

THE MATERNITY BENEFIT.

The Maternity Benefit of 30s., to which all women insured for a full period of six months are now entitled, on confinement, is complicated by the inclusion in the Act of a provision to pay the fees of doctors when summoned on the advice of midwives. It appears likely that the approved societies may protect themselves either by deferring the needed payment till their liability is passed, or by advising their members that if they wish the maternity benefit paid promptly they should call in a doctor, in the first instance, which is an indirect way of restricting the employment of midwives, concerning which they should be on the alert.

The fees for which the Society is liable, in this event, fall into three classes, namely, 15s. for an attendance on the mother in an emergency arising in connection with labour, and 5s. and 2s. 6d. respectively, for an attendance on the mother, or on the child by day, in other emergencies arising during the lying-in period. (The fee for attendance on the child by night is 5s.) A society is not, however, liable to pay more than 15s. in any case, and when the doctor is called in after twelve hours from birth, the liability of the society cannot exceed 10s. in all.

It will be seen therefore that societies are justified in paying £1, at least, on the fourth day.

MIDWIFERY MADE EASY.

We have received from Messrs. Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 8, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., a book which they have just published, "Midwifery Made Easy," price 2s., by Miss Mary L. Skinner, who holds the General and Obstetric Certificates of the Australasian Trained Nurses Association, and is a certified midwife, trained by the Maternity Nursing Association, Myddleton Square, E.C.

The book, which is dedicated "to the memory of Sybil Avis Dauney," who died at her post as Matron of the Association, where she was widely respected and greatly beloved, differs from other innumerable text-books on the same subject, and is indeed in the first instance a pronouncing dictionary, which will be greatly appreciated by midwifery pupils to whom the technical terms with which they are confronted on taking up this work are embarrassing and perplexing. But the book is more than a dictionary; for instance, under the heading "Management of Stages," the method of conducting a labour is described in detail.

Some of the homely illustrations are also excellent. For instance, as illustrative of a *fœtus in utero* an electric bulb with frosted glass is taken. "The glass of the bulb represents the membranes, the outer opaque part the chorion, the inner clear part the amnion. The light, the *fœtus*. The conductor (the thin wire running to the light) the cord. The connection (the brass part at the end) the placenta. Carry the bulb to the wall where it connects with the main, and

attach it. This will show you more clearly than any words the way the placenta is attached to the uterine wall. The current that lights the light, and the way it is picked up, illustrates the blood and oxygen being carried to the *fœtus*."

A NOVEL COMPETITION.

With a view to promoting a healthy spirit of emulation among women attending London Schools for Mothers, and generally to raise the standard of mother-craft among the lower classes, the Association of Infant Consultations and Schools for Mothers (a Department of the National League for Physical Education and Improvement), is organising Mothercraft Competitions, in conjunction with the National Health Week Committee, to be held in London during Health Week, April 6-12.

All "Schools" in the metropolis have been invited to send in competitors, not more than six in all to compete from any one "School." It is hoped that these six may be selected as the result of preliminary competitions. There will be nine classes in the competition, covering all aspects of mothercraft. Dressing and undressing a baby (to judge of the mother's skill in handling the child and the suitability of the clothing), laundry work, cooking, cutting out and making garments, knitting, washing a baby's bottle, together with a few simple *viva voce* questions on infant care and management, will all be included. A prize will also be given to the baby showing evidence of the best condition and the greatest care.

LE NOURRISSON.

We have pleasure in drawing attention to the first number of a new French review, *Le Nourrisson*, the editor of which is Dr. A. B. Marpan, Professor of the Faculty of Medicine, and doctor to the Hospital of Sick Children, with whom a group of distinguished medical men connected with the children's hospitals of the city are associated.

This publication, which appears under such good auspices, fills a vacant place amongst those devoted to infantile medicine. The programme includes original articles and practical medicine, critical and analytical *revues*, a concise bibliography and articles relating to the hygiene and pathology of infancy and early childhood.

Childhood, we are told, is the period of life which extends from birth to puberty.

It is proposed to consider childhood in three periods: Infancy, including the first two years of life, when the infant is called the *nourrisson*, and during the first two months the *nouveau-né* (newly born); the second period is that of the *seconde* or *moyenne enfance* (the medium period of childhood) up to the sixth or seventh year; . . . and the *troisième* or *grande enfance*, the third period of childhood, lasting from the sixth or seventh year to puberty. The address of the journal is 19, Rue Hautefeuille, Paris, and the price for foreign subscribers 14 frs. per annum.

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