

Infirmary the same day. After a very severe illness she came home for two weeks before her confinement, and returned to the Infirmary when labour set in. Twin babies were born, who weighed 5 lb. 2 oz. and 6½ lb. at two weeks old.

In another case a mother in her sixth month of pregnancy was found ill, and advised to call in her doctor. He removed a macerated foetus within twenty-four hours, and the mother made a good though slow recovery. Other cases might be quoted, but time and space forbid.

Many mothers have been enabled to nurse their infants through following advice given, who had not succeeded in doing so with previous infants. The pleasure of a mother is very marked when she shows her newly born infant to the visitor who has taken a friendly and practical interest in her during the long months of pregnancy.

A very difficult part of this work is dealing with a large moving population of the lowest type, who inhabit furnished places and cannot easily be traced after their frequent removals. These mothers seldom go to work, are very poor, and very dirty. Another difficulty is the habits, traditions, and superstitions handed down from previous generations, which sometimes cause the mothers to hesitate about seeking really necessary advice and treatment. The practice of taking large doses of gin and Epsom salts in early pregnancy is often met with.

Where diachylum has been taken the mothers are warned that it is illegal to do this.

Only persistent friendliness gains the confidence of the mothers in these matters, but this once gained, the results are very far-reaching, not only in their own lives but in their influence among their friends and neighbours.

MATERNITY BENEFIT FEES.

At a meeting of the Insurance Act Committee of the British Medical Association, in considering the following motion on Maternity Benefit—

That for the purpose of providing on reasonable terms women attended by midwives with the services of a medical practitioner if required in accordance with the rules made under the Midwives Act, 1902, a scheme be prepared for the insurance with approved societies of the liabilities of their members for the fees payable on the scale adopted by the British Medical Association. That this scheme may provide for the method of calculating the premiums to be charged to the members concerned, and may contain such other incidental, consequential, and supplementary provisions as may appear necessary for the purpose,

the Committee decided to ascertain the attitude boards of guardians and other authorities will adopt now that such patients obtain grants under the Insurance Act.

A NURSE'S WRONGFUL ACTION.

An instance was brought to the notice of the Committee in which it was alleged that the nurse in attendance upon a case of miscarriage, having been informed that it was a case of pregnancy of less than three months' duration, nevertheless signed the form enabling the patient to obtain the maternity benefit. The Committee expressed the

opinion that the remedy in such a case lay in reporting to the Commissioners the action of the nurse in giving a certificate in such circumstances.

LAMBETH MATERNITY HOME.

Mrs. Davidson, wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mrs. Burge, wife of the Bishop of Southwark, and the Rev. T. G. Gardiner have issued the following appeal to the public through the Press:—

“ May we be allowed to lay before your readers the urgent needs of the Lambeth Maternity Home? The present is a crucial moment in its history as, unless an immediate increased support is forthcoming, the home must be closed. Those acquainted with the need everywhere for this form of rescue work will best appreciate how great a calamity the closing of any such home would be. In South London the need is no less urgent than elsewhere, but the difficulty of finding adequate support is becoming increasingly greater as the wealthier population moves into more and more distant suburbs. The work of such homes needs no commendation. There can be little doubt that it is one of the most hopeful means of restoring the young mothers to self-respecting lives and of preventing much misery if not mortality among the infants. Every effort is made to help the inmates of the home spiritually and materially, to foster their maternal love, to strengthen their wills, and to train them for a useful life. We ask for help to continue this work. Considering how few in number and at the same time how necessary these maternity homes are, and bearing in mind the pressing needs of South London in this respect, we dare not close the Lambeth home without first appealing to the public for the means to keep it open. An increase of £200 annually, together with the present income derived from subscriptions and girls' payments and the special efforts made periodically by friends, will suffice for this purpose. We ask for new subscriptions, large or small, to make up this sum. All money should be sent to Mrs. W. H. Paine, 34, Westminster Mansions, S.W.

A TAX ON MARRIAGE.

While so much is heard in France about the proposed new tax on bachelors, the *Matin* learns that in Lippe-Detmold, the smallest of the German States, it has been decided that every young couple about to marry must pay a tax. The amount varies from 50 pfennigs to 5 marks, according to their position in life. The proceeds of this tax go to a midwives fund created by the principality.

France has a decreasing population, so must force the legitimate birthrate somehow. So far the prolific German has nothing to fear—his quiver is full. But surely such taxation encroaches upon personal liberty in a peculiarly indecent manner.

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