

The Midwife.

THE SYDENHAM INFANT WELFARE CENTRE.

It will not be gainsaid that the work of Infant Welfare stands in the forefront of social reform.

The Sydenham Infant Welfare Centre is an up-to-date and go-ahead one, and deals with all branches of this important work.

It occupies two adjoining houses, 5 and 7, Adamsrill Road, Sydenham, where accommodation is found for the infants' hospital (12 beds), the infants' clinic, weighing room, milk kitchen, laboratory, and nurses' and pupils' quarters.

The hospital wards are quite charming, dainty and simple, and on the occasion of our visit contained eight infants in various stages of illness and convalescence; some pathetically shrunken and pinched, but with good hope of attaining the satisfactory condition of others, who lay placidly and contentedly in their cots.

A special feature of this work is the training of pupils for infant welfare work. The period of training is one year, six months of which are spent in the hospital, three months in the milk kitchen, where modification of milk, preparation of feeds, sterilization, pasteurization, &c., are taught. The final three months are spent in the district. At the conclusion of the course an examination is held and the successful pupils are granted certificates.

On being discharged from the hospital, the infants are followed up by the resident nurses, and their feeds still prepared in the hospital. Six hundred bottles with prepared feeds had been sent out on the day of our visit. A district midwife has just been added to the staff of the Centre.

On one afternoon a clinic is held for mothers of the better classes, which is a step in quite the right direction, and on Saturdays, mothers who are unable to attend at the other times may bring their babies to be weighed.

The most original feature of this Centre is the class of "Little Mothers," which now numbers over 100.

The "Little Mothers" are the girls, generally little sisters, who take charge of baby in his pram, or when mother is out at work. The children are initiated into babycraft in all its branches—how to wash, dress, and feed baby; what to avoid—tight binders, dummies, &c. They are the proud possessors of special arm-

lets, which must be worn when they wheel baby out. Miss A. M. Payne is the Superintendent and Hon. Secretary combined. She holds the certificate of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. When she went to Sydenham, the work was but an embryo of the present comprehensive scheme. "Somehow it grew round her." We imagine that Miss Payne is the kind of person that things do grow round, but such efficiency as is evidenced in the Sydenham Centre does not "grow" without initiative and hard work. The L.G.B. guarantees 50 per cent. of the expenses, and the remainder depends on voluntary contributions.

H. H.

ADVANCED LECTURES ON INFANT CARE.

A course of advanced lectures on "Infant Care," for Nurses, health visitors, teachers, Infant Welfare workers, mothers, &c., will be held at No. 1, Wimpole Street, London, W. (corner of Henrietta Street), on Mondays from January 28th to April 22nd, at 5.30 p.m.

The course is in preparation for the advanced certificate of the National Association for the Prevention of Infant Mortality. Fees for the course of twelve lectures 5s., single lectures 1s., obtainable from Miss Halford, Secretary, 4, Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1. They must be obtained in every case in advance, and are not transferable. Students desirous of borrowing books on "Infant Care," from the Association's library, can do so on payment in advance of 1s.

January 28th.—The Development of the Child in Utero. By Lady Barrett, C.B.E., M.D., M.S.

THE MIDWIVES (IRELAND) BILL.

In a reply to a question addressed by General M'Calmont to the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on January 17th, Mr. Duke said that if certain provisions in the Bill were not agreed upon with the parties concerned in the course of the week he did not think it would be practicable for the Government to proceed with the Midwives (Ireland) Bill before the Prorogation. Sir J. D. Rees asked him to reconsider that decision in view of the fact that the services of all these ladies will be required at the birth of the new Constitution. Mr. Duke said that his various duties prevented his going about trying to induce people to be reasonable over proposals of legislation. He hoped the public interest would induce people to be reasonable. If they were not he could not promise to use personal exertions where such a large area was involved.

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