

poetic enwrapping in the myths of angels and storks as the bringers of babes can save a child from the evil effects of the disillusionment that sooner or later is inevitable. *There is nothing higher than the truth.*

It is, however, useless to attempt to make children see the beauty of parenthood unless we can first see it ourselves. It is the attitude of the teacher's mind that is imposed on the child more than the spoken words. And those who cannot feel other than shame regarding the initial stages of life would do best to entrust the sex-education of their children to others whose minds are filled with a consciousness of the beauty of human reproduction.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said that the making of a perfect child must begin a hundred years before its birth. We are slowly approaching a realisation of this fact. Meanwhile let us spread as widely as possible the elementary eugenic teaching that if the precious nine months of pre-natal life are mis-spent by the mother, irreparable injury is done to the mind and body of the child. False modesty and perverted views of sex questions will leave their lasting impress on the offspring. An untrue or shameful presentment of the facts of birth to the mind of a child must sully it beyond all hope of repair. It is the *first* teaching that matters. The whole question of sex and birth is entangled in prudery, untruth and dishonesty. It is possible to disentangle it from these evils, and with immense physical and moral benefit to all concerned.

In his address on education to the British Association the other day, Principal Griffiths referred to "our conspiracy of silence with regard to sexual instruction." He concluded: "If the proverbial visitor from Mars were engaged in a tour of inspection in our country, I think nothing would strike him as more extraordinary than that a subject which so clearly concerns the progress of the race and the welfare of the individual should be entirely ignored in our system of education. By our action (or want of action) we tacitly admit that such knowledge is harmful and that we deliberately prefer such knowledge, which must necessarily be obtained in one way or another, to arrive by subterranean channels and by agencies which will present facts of vital importance in their worst possible aspect. We cannot be said to be really educating our children so long as we withhold from them all guidance in one of the most difficult problems which will be presented to them in later life, and when one reflects on the misery and wreckage consequent on our silence (the

italics are mine) it is difficult to speak with due moderation."

Midwives and maternity nurses have higher opportunities here than any other body of workers, especially during the lying-in period when forced inaction to the physical body causes increased activity and receptivity to the mind. This combined with the personal influence of the nurse or midwife, renders the occasion auspicious for the discussion of eugenics, and what could be a more fitting alternative to the gossip which is often in a cottage the sole topic.

HEALTH MISSIONER.

### IS SHE A CERTIFIED MIDWIFE?

At the meeting of the Central Midwives Board, held on the 9th inst., Miss Rosalind Paget asked the Secretary—

"Whether any steps have been taken to ascertain if a woman, described in the press reports of the proceedings as connected with a recent prosecution for an offence under the Criminal Law Amendment Act in Piccadilly is a certified midwife, as has been asserted; and, if so, whether it is contemplated to cite her to appear before the Board?"

This pertinent question has arisen out of the following facts.

When Inspector Curry raided "Queenie Gerald's" flat in Piccadilly, it was reported in the press that the door was opened by a woman in nurse's uniform, who was described as "Nurse Betty"; and moreover that she had invited young girls off the street into the flat. This woman's real name was (like that of the procuress she served) kept strictly private by the magistrate before whom the latter was charged.

Upon enquiry, it was ascertained on good authority that "Nurse Betty" had stated that she was a midwife; and the name she gave as her own was found to be on the Roll. Moreover that only one midwife had been certified under such name. This information was given to the Secretary of the Midwives' Board, also to Miss Rosalind Paget (a member of the Board)—in the hope that the case would be taken up and investigated by the Board.

This for two reasons. "Nurse Betty" disguised in nurse's uniform, was engaged in a horrible and criminal trade, aiding and abetting a procuress to ruin young girls.

Through some very powerful influence she was never charged.

Though her name was carefully kept from the public, this woman stated she was a midwife; and gave the exclusive name of a certified midwife on the Roll.

Either she is the person she represents herself to be—in which case her conduct should be enquired into by the local supervising authority; and if a *prima facie* case is established, the same

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