

tion. So complete a survey of the whole question has never before been attempted. Ante-natal supervision, supervision during the lying-in period, and post-natal welfare, are among the questions discussed by Dr. Hope, while the first part of Dr. Campbell's Report deals exclusively with midwives and midwifery. Reports have also been prepared by Dr. W. Leslie Mackenzie, Medical Officer of the Local Government Board for Scotland, and Dr. E. Coey-Bigger, Medical Commissioner of the Local Government Board for Ireland.

The value of these reports as standard books of reference can hardly be over-estimated.

NATIONAL BABY WEEK.

An event of the year has been the National Baby Week, held at the Central Hall, Westminster, and elsewhere, in July, with the object of drawing attention to the importance of the whole question of motherhood and the preservation of infant life. The National Baby Week Council, which promoted the Exhibition and Conference, has now become a permanent body, with headquarters at 7, Hanover Square, W., and with far-reaching plans for the future.

The suggestion of the greatest importance during the Conference was that made by Judge Neil, of Chicago, who described the system of Mothers' Pensions established in 30 of the United States of America, whereby "the taxpayer pays the mother to look after her children instead of some other person." The method is most humane and beneficent, as well as economical in operation.

PROPOSALS FOR STATE-AIDED MIDWIFERY SERVICE IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

In September the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives drafted proposals for a State-aided Midwifery Service in England and Wales (which were discussed in our "Midwife" section at the beginning of October), some of which were admirable. The weak points are that although it is proposed that the State Midwifery Service shall be State-aided—or more properly State-endowed—for it is part of the scheme that no fees shall be recovered from the patients—and also that the remuneration of midwives shall be substantially increased, yet the document is silent as to the standard of training which should be enforced. Dr. Janet Campbell points out in the Report above referred to:—"It is manifestly useless to arbitrarily raise the remuneration of midwives if their efficiency is not materially raised also." She indicates twelve months as the minimum period of training desirable for midwives, and further discusses the question of a second certificate, indicating more advanced knowledge and experience than the existing C.M.B. certificates.

There is no suggestion that midwives shall be represented on any bodies charged with their control, an omission which must be rectified before the scheme will commend itself to intelligent midwives.

THE DOMINIONS BEYOND THE SEAS.

NEW ZEALAND.

The need for uniformity of standards, not only in the three divisions of the United Kingdom but in the Colonies also, is emphasised by a paragraph which appears in the Report of Miss Maclean, Assistant Inspector and Deputy Registrar of Nurses in the Department of Public Health, New Zealand, which is incorporated by Dr. T. H. A. Valintine, Inspector-General of Hospitals and Chief Health Officer, in the Report of his Department to the Hon. Minister of Public Health.

Miss Maclean writes: "The lack of a high standard of training under the Midwives Acts for England and Scotland points to the necessity of amendments to the New Zealand Act, which allows a too-open door for the admission of midwives to the register whose course of training is far below the standard imposed on the midwives trained in the Dominion and in Australia. This is an injustice to the New Zealand midwives which should be rectified as soon as possible."

CANADA.

The proposal made at a public meeting in this country to send midwives to Canada and incidentally to find occupation for V.A.D. workers after the war, was followed by a strong protest from Miss M. Ard Mackenzie, R.N. B.A., one of the most honoured members of the nursing profession in the Dominion, a past President of the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses, and who, as Chief Superintendent of the Victorian Order of Nurses in Canada, knew the needs of the provinces from the Atlantic to the Pacific in regard to nursing. Miss Ard Mackenzie points out that there is a sufficient supply of doctors and midwives in the cities and that no one but the fully-trained women will solve the problem of nursing care in the isolated districts. Further, that start them where you will, midwives always gravitate to populous centres, and if they were brought over from the older countries in shiploads, or turned out in hundreds in Canada on the old pattern, the nursing problem in the sparsely settled districts would still be unsolved; and you would find all those midwives settled in the more densely populated parts where they would get regular work.

That is the opinion of an expert.

VICTORIA.

Lastly, in Victoria, the second reading of the Midwives Bill was carried some months ago in the Legislative Assembly, and at any moment the news may be received that it has passed into law.

LAST WORDS FOR 1917.

The path of Progress ever is untrodden;
The work to do lies always just ahead.

Paul Derrick.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.