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EDITORIAL.

THE MOTHERS OF THE NATION.

We are slow to learn the value of the mothers of the nation as a most precious asset in its welfare. For long, in the poorer classes, they have been overworked, and often under-fed, up to the day of child-bearing; they have returned to full work within a fortnight of the birth of their children. They have never been taught the most elementary facts concerning the feeding, health, rearing and education of their offspring, and they have little to guide them in the supremely important duty of conserving the health and developing the minds of the rising generation, but the mother-love implanted deep in the hearts of women, the intensity of which makes them pathetically aware that it is impotent as a substitute for knowledge. Two main factors are essential if the health of the nation is to be conserved:—(1) That the mothers themselves shall be skilfully attended, in surroundings conducive to recovery, at the birth of their children; and (2) that they shall possess the knowledge which will enable them to rear their infants.

Her Majesty the Queen, herself a devoted mother, has shown herself alive to the necessity of the points we have mentioned for those of His Majesty's subjects less happily placed.

On Thursday in last week the Queen visited the Mothers' Hospital established by the Salvation Army at Clapton, and Lorne House Maternity Home, Stoke Newington, and subsequently Mr. E. W. Wallington, the Queen's private secretary, wrote to the authorities as follows:—

"The Queen commands me to write and assure you how glad she was to have had the opportunity of paying a visit to the

Mothers' Hospital and Lorne House this afternoon.

"Her Majesty was greatly interested in all that she saw, and the Queen is most grateful to Mrs. Booth, Commissioner Cox, together with the nurses and others, who made such admirable arrangements for her Majesty's reception.

"The Queen heartily congratulates the Salvation Army on the possession of such an excellent hospital, which has been so happily designed to assist in carrying out the important work the society has in hand."

The movement for Schools for Mothers, in which the St. Pancras School, suggested by an interesting and most effective organization at Ghent, was the pioneer in this country, was inaugurated in order to extend, by voluntary effort, instruction and assistance in raising to a higher level the health and intelligence of motherhood; and so to give the babies of the poorer classes a better start in life.

The Queen has also given her recognition and approval to this work, and on February 24th her Majesty will be present at the *matinée* to be given at the Palace Theatre in aid of the Schools for Mothers in Fulham, Poplar, Shoreditch and Stepney.

The essential of a School for Mothers is medical and nursing care, though the treatment of sick infants is beyond its scope; home visiting, classes in hygiene, cookery, and cutting out, provision of dinners to expectant and nursing mothers, the formation of provident clubs, etc. In fact new openings for the activities of the promoters of the Schools are constantly arising, the only limitations set to their usefulness being those arising from lack of funds.

Her Majesty's sympathy should do much to stimulate interest in and gain support for a movement which is doing excellent work.

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