

**THE CRÈCHE OF THE WEST LONDON MISSION.**

“Well begun is half done” is a proverb we should do well as a nation to bear in mind; we then would surely take greater care of the tender child life in our midst, and aim at the ideal that every child should have a good start in life—good food, cleanliness, warmth, and plenty of sleep until it is five years old. It is not a great deal to ask of a nation professedly Christian, and yet, though the State provides free education for the children of school age, it so far does nothing to ensure that these children shall arrive at this age with well-nourished bodies, and brains capable of assimilating the knowledge offered to them. Yet in the first five years of life the constitution of the future citizen

is to a great extent determined, and in our midst a child population lacking in stamina, stunted in growth, rickety in body, and often mentally deficient, is growing up, upon whom, in later life, we shall spend huge sums in voluntary and State hospitals, in homes and asylums, in the endeavour to care for and cure maimed bodies, when a fraction of the

money so spent, if used for preventive work in the first five years of life, would render this costly provision largely unnecessary, and enable the nation to breed a healthier, happier, saner, and better people.

So private endeavour here and there steps in just to show what can be done, and if any one wishes to become practically acquainted with

an agency which is doing an incalculable amount of good in this direction, a visit to the Crèche of the West London Mission, at their Central Institute in Kingsway Hall, Kingsway, London, will speedily convince him of the need of this work.

Arrived at the sixth floor, we are cordially received by Sister Hope, who, from its small beginnings, has spent over twenty years in this beneficent work. One large airy room is devoted to the tiny children, and equipped with sixteen cots. Very smart they look ena-

melled in green, with bright brass knobs, and quilts in a restful tone of green. On the practical side we note that the sides, which are higher, and thus safer than usual, drop down with the greatest ease, that each mattress is first encased in a washable cover and then protected by a large mackintosh, that the pillows have jaconet covers, and that tiny pillows



THE CARETAKERS.

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