

## The Midwife.

### BEFORE BABY COMES.

#### A TALK WITH EXPECTANT MOTHERS.

A useful booklet, published by the Glaxo Mothers' Help Bureau, 155-157, Great Portland Street, London, W. 1, is "Before Baby Comes: A Short Talk to Expectant Mothers," by a Doctor and the Glaxo nurses.

In the past the way in which the community has permitted working women to be overworked and underfed during the antenatal period has been a blot on our humanity — it was cruel to the mother and unjust to her unborn child. But we are now getting a juster view of the needs of the expectant mother, a clear comprehension of our duty to her. We know as the booklet under review points out, that "all our efforts and devotion, after a child is born, may fail unless that child was properly cared for before it was born. But to care for it then can only be done by caring for its mother; and so the care of the expectant mother, as we beautifully and significantly call her nowadays, is seen to be the care of two human beings, two generations, mother and child, present and future in one. So great a matter upon which the success or failure of all infant welfare

work has lately been proved to depend, has now received the special and devoted study which it demands," and the results of the combined efforts of many famous workers in this department of science are told in simple language which can be readily understood by the unlearned.

Here is advice which is sane and sound. "You ought not to be ill, or to feel ill, you ought not to be satisfied if you do feel ill, as if you could expect nothing better in your condition. On the contrary, there are many women who are never so well in their lives as during this time. To-day we know the reason of this. We know that the unborn child, during its growth and development,

which it owes to its mother, also makes a return to her, and passes into her blood precious things which are of value to her. We have learnt, also, that the expectant mother gains powers of resistance to fatigue and to other kinds of strain and danger, such as she never had before, nor can ever have at any other time. These then are proofs positive that expectant motherhood, so far from being an illness, should be what it usually is—a time of splendid and wonderful health.

"But, of course, this health must be cared for, and since all that the mother does for her own life is really done for two, it is clear that she is in duty bound to take special care of herself at this time, to be more scrupulous in obeying the laws of health and to avoid those doubtful doings which might perhaps matter little at other times, but which certainly must be avoided now. Above all, you have only to remind yourself of the marvellous fact that a living child is growing with tremendous speed at the cost of your own blood, in order to realize that your diet is of supreme importance. You are feeding for two, and one of the two is building brain and bone and muscle out of the food which you swallow and which your blood carries swiftly to your



A BONNIE GLAXO BABY.

child in a few seconds after the few hours during which you are digesting it. If it be the wrong food, or insufficient, or not digested, then you will suffer more or less, but your baby will assuredly starve."

This is advice which any expectant mother can understand, and will be the better for gasping. After showing that the woman with child should avoid stimulants, owing to their injurious effect on the unborn child, the booklet states "there is good evidence to show that for exactly similar reasons the expectant mother should not smoke."

We cordially commend the booklet to the attention of our readers.

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