

and Borough Councils. She anticipated the question—why should not the mothers pay part of the fee? She thought it would probably mean a multiplication of officials, which would be undesirable. Another suggestion was that, if the public bodies guaranteed the fees, they might establish a Midwifery Service of their own. The objection to that was that the expectant mothers liked to choose those who were to attend them. The question of a guaranteed fee for the medical men was also dealt with. The speaker also emphasized the importance of greater efficiency of the Inspectors of Midwives; at present this question left much to be desired.

The keynote sounded by the speakers and echoed by the audience was the urgent need for a higher standard all round of the Midwifery Service, namely—a higher standard of professional education for Midwives and their Inspectors, a higher and an assured rate of pay, and improved home conditions for mothers and babes—ante- and post-natal. These points were embodied in a Resolution which was passed unanimously. After a vote of thanks to the kind host and hostess for lending their house, the meeting terminated, and the guests were most hospitably entertained to tea.

B. K.

#### A STATE MIDWIFERY SERVICE.

In our opinion it is high time that a State Midwifery Service was organized upon a financial basis which would induce well-educated trained Midwifery Nurses to act as Midwives. At present the short term training of uneducated women—compelled by agreement to contract out their labour to Cottage Benefit Societies and as Village Nurses controlled by committees of ladies and gentlemen who are devoid of all professional knowledge—is just the most deplorable system possible. These sweating societies are simply freezing up the supply—of even the poor material they have recognized in the past.

All skilled professional work should be dissociated from the philanthropic proclivities of Mrs. Leisured Busybody—who apparently considers a living wage, much more a just one, productive of dangerous independence upon the part of the worker. We attended a consultation on the question of a State Midwifery Service recently, where half-a-dozen ladies put forward their pet schemes for the regeneration of the Midwife for the benefit of the lying-in woman, and all deplored the shortage of workers.

“What do the Midwives suggest?” we enquired.

Apparently no one present had consulted them! And our question was treated as exceedingly irrelevant.

We shall be glad to hear and publish what the Midwives think and suggest.

We know they want better teaching, more practical experience before examination.

We know they want more liberal remuneration to live decently.

We know they want direct and adequate representation on the Central Midwives Boards—more especially the English Board.

And we know they object to unpractical and ignorant women inspectors—

Anything else? Why not say?

#### THE ST. MARYLEBONE BABIES' NURSING HOME.

A new development of the Schools of Mothercraft which are being organised in so many places is the establishment of a Babies' Nursing Home, at 20, Marlborough Place, N.W. 8, under the auspices of the St. Marylebone Health Society, which was opened by H.R.H. Princess Arthur of Connaught on March 22nd. The difficulty in connection with such schools is the impossibility of providing adequate treatment for babies suffering from malnutrition, the hospital accommodation being quite insufficient.

A feature of the new Babies' Home is that the mothers are to be encouraged to visit the babies at any reasonable times, to help to nurse them, and to learn to continue the treatment when the baby goes home. This education of the mothers, as well as the cure of the baby, is one of the chief aims of the Society in its Schools of Mothercraft, and this cannot be achieved in an ordinary hospital.

Dr. Eric Pritchard, speaking at the opening of the Home, said that he had learned by experience that 99 per cent. of the cases treated at an institute of that kind became healthy. There was no evidence that a wasting child need be a bad citizen.

The home looked very dainty and bright on the opening day. The staff includes a Matron, a day and night Sister, and four probationers. (Norland nurses, who are trained there for three months.) In the sunny garden at the back the babies lie out in the open when weather permits, snugly ensconced in Treasure Cots, than which there are no better.

#### LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION.

At the fourth annual meeting of the above association the following resolution, moved by Miss E. Pell-Smith, was carried unanimously.

##### RESOLUTION.

The midwives, knowing the advantages both for themselves and their work of being registered by the State, offer their sympathy to the trained nurses of this county in their efforts to obtain a like recognition; they urge them to aim at a right bill, one giving a one portal entrance and direct representation.

Copies to be sent to the Central Committee for State Registration and the Royal British Nurses' Association and the College of Nursing

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