

establishments, special baths, and many other names, are not massage establishments at all, but places where facilities are given for immorality, to which, not infrequently, quite innocent girls are attracted by advertisements. The attention of the London County Council was directed to the need for the inspection and registration of all such establishments by the Commissioner of the Police of the Metropolis, who "invited the serious attention of the Council to the matter with a view to putting an end to a scandal which has assumed very serious proportions."

Counsel explained that the difficulty at present is that, to inspect such places a warrant is necessary, and a magistrate will not grant a warrant except evidence is furnished which it is almost impossible to secure, so one of the essential provisions of Part V of the Bill enables the official of the L.C.C. to enter any of these registered premises to see what is being done, the effect of which will be to bring the business to an end, or to provide evidence enabling proceedings to be taken.

In reply to a question from the Chairman the learned Counsel drew attention to a clause prohibiting advertising by unregistered lying-in homes or massage establishments. He then proceeded to deal with the opposition, which we have already defined, and pointed out that reputable lying-in homes and massage establishments, while perfectly content with the provisions of the Bill so long as they are in the hands of the London County Council, object most strongly to their administration being handed over to the different Borough Councils. In support of this he handed in a list of resolutions in this sense from the Central Midwives Board, the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, the Incorporated Midwives Institute, the Charity Organization Society, the Mothers' Union, the Provisional Executive Committee of the National Council for the Prevention of Venereal Diseases, and the Executive Committee of the National Vigilance Association, the Ladies' National Association, &c., as well as a Petition signed by Matrons and Superintendents of Nursing Homes, and a list of important societies represented by witnesses.

Counsel then stated that the London County Council had already a skilled staff of inspectors under the Midwives Act, who, with an additional inspector, could deal with the lying-in homes, and the inspectors who deal with the employment agencies could be utilised in connection with the massage establishments, and then read the Petition of the sixteen Borough Councils alleging that their rights and interests will be injuriously affected, and that their rights, powers, and privileges are attacked by several clauses of the Bill.

EVIDENCE FOR THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

Witnesses were then called in support of the Bill as it stands, making the London County Council the registering and controlling authority. They were Mrs. Wilton Phipps, Chairman of the Midwives Act Committee of the L.C.C.; Dr. W. H. Hamer, Medical Officer of Health and

School Medical Officer of the County of London; Miss Rosalind Paget, representing Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses and the Central Midwives Board; the Hon. Frank Trevor Bigham, Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police Force; Mr. Percy C. Simmons, Vice-Chairman of the Public Control Committee L.C.C.; and Miss Lucy Robinson, one of the founders of the Incorporated Society of Trained Masseuses. All were emphatic that the power of administration should be vested with the Central Authority, the L.C.C.

Mrs. Wilton Phipps, in her evidence, referred to the very largely signed petition from Matrons and Superintendents of Nursing Homes, to which reference has already been made, in which they strongly objected to powers of administration being given to the Borough Councils as an extension of their powers under the Disorderly Houses Act, and (in the words of the National Council of Trained Nurses) earnestly petitioned the London County Council not to "cast so grave a slur upon a section of the nursing profession which is rendering indispensable service to the public," and expressed the opinion that "such action would be most disastrous in the interests of the community."

Dr. Hamer stated that the number of maternity homes kept by registered midwives under the jurisdiction of the L.C.C. was about 100; that the Council knows of some forty or fifty more; and that probably there are more in which the particular evil complained of exists.

Miss Paget stated that the medical women who are inspectors of midwives under the London County Council are exceedingly respected by the midwives. She thought it would be disastrous to substitute for this intelligent inspection the ordinary sanitary inspectors of the borough councils, for the inspection of lying-in homes is a highly technical matter, requiring medical knowledge of a very high sort. Further the sanitary midwives may have been trained by the very midwives of the place they are going to inspect.

Mr. Bigham, on behalf of the Commissioner of Police, gave valuable evidence on Part V of the Bill; and as to the character of many of the establishments advertised as massage establishments. He explained that when dealing with ordinary disorderly houses, the police are able by watching and seeing the characters who go in and out to give *prima facie* evidence that the house is used as a disorderly house; but in these massage houses, generally on the upper floor of a house used by other people, there is nothing to indicate where the particular people go; and it is extremely difficult for the police to get any evidence to enable them to enter the establishment. He referred to the notorious case of Queenie Gerald, who employed a woman dressed as a nurse on her establishment, to give it an air of respectability, and said that this woman is still advertising from another address under another name.

Mrs. Gow spoke on behalf of a number of important philanthropic Societies.

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