

in England and Wales had fallen from 132 to 91 last year. The latter was one of the lowest rates ever recorded in this country.

#### SOME INTERESTING FIGURES.

In connection with the suggestion that the entry of women into an active part in the national life, whether industrial, professional or political, will prejudicially affect the birth-rate, a correspondent writes in the *Daily Mail* :—"The following were the facts in the years 1912 to 1914 with regard to infant mortality. Of all civilised countries, New Zealand, Australia and Norway, where women were already fully enfranchised had the lowest infant death-rate (51, 71 and 65 per thousand born); Sweden, Holland and Denmark, where women took an active part in political life (in Holland and Denmark women now have the vote), came next with 71, 95 and 98 per thousand; while in the United Kingdom the rate in 1914 was 104 per thousand in Germany (1912), 147, and in Austria (1912) 180.

#### WAR SAVING CERTIFICATES FOR BABIES.

A Deptford doctor has hit on a happy idea in connection with a Baby Club, namely, to purchase for each infant of two or three months old a War Savings Certificate (15s. 6d.), to be held by the doctor till the child is one year old. If the child dies before that age the Certificate will return to the doctor. If the child lives over twelve months and dies before the Certificate matures, the Certificate becomes the property of the parents. If the child lives until the Certificate matures, the Certificate is its own. Thus the War Loan is supported, the parents are encouraged to do well by the child, and the child itself benefits later on. The only condition is that the child shall be brought to the club every three months for examination to show that it is properly fed, washed and clothed.

#### THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MOTHERCRAFT.

The Committee of the National Institute of Mothercraft—of which the Duchess of Marlborough is Hon. Treasurer, and which, it is hoped to erect on a site easily accessible from all parts of London—has received a gift of £5,000 to equip and maintain an ante-natal clinic.

The Institute, which is intended as a memorial to those who have fallen in the war, will, it is anticipated, cost £200,000, and be the headquarters of all information concerning the different phases of mothercraft. Individual donors can endow and name special departments.

At a meeting convened last week by Lady Pollock at 21, Hyde Park Place, in support of the Institute, Mr. Arthur Acland said the Institute would do work of Imperial importance, and pointed out that in 1915 out of every 1,000 children born 110 died in the first year of life. Ante-natal losses

from want of adequate attention were also enormous, and out of 6,000,000 children at school 1,000,000 were unfitted to take advantage of the education given, mainly on account of neglect of health in the early years of life. He urged the importance of appointing six women on every Health Committee in the country, of an adequate supply of health visitors, and of welfare centres within reach of all expectant mothers.

#### A WAIF.

On a bitter night at the end of last week a baby which had made its unwelcome entry into life about an hour previously, and had been left on the steps of a church, with a sheet of brown paper as its only covering, was taken to a large London hospital.

The question was how this newly born infant had survived in the bitter cold, and it is an interesting point that the medical opinion is that it was saved by the fact that it was still attached to the placenta.

Those midwives who hasten to tie and cut the umbilical cord before it has ceased to pulsate will do well to remember that by so doing they are depriving the infant of a supply of blood "which is the life," amounting probably to more than an ounce.

#### AN L.G.B. GRANT-IN-AID.

The Local Government Board has decided to make a grant-in-aid amounting to £355 1s. 10d., in respect of the salaries and expenses during the year 1916-1917 of the two London County Council Inspectors under the Midwives' Act, 1902, by reason of the co-operation of the work of the inspectors with schemes for maternity and infant welfare in the administrative County of London.

#### "NATIONAL BABY WEEK."

Plans are on foot for a "National Baby Week," to be held in July, and at an informal conference, held in London, on Monday, to discuss the project with representatives of fifty national societies, at which Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, presided, Miss Halford stated that the scheme included cinema films, sermons, speeches and exhibitions.

#### THE LEEDS MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

The Lord Mayor of Leeds, Mr. E. George Arnold, who presided at the annual meeting of the Leeds Maternity Hospital, and moved the adoption of the report, congratulated the institution on the noble work it is doing. The increase in the number of patients has taxed the resources of the institution severely, and the committee attribute this largely to the safety and comfort which women realise are provided there, and also to the educational work conducted at the maternity centres. There is a daily average of twelve beds occupied by women receiving ante-natal treatment.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)