

The Midwife.

MIDWIVES FOR CANADA.

In the issue of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING Supplement of November 11th there was an account, with the above heading, of a meeting held in London, which informed Canadians that plans for solving their nursing problems were afoot. It was so comical that the audacity of it was lost sight of for a moment.

The scheme proposed is to utilize the V.A.D. workers, the sporting woman, the woman who wishes freedom for herself and horse, &c., to look after the people on the Canadian prairies. The question of training is apparently nothing, though it is arranged that the word "midwife" be changed to "mother nurse"—the person remaining the same. Then a Resolution was passed: "This meeting wishes to express its deepfelt desire to co-operate with the Dominion in her efforts to place adequate midwifery within the means and within the reach of pioneer settlers in outlying districts." I wonder to whom that Resolution was sent.

Now let us look closely at this matter. There is a need for nurses and doctors in the sparsely settled parts of the Dominion, but the need is for the fully trained nurse and the fully trained physician. The woman who goes out to those parts to nurse must be able to cope with all emergencies. She must be able to conduct a maternity case unaided, if necessary; to care for accident cases, pneumonia cases, and so on. She must be able to teach and advise the young mothers, and to watch over the infants. Nothing short of that is acceptable to the Western people, as the writer has heard them express themselves many times over. Besides, they wish women who are adaptable, who can turn their hands to any of the household duties when necessary.

Canada is willing to welcome the fully trained woman for work on the prairies if she have the qualifications necessary, no matter whence she comes. Her people are able and willing to pay well for efficient service, and they do not wish and will not accept any charity, certainly not from other countries. *And Canada is able to solve her problems herself:* At present, midwives are not needed in Canada, and may they never be needed in this fair land! But if at any time in the future it should be decided that they are necessary, Canada will have to evolve her own midwife scheme. She will have to create

her own machinery—the training school, the examining board, the licensing and supervising board for midwives. *And she is perfectly capable of doing so.*

The above expresses the writer's opinion as a private Canadian citizen.

MARY ARD MACKENZIE.

We are not surprised that the article referred to by Miss Ard Mackenzie has resulted in her strong protest.

No one is better qualified to express an opinion on this subject than Miss Ard Mackenzie, who, as Chief Superintendent of the Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada, is acquainted with nursing conditions from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is extraordinary how, in nursing matters, every one feels competent to deal with highly technical questions without consulting the expert opinion of members of the nursing profession.

In reporting the meeting held at Sunderland House on November 3rd, which has as its object co-operation with the Dominion of Canada in her efforts to place adequate midwifery within the means, and within the reach, of pioneer settlers in outlying districts by getting V.A.D.s and war widows to train as midwives, and then emigrate to the outlying districts of Canada, we questioned if the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses had been approached concerning the scheme. Apparently it has not, and, as Miss Ard Mackenzie reminds us, "Canada is able to solve her problems herself. At present midwives are not needed in Canada, and may they never be needed in this fair land."

Lady Howard de Walden is establishing a maternity home at Park House, Albert Road, Regent's Park, in connection with the Marchioness of Lansdowne's Officers' Families Fund. As so many officers' wives have given up their homes, these "homes" are a real blessing.

The offices of the Central Midwives Board are now removed from Caxton House to Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Westminster, London, S.W.

The dates of the Ordinary Board meetings for 1917 have been fixed as follows:—

January 18th.	June 21st.
February 15th.	July 26th.
March 15th.	October 11th.
April 19th.	November 15th.
May 10th.	December 13th.

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