

HEALTH WEEK.

Surely the health of nations never received greater attention in London than in the present week, during which two great Conferences were in session on Monday and Tuesday, dethroning "St. Lubbock" and keeping speakers and audiences, journalists, reporters and caterers hard at work on Bank Holiday; and on Wednesday the great International Medical Congress was opened by Prince Arthur of Connaught in the name of the King at the Albert Hall, and is still in session.

THE INFANT MORTALITY CONFERENCE.

The Infant Mortality Conference, convened by the National Association for the Prevention of Infant Mortality, and the Welfare of Infancy, was opened by the President of the Local Government Board, Mr. John Burns, at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, at 10 a.m. In his inaugural address, which lasted for upwards of an hour, Mr. Burns took a broad survey of the subject, impressing upon the delegates of all the English speaking peoples the importance of co-operation in regard to the objects which they had in common. Of the 300,000 people who migrated from the United Kingdom last year 82 per cent. went, he said, to British Dominions, and the rest, roughly speaking, to America. All were called to the common duty of seeing that their stock was good, their children clean and healthy, their women virile and their men enduring. Attention during the last seven years had been concentrated on the child with most beneficial results, it was now their duty to ensure that they did not lose sight of the mother. He urged the importance of the ante-natal life of the child. The life of the child, in city communities was probably more influenced by its pre-natal condition than by its post-natal environment after it had been healthily born.

He suggested that next year they should consider more carefully the diseases of maternity and paternity. They had to investigate more closely those sexual diseases in regard to which society showed a prurient delicacy which was dangerous, but in regard to which the Local Government Board had a report in preparation which he hoped might help them in their investigations. He believed that 30 to 50 per cent. of blind people in this country were blind owing to the existence of venereal disease.

In conclusion, the President of the Local Government Board spoke appreciatively of the work of Medical Officers of Health, nurses, midwives, and schoolmasters, and said that the Government regarded the health of the people as the supreme law. Other things were as nothing in comparison with clean and happy homes.

The Conference then divided into two sections, in which, during the two days, a large variety of subjects bearing on child welfare work were discussed.

On Tuesday evening the Duchess of Marlborough received the members of the Conference at Sunderland House.

THE TUBERCULOSIS CONFERENCE.

At 11.30 on the same morning Lord Balfour of Burleigh, K.T., G.C.M.G., Chairman of Council, presided at the opening session of the Conference of the National Association for the Prevention of Consumption and other forms of Tuberculosis, at the Central Hall, Westminster, and at once called on the Prime Minister to give an address.

Mr. Asquith, who on rising to speak was immediately interrogated on the question of Woman's Suffrage, said that he had not come with the object of delivering an address, but to express the good wishes of all interested in the welfare of the community for the practical success of the deliberations of the Conference.

The questions of Suffragists and the summary and violent ejection of the individuals concerned continuing, the chairman made an appeal to the meeting, even to those who felt very strongly on the Suffrage question, to maintain order. He further said that he "regretted the unnecessary violence which had sometimes to be exhibited." He hoped they would allow the Prime Minister to go on.

Order having been secured, the Prime Minister went on to say that the Association was formed some fifteen years ago under the auspices of King Edward VII with the object of spreading a knowledge of the facts concerning tuberculosis, and it was satisfactory to know that, though the society was a national one, the members of the Conference included eminent scientific authorities from all the countries of Europe.

The Prime Minister said that the loss of life caused by tuberculosis was appalling. Out of every ten deaths in this country from all causes one was due to this disease, and the loss was greatest in the working years of life. He however reported a decline in the death-rate, amounting to the saving of 50,000 lives in one year, and said there were reasons for expecting even greater progress in the near future. He urged the importance of the co-operation and co-ordination of science, of philanthropy and of Government.

The Conference then proceeded to discuss the question in all its aspects, many valuable papers being presented.

At the *Conversazione* on Monday evening, Dr. Rollier, of Leysin, gave a fascinating cinematograph demonstration of the cure of surgical tuberculosis by direct sunlight. Open ulcers became healed, everted limbs straightened, cripples healthy and energetic by the methodical application of heliotherapeutics at a high altitude. The patients appeared perfectly comfortable amid the snow of the Alps clad only in the loin cloth generally associated with tropical regions.

This demonstration was followed by a most interesting lecture on "The Fight against Consumption," by Dr. Halliday Sutherland of Edinburgh, illustrating the working of a complete co-ordination scheme for dealing with consumption.

The indispensability of the trained nurse in carrying out the necessary treatment was very much in evidence, and the films showing her actually performing her work most instructive.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)