them to stop is very great. Children brought into the world under such conditions cannot be expected to have stable nervous systems.

The Central Midwives Board.

A special meeting of the Central Midwives' Board, for the hearing of penal cases was held in the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, on Thursday, July 27th. Sir Francis Champneys presided. Eighteen midwives were cited to appear before the Board, the cases being conducted on behalf of the Board by Mr. Bertram, with the following results:—

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STRUCK OFF THE ROLL AND CERTIFICATES CANCELLED.

Amelia Ashton (No. 21038), Elizabeth Bell (No. 6921), Harriet Blowers (No. 19593), Mary Denham (No. 13182). This midwife having been enrolled in virtue of having been in *bonâ fide* practice as a midwife for a year before the passing of the Midwives' Act, 1902, and never having passed the Examination of the Central Midwives' Board, or any other examination in midwifery, falsely represented herself on her door plate, and by means of cards and advertisements in the *Isle of Thanet Gazette* as (a) "Certificated Midwife by Examination of the Central Board"; (b) "Certificated by Examination, Central Midwife Board," and (c) "Certificated Midwife by Examination of Central Board." Ann Fox (No. 752), Harriet Growcott (No. 5241), Caroline Amelia Hutt (No. 8249), Mary Ann Margaret Hyde (No. 8174), who, amongst other charges, admitted having employed an un-certified person as her substitute, Sarah Jane Leach (No. 13157), Mary Ann Pickering (No. 1533), convicted at Birmingham Assizes of counselling abortion, and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment with hard labour, Hannah Rhodes (No. 5377), who admitted cutting the patients' perineum with a pair of household scissors without disinfection, Ann Sant (No. 7717), Sarah Stanley (No. 1642), and Ellen Upton (No. 6532).

SEVERELY CENSURED

Elizabeth Jones (No. 22708, C.M.B. Examination) was severely censured for not explaining in a case of inflammation of, and discharge from, the eyes of a child, that the case was one in which the attendance of a registered medical practitioner was required. It was brought out in evidence that the midwife said the inflammation was due to cold, and attended to the eyes while visiting the mother, and left a supply of lotion for her to use after the ninth day.

Mr. Bertram mentioned that three years ago, when the midwife attended the mother, the infant

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