

PROSECUTION OF UNCERTIFIED WOMEN PRACTISING AS MIDWIVES.

The Midwives Act Committee of the London County Council reported to the Council on Tuesday that legal proceedings were instituted against Mrs. Jane Smith, of No. 14, Chadwick Street, Westminster, S.W., and Mrs. Annie Deloos, of No. 84, Whateley Road, Dulwich, S.E., for practising midwifery within the Administrative County of London, without being certified by the Central Midwives Board. The cases were heard at the Westminster and Lambeth Police Courts, and the defendants were bound over in £5 for twelve months and £10 for two years, respectively. The qualification of certified midwife has a very definite value, since the Midwives Registration Act was passed, and nowadays is protected by the strong arm of the law.

THE HOUSE-FLY EXHIBITION.

Nurses and midwives should study the House-Fly Exhibition organized by Professor Maxwell-Lefroy, now open at the Zoological Society's Gardens, Regent's Park. It is being held in a room in the Superintendent's House, and there are to be seen in connection with it American fly traps, with various modifications, and fly bats, fly nets, fly sprays and syringes, with poisons, bait, and disinfectants till one would think the chances of survival for the most persistent fly were poor indeed.

The design of the exhibition is not only to teach householders how to eradicate a dangerous pest, but also to afford assistance to public health authorities in planning anti-fly campaigns. In accordance with this scheme it is open in the morning to the public from 10 to 12, and in the afternoon it is limited to doctors, nurses, and public health and sanitary authorities.

A point to be remembered this year, emphasised by Professor Maxwell-Lefroy, was that manure heaps are the great breeding place of flies, and that owing to the deficiency of labour it is likely that stable manure will not be removed quickly. A few hundred pounds spent on research work might result in an efficient means of treating manure heaps being available, even before the end of the summer.

TO PREVENT FLY-EGGS FROM HATCHING.

The United States Department of Agriculture gives the following directions for applying borax as a fly-egg destroyer:—"Apply through a fine sieve or flour sifter two ounces of borax to a can of garbage daily; apply ten ounces in the same way to eight bushels of fresh manure and sprinkle with water." Borax should be applied also to floors and crevices in barns, stables, markets, to street sweepings, and to such places in the hospital or home as are likely to be chosen by flies in which to lay their eggs. After sprinkling the borax water should be sprinkled over the powder.

THE INCREASE IN INFANT MORTALITY.

The deputation from the Women's Co-operative Guild, who were received by the President of the Local Government Board last week, had every reason to be satisfied with their reception.

Miss Llewellyn Davies urged on its behalf that the Bill was needed to give due effect to the circular issued last July by the Local Government Board. She asked that the Notification of Births Act should be made universal; that the powers of county councils should be extended so as to cover the establishment of maternity centres and maternity hospitals, and that sanitary authorities should have legal powers to provide ante-natal advice and treatment, and carry on preventive health work among children.

Mr. Long said that anything that could be done to protect infant life and render more secure the early days of the children who were to become the men and women of the future ought to be done, and any gaps in the existing legislation ought certainly to be filled up. While he was in office he should be only too glad to help in this good work. At this moment of supreme national trial the preservation of infant life and the lives of our women was of increased importance. In the few months that had passed since August the population of a great town had been removed from among us—the best, the bravest, and the finest of our manhood. It was, therefore, our bounden duty to see that everything was done that could be done to ensure the well-being of the community.

In reply to questions asked in the House of Commons on Monday and Tuesday by Mr. Lough (Islington) and Mr. Snowden (Blackburn), Mr. Long said:—

"I am fully aware of the importance of this matter, and I am anxious to introduce without delay a measure making the Notification of Births Act of general application and conferring certain powers on local authorities for safeguarding the health of infants and expectant mothers. I shall be very glad if hon. members will co-operate with me in securing the unopposed passage of the Bill."

"The births registered in London during the second quarter of this year averaged 79 per week fewer than the corresponding weekly number in the past five years, and during the 13 weeks ending June 5th there has been a weekly excess in the deaths of children under five years of age averaging 169. This excess has been mainly due to an exceptional prevalence of measles and whooping-cough, with their usual sequelae. The suggestion that if the present rates be continued for 42 weeks all the infants will have succumbed is, I am happy to say, devoid of foundation, as is also the statement that one child in 10 born dies within 48 hours of birth."

It is disquieting that in the County of London the death-rate of infants under five is much above the average. In one week in April the deaths were 278 over the number last year.

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