

ASSOCIATION OF INFANT CONSULTATIONS AND SCHOOLS FOR MOTHERS.

MOTHER COMPETITIONS.

A very interesting function took place on Saturday afternoon, June 27th, at the L.C.C. Schools, Cosway Street, Edgware Road, W. It was a competition in mothercraft, arranged by the Association of Infant Consultations and Schools for Mothers. Sixteen Schools competed, and the competitions were divided into six classes:—

1. Six simple questions in mothercraft.
2. The mother and child showing evidence of having profited most by the instruction given her at the School.
3. Made-up garments.
4. Cutting out paper patterns of a set of infants' clothing.
5. Mended or adapted garments.
6. Planning, buying the materials, and cooking a shilling dinner for a family of four.
7. Washing and ironing a set of infants' clothing.
8. A letter on mothercraft.
9. A competition for fathers for the best contrivance for the benefit of mother or child, costing not more than 5s.

The competitors were the mothers who had earned the highest marks in their respective schools, and the prizes awarded were given, as Dr. Macgregor said, to the best of the best. Great applause was accorded when it was announced that the School winning the highest number of marks was the winner of last year, Fulham North. Fulham South came second within two marks, Paddington B coming in third.

The certificates were presented by Lady Broadbent to the proud recipients, and generous applause was given by the non-successful.

Dr. Eric Pritchard, who is keenly interested in this work, said he would be brief as he knew the mothers were boiling over with excitement. He then introduced Mrs. H. B. Irving, who addressed the mothers.

She spoke of the need of public spirit, and said how the meeting together of the various schools should be welcomed as an opportunity of rubbing shoulders with other mothers. The prizes represented only a very small part of their reward. They were fighting for the nation, quite as truly as soldiers, against disease, ignorance, poverty and dirt.

Dr. Macgregor said that she had had a very difficult task, for she had not simply to judge the best baby, but also the best mother. She had in addition to take into account the record of the schools to which they belonged. The first prize winner in this class belonged to St. Pancras School.

The competitions were held simultaneously in the various class-rooms, and one had but to look at the earnest and intent faces of the competitors to realise that mothercraft is taken seriously in these schools.

Delightful and appetising little dinners were

being concocted in the cookery department. The prize dinner consisted of lentil soup, stewed mutton, potatoes, cauliflower, and rice pudding—not a bad shilling's worth.

Fourteen healthy and jolly babies, spotlessly clean from head to foot, the prize winners in the different schools which have recently held local competitions, were entered for the baby competition. The prize mother and baby were specially commended on account of the bad health of the mother. Dr. Macgregor remarked that it would have been a sufficient excuse for neglect of home and children.

The judge in the laundry was not satisfied that some of the garments (brought by the women themselves) were sufficiently dirty, and the competitors were seen as a preliminary rubbing them on the floor. Two hours later they were all that baby's garments should be, the flannels beautifully soft.

The fathers' contributions, though very few, made up in quality. The first prize was given for a beautifully made little milk safe costing one shilling. The second prize was carried off by a surprising cot big enough for a child of three or four years, costing 2s. 3d. A little cot which was unrewarded bore the label informing the public that the lathes were "portable to keep out the vermin."

The organisers of these mothercraft competitions are to be congratulated. The work was strenuous and the result happy. We did, however, hear one superintendent lamenting that it was likely to breed a spirit of jealousy.

Round the central hall were hung ingeniously designed garments, new and adapted, perhaps the most appealing of which was a clever little jersey made of the legs of a man's blue knitted stocking.

BIRMINGHAM MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

As will have been observed from our Report of the Central Midwives Board Meeting last week, the Board has sanctioned a C.M.B. Examination every two months at Birmingham, instead of every four months as formerly, to be held at the Birmingham Maternity Hospital. The first two-monthly examination will be held in December, 1914.

Previously the period of training for trained nurses at the above hospital has been three months, and the fee £21. Trained nurses will now receive a four months' course of instruction, and the fee, inclusive of board, lodging and laundry will be £16 16s.

Untrained pupils receive a six months' course of training; the fee, including board, lodging and laundry, is £26 5s.

The fact of the reduced fee, combined with the great advantage of having the examination held in the Hospital at the end of her training, will be a decided saving, and therefore gladly welcomed by the trained nurse desirous of taking her midwifery training and Central Midwives Board Certificate.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)