

sentenced to imprisonment, deportation, and even hanging! and little boys were sent up the chimney to serve the purpose of a broom! Surely some of the feeble-mindedness among the poor that we are continually bewailing may be traced back to the tortures of mind and body endured then.

However, we have repented of our past neglect, and are rapidly amending our ways. Since the death of Queen Victoria various other Acts for the welfare of child life have been added to the Statute Book, and the present epoch in our social history is full of promise and beneficent possibilities, although much remains to be done, for we have not reached perfectibility. To concentrate on the child is to concentrate on the potential greatness of our country.

Among the many splendid organisations now in operation designed to promote the welfare of children, the one—in my opinion—deserving the highest praise, because it is fundamentally *preventive of evil*, is that known as "Schools of Mothercraft."

Following the example of France, to whom the honour must be accorded of having initiated the movement, the first school for mothers was established, in St. Pancras District, in the year 1907. With the exception of one opened a few months earlier in Glasgow, this was the pioneer school. There are now 160 schools for mothers throughout the kingdom, or infant consultation centres, and kindred societies. The primary object of these "Schools" is, of course, to educate the mothers in the rearing of children, and so prevent infant mortality. But they do much more than that. The mothers are taught everything that is useful to them as householders. They learn to cut out and make babies' garments, hygiene and cooking, &c. The education of fathers in fathercraft is one of the most recent developments or by-products of this valuable organisation. "Conferences for fathers" have consequently been established in connection with some of these schools, where men are being taught the duties, responsibilities, and honour of fatherhood. In a word, they are being taught the true meaning of *chivalry*. The results have been excellent, and will lead, we trust, to the extermination of hooliganism, which after all is largely the result of ignorance and neglect. It is not the object of the schools for mothers to treat *sick* infants, but rather by instruction to prevent their becoming sick. It must be clearly understood that they are in no sense hospitals.

The women are usefully taught the relative value of foods and beverages, with their consequent energy value. These lessons are illustrated by clearly defined diagrams showing in brilliant colours the constituent nutrient values. The curriculum also comprises instruction in the science of buying to the best economic advantage. So we see how full of meaning and rich in value is the compendious term—*School for Mothers*. If all the pupils profit intelligently by their instruc-

tion, a happier, healthier, and more temperate and virile race is assured for the future.

Ignorance of things pertaining to the rearing of children is not the monopoly of the mothers of the poor. In the higher grades of the social scale it abounds, although its results are not so dreadful or so obvious. These mothers, too, have never learnt mothercraft. In various parts of the country there have existed for some years past institutions for training the daughters of professional men to be nursery nurses. The Norland Institute is perhaps the oldest and best known, but one of the most important is the Liverpool Nursery Training College. The fact that the demand for nurses trained in the College is greater far than the supply is an eloquent proof of its need.

The curriculum is, of course, somewhat different. The course includes:—Daily care, washing, clothing, and feeding of young children from a month to seven years of age. Nursery cookery includes the daily preparation of all food required in the nurseries. Nursery laundry includes the washing of silks, flannels, and laces. Nursery needlework includes instruction in cutting out, children's dressmaking, millinery, making and mending.

So while girls are learning to tend the children of other people they are incidentally learning the craft with which every girl should be equipped before she marries.

A very important step was taken last year when it was proposed at a meeting held at the Caxton Hall early in June to amalgamate some of the existing societies for the welfare of children in order to strengthen and consolidate the work, with the result that the National Conferences on Infantile Mortality, The National League of Physical Education and Improvement, The Association of Infant Consultations and Schools for Mothers, and the Women's National Health Association of Ireland have effected a union under the title of *The National Association for the Prevention of Infant Mortality and for the Welfare of Infancy*. The term "Infancy" applies to children under school age.

This is a very forward movement, and one cannot but rejoice that children will pass straight from the care of this body to that of school nurses and doctors. The progress that has been made in the care of the health of the children within the last six years has been phenomenal, and all of us who are interested in this vital question will look forward with the keenest interest to "An English-speaking Conference on Infantile Mortality," which will be held at the Caxton Hall on August 4th and 5th.

BEATRICE KENT.

#### WASHING DRESS MATERIALS.

During the present spell of hot weather the mention of washing dress materials has an attractive sound to many besides trained nurses. A large selection is to be found at Messrs. Garrould's establishment, 150, Edgware Road, which will well repay inspection.

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