

vice should be administered by the County Borough Councils and the County Councils through a Hybrid Committee of the Health Committee, having on it representatives of the Insurance Committee, of working women and so forth. We suggest that "direct representatives of the certified midwives in the area" should be substituted for "so forth."

We consider that in organizing the scheme it is important that in "the more populous areas it should be arranged that several midwives should live together. The prospective patient then can bespeak the services of one of the midwives on the staff, work can be equalized, and day and night duty fairly shared.

Whether medical practitioners will be willing to accept the same fee for their services as the six months' midwife, and to forego the fee for an abnormal case which they would receive if called to the assistance of a midwife, is a question for the medical profession—we doubt it.

If District Nursing Associations providing midwifery service are recognized under the scheme, steps must be taken to ensure that inadequate nursing standards are not given a false value and official protection. The Central Midwives Board would do well to print on its certificate that it implies no knowledge of the nursing of the sick.

Whether the cost of the scheme cannot in part be defrayed by the parents is open to discussion. Dr. Hope is of opinion that the administrative machinery would be simple. If not, then the scheme must be regarded as a State endowed, not State aided one.

HEALTH ACTIVITIES.

Miss Elizabeth Ross, in a paper read at the Annual Convention of the American Nurses' Association, expresses the opinion that "the nurse who is to be with the mother when the baby arrives can do far better pre-natal work than a nurse whose duty ends with the advent of the child. This is also true of post-natal work. It is the natural sequence, and the parent feels a greater confidence in the nurse who has been her friend through all. I can hear someone saying, 'How is one nurse to do all this?' She cannot, but every town should have nurses enough to cover the whole work, and if the people are taught to pay a reasonable price for what they receive, the expenditure will not be excessive and the return will warrant the cost."

At the same Convention, Dr. Robert H. Bishop, of Cleveland, Ohio, stated that in a Health Centre in that city the Division of Health issues to each new-born babe a health certificate; these certificates are delivered in person by the nurse. A personal letter from the mayor of the city is also delivered to the mother, congratulating her upon the new arrival and advising her of the need of careful medical supervision which the city provides in case she has no private physician. The nurses find that these certificates are of great value in securing admission to the home and in establishing a friendly working relationship with the

mother. They have been the means, too, of increasing the birth registration which is far from perfect even now. The mothers are urged to bring their well babies to the prophylactic dispensaries which are located either in the central dispensary or in the district, as the need may be. Sick babies are taken or sent to their private physician or to the sick babies' dispensary centrally located in the city. Here the expert physicians in charge examine the baby and the orders are telephoned to the central dispensary the same day; a written copy of the orders follows in the morning mail.

STRINGENT REGULATIONS UNNECESSARY FOR THE COMPETENT.

Dr. Lovell Drage writes in the *Lancet* :—

"The attempt to make a new class of midwifery practitioners has failed, and if the establishment of such a class is desired a sufficiently equipped class must be made and the subject of midwifery removed from the compulsory subjects of medical students. At the present time midwives do not occupy a position which is quite fair to them. They are not considered to be competent to carry out their work without the aid of stringent rules and regulations. They consequently have no responsibility so long as these rules are obeyed. Some are incompetent and others competent, and no rules will make those competent who are incompetent. If a sufficient class must be obtained it must be a class who are so competent that their work can be carried on without rules and regulations."

ELECTRICAL STERILIZATION OF MILK.

Dr. Joseph Priestley, medical officer of health for Lambeth, describes in the current number of the *Practitioner* experiments in the electrical sterilization of milk which has had astonishing results.

They were carried out by Professor J. M. Beattie at one of the Liverpool Corporation milk depots, a rapidly alternating electrical current being passed through the milk. It is stated that by treatment in this way all disease-producing germs are killed; tuberculous milk is rendered non-tuberculous; the chief milk-souring bacilli are destroyed so that the milk keeps sweet for 3 or 4 days; the chemical composition and taste are in no way altered; the milk, after this treatment is perfectly satisfactory as a food for infants. Further, the method employed is quite simple, and could be easily applied by milk distributors.

"THE NIGHT THE BING BOYS WAS 'ERE."

There was a christening at an unfashionable church last Sunday.

Two proud mothers were doubly proud, as both their babies had arrived "the night the Bing Boys was 'ere."

Well done, mothers!

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