

The Midwife.

THE MIDWIVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On July 9th, in the House of Lords, the Report of Amendments to the Midwives Bill was received. The district councils are evidently still struggling to retain the right to act as Local Supervising Authorities. It will be remembered that in Committee the following Amendment was inserted at the instance of the Marquess of Salisbury as "Clause 12":—

"Section nine of the principal Act (which enables county councils to delegate their powers and duties to district councils) shall be repealed." An amendment to this Clause, moved by Lord Salisbury, has now been adopted which materially weakens it:—"Provided that where, at the commencement of this Act, any powers or duties have been delegated, such delegation shall not be affected." To this amendment, on the third reading of the Bill on July 16th, Viscount Peel moved a further one:—"Unless, on the representation of the County Council concerned, the Local Government Board otherwise direct."

The existing cases of delegation affected by this amendment are four.

The Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE BILL.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Bill was debated at length in Committee in the House of Commons on July 9th, and read a third time and passed in that House on July 12th. The long discussion in Committee centred mainly round the question whether the powers given under the Act should be conferred on both large and small authorities, or whether it was desired to limit the use of these powers to boroughs of more than 50,000 population. Eventually it was decided that the County Councils in England and Wales exercising powers under this Act or under Section two of the Notification of Births (Extension) Act, 1915, should establish maternity and child welfare committees, and may delegate to such committees, with or without restrictions or conditions, as they think fit, any of the powers under either Act, except the power of raising a rate, or borrowing money.

EUGENICS.

A selection of striking posters shown at the recent Baby Week Exhibition at Westminster were illustrative of inheritance of ability, inheritance of defect, causes of infant deaths, insanity in the relation to heredity; also of the various aspects of syphilis—as the result of heredity, of infection, &c.—and a study of worthy parentage.

BABIES OF THE EMPIRE.

On Tuesday in last week the Right Honble. W. F. Massey, P.C. (Prime Minister of New Zealand), presided at the opening of the Babies of the Empire Mothercraft Training Centre, 29 and 31, Trebovir Road, Earl's Court, S.W. The Babies of the Empire Society, of which Lord Plunket is Chairman, and Dr. F. Truby King, C.M.G., Medical Director, has its headquarters in the General Buildings, Aldwych, W.C. 2. Its objects are (1) To uphold the Sacredness of the Body and the Duty of Health; (2) To acquire accurate information and knowledge on matters affecting the health of Women and Children, and to disseminate such knowledge; and (3) To train specially, and to employ qualified nurses, whose duty it will be to give sound, reliable instruction, advice and assistance on matters affecting the health and well-being of women, especially during pregnancy and while nursing infants . . . with a view to conserving the health and strength of the rising generation, and rendering both mother and offspring hardy, healthy, and resistive to disease; (4) To co-operate with any present or future organisations which are working for any of the foregoing or cognate objects.

At the Mothercraft Training Centre the main idea is to give a sound, simple, thorough grounding in the every-day needs of home and nursing. The desire is to make the course practical, helpful, and domestic, to encourage and stimulate commonsense and resourcefulness, and to render the knowledge conveyed as interesting and as widely applicable and adaptable as possible. The Matron is Miss A. Pattick, and the Staff Sister Mrs. Cowey.

THE CARE OF MOTHER AND CHILD.

Under the auspices of the London County Council, which is the Local Supervising Authority for midwives in the county, Dr. Truby King is giving two courses of lectures on the Care of Mother and Child with special reference to the work of midwives, one at Birkbeck College, Bream's Buildings, Fetter Lane, E.C., the next lecture being given on July 22nd at 4 o'clock, and the other at Morley College, Waterloo Road, S.E. 1, where lectures will be given on July 18th and 24th at 4 o'clock. They will be illustrated by Lantern Slides and Practical Demonstrations.

A report compiled by the Local Government Board on information derived from German sources shows that the fall in the birth-rate in Germany during the three years, 1915-17, was equivalent to the loss of 2,000,000 babies.

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