

the four beds installed in a school at Vitry are excepted.

An Army Order to evacuate our Maternity came on July 11th, 1918. We had a place ready to receive us, two hours away by car, but we kept a *poste de secours* in Châlons, moving most of the women down to Méry. The Maternity building was now in a place of particular danger both from long-range guns and aircraft, so we installed three maternity beds in a house which was somewhat safer. For the nights we had our *poste de secours* in the great champagne cellars under the hill, where all the inhabitants of Châlons sheltered. . . . Three babies were born there, about twenty more in the daytime *poste de secours*, and all were taken down to safety at Méry immediately after.

Our old building having been severely damaged, we had to wait five months before we could return; but with new paint everywhere, electric light and hot water, the days of *crises* now seem over.

There is one more *crise*, which might be the worst, and that would be its closing down. During these four years and a quarter, eight hundred and seventy-eight babies have been born. Two mothers only died. One arrived much too late, hopeless from the first. The other died from long-standing heart disease, which became acute. Only 4½ per cent. of babies have been born dead, or have died in their first month.

The mothers say to us, "il n'y a pas d'accidents chez vous," and come again, bringing their neighbours. The hospital is badly wanted—everybody wants it to remain. We began with twenty-six maternity beds; now we have forty, with twenty four cradles, and we need them all. The garderie for the older children had about sixteen beds and there was no *pouponnière*; now there are forty cots for children, and these are never empty.

There is a committee of French people willing, nay, eager and enthusiastic, to take over the management when the Friends go; there is a French staff ready to carry it on in the same spirit and with equal skill. The question is, can the Département of the Marne afford the necessary grant now the war is over? With Reims a heap of ruins, Suippes, Mourmelon, and countless other little towns, not to speak of villages, half or totally destroyed, Châlons itself much damaged, the funds of the département will have a heavy strain upon them. The Conseillers look very grave and shake their heads when we speak of the 120,000 francs a year that will be necessary to keep it going. According to our calculations, four hundred dollars or eighty pounds will maintain entirely for one year a mother's bed and a baby's cradle. Ten thousand dollars or two thousand pounds will endow them for ever. The cost of each baby, including the care of its mother at the time of birth, the housing and care of all its little brothers and sisters at the same time, if necessary, and the assurance of a cot in the *pouponnière* should it fall ill at any time up to two years old, costs four hundred francs, or eighty dollars or sixteen pounds.

Will not friends come forward and give France the cost of the birth of a baby, or keep a cradle full of them for a year, or better still for ten years, when the country will have recovered from her losses? To reconstruct, a country must have children. The Maternité helps her to keep them and to keep them healthy. The women come with tears in their eyes to beg us not to go, saying, "we must keep the Maternity"—will friends not help to keep it open?

We want to call it the Maison Maternelle de la Marne, so that it may remain what it now is, the Friend of every mother and every babe. We want to teach the mothers how to care for their babies wisely; we want to help mothers in trouble and difficulty, and we want at the same time to teach educated French, English, and American girls, as we have been doing, how to deal with babies and young children so as to keep them healthy, so that they may in turn teach others. The international spirit will remain, and will keep fresh the memory of Les Amis. It will water the seeds of brotherhood sown in the time of France's distress, and may help them to continue to grow and flourish when her wounds are healed.

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CONTROL OF MIDWIVES.

Standing Committee A of the House of Commons, considering on Tuesday the Ministry of Health Bill, considered the control of midwives.

Major Hills moved to leave out the following subsection in Clause 3:—"All the powers of the Privy Council and of the Lord President of the Council under the Midwives Acts, 1902 and 1918." He said that midwives were a branch of the medical service, and so far the Ministry of Health had not proposed to take charge of the service.

Major Astor explained that Parliament had given the direction, employment, and payment of midwives to local authorities. The Ministry of Health, succeeding the Local Government Board, was far more qualified to deal with those local authorities than the Privy Council. They did not propose to touch the judicial functions, so that midwives when questions of discipline were raised would have the same right of appeal as now to the High Court of Justice. The Committee had shown quite clearly that it wanted to concentrate matters dealing with infants and children under the Minister of Health, and it would be unwise consequently to remove from that Department a matter so very essential to the welfare of infants.

Major Hills, in view of the assurance that an appeal would be allowed, and the Central Midwives Board would remain intact, with all its powers, withdrew his amendment.

A CHILD LIFE-CARD.

Dr. Eric Pritchard, speaking at the Royal Sanitary Institute last Saturday, said: "I hope the Ministry of Health will devise a life-card for a child's whole history, so that it may be kept and handed on from one authority to another."

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