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EDITORIAL.

THE WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF SERVICE.

"These children are dear to Me, be a mother to them, and more than a mother, watch over them tenderly. . . . If thy heart is not large enough to embrace them, I will enlarge it after a pattern of My own."

Conspicuous forms of patriotism are at the present time abundantly apparent, and we applaud them all, but we cannot conceive a nobler and a wiser form of patriotism than attention to the welfare of the poor mother and her unborn child. It is to be hoped that before long the State will recognize its duty in this matter, and support and encourage the work of the Women's League of Service by a substantial grant. The child belongs to the State, we have been slow to grasp this obvious truth which was recognized by the Ancients as a solemn obligation. The great Spartan Lawgiver Lycurgus (ninth cent. B.C.) was apparently the first to make laws for the protection of child life, and held as his great principle the responsibility of the State towards the child. Pregnant women, too, were tenderly cared for, as the procreation of healthy children was deemed by him a matter of supreme importance.

The object of the League is "to unite women in a common bond to further the interests of motherhood." The interests of motherhood should be the interests of all women, since all women are potential mothers; and so this good Cause should make a very strong appeal to us, more especially at the present time when the husbands of many expectant mothers will be serving their country on the battlefield; a circumstance which will complicate the condition of pregnancy with anxiety, and in some cases doubtless with increased poverty. The chief method of the League is to supply expectant and nursing mothers daily with dinners during the

9 months of pregnancy and the 9 months of nursing. During the 4 years of its beneficent existence, the League has established 6 centres where dining-rooms have been opened for this purpose at a charge of 1d. or ½d. according to means of the diner. No deserving case is refused, and many receive free dinners.

It has been our privilege to be present at the Marylebone Centre when about 36 mothers took their places in a quiet and orderly manner at three long tables and partook of an excellent repast having first deposited their babies in the crèche upstairs. Two courses, nourishing and abundant were served to each, with a glass of water and as much bread as they liked.

To watch so many hard-working women enjoying a comfortable and sustaining meal which they had not cooked themselves, and the company and conversation of their friends, was a sight both impressive and gratifying.

It must have been the refinement of kindness and a sensitive imagination, which prompted the ladies in charge of the arrangements, to decorate the tables of their poorer sisters with flowers and ferns! Whether expressed or unexpressed, we feel confident that this delicate, this *sweet* attention, is appreciated. The appearance of the mothers and the babies was an eloquent testimony of the good work being done by the League, for the mothers, for the babies, and for the future race. *This is patriotism writ large.*

Mothers are frequently reminded that it is their duty to breast-feed their babies because it is the ideal food. Dr. Florence E. Willey qualifies that axiom, by remarking that "the mother's milk is only ideal if we presuppose a healthy and well-nourished mother." The science underlying that remark, and the wisdom are obvious.

The League is greatly in need of funds at this time as the demand upon its resources are, for obvious reasons, increasing.

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