

# The Midwife.

## POST-GRADUATE WEEK.

### AT THE GENERAL LYING-IN HOSPITAL, YORK ROAD, LAMBETH.

The eighth Annual Post-Graduate Week at the General Lying-in Hospital, York Road, opened on Monday, June 21st, with its usual *éclat*. The weather, which on the previous day had threatened to spoil the fun, changed its mind, and the "week" started with its usual good luck. As our climate, however, is uncertain, coy, and hard to be even with, it was thought prudent to have the tea indoors, and the "ball was kicked off" from the entrance hall of the hospital, which was charmingly adapted to the occasion.

York Road is second to none in hospitality, and the guests were received by the Matron with her usual graciousness. The tables were loaded with good things (including *sugar*), which Sisters and pupils alike were assiduous in pressing upon their guests.

The decorations of the tea tables were particularly pretty; foxgloves, wild parsley, lupins, and snapdragons translated smoky Lambeth for the time being into the atmosphere of a country garden.

The popularity of Post Graduate Week shows no sign of waning, for upwards of one hundred midwives from all parts of the country have enrolled this year. And a merry company round the tables they proved. There could be no doubt as to the nature of the gathering, for above the clatter of the cups and the ripples of laughter could be heard—

"She had *triplets*, my dear."

"Oh, of course, *she* would!"

Whether this perversity was ascribed to the mother or the midwife was left to conjecture.

The difficulties of breast-feeding, the bad luck of "all night cases but two, my dear," interspersed between bites of bun and cress sandwiches.

The general air of enthusiasm among the post-graduates was most inspiring and accorded with the "make-yourself-at-home" atmosphere of the hostesses.

The guests having done full justice to the fare, drifted one by one into the sitting-room, where bookings were eagerly made for the fixtures of the following day, and earnest discussions took place as to their relative attractions.

Since it was obviously impossible to be in two places at once, the decision as to superior merit had to be arrived at.

This first successful day of the Post-Graduate Week concluded with a lecture by Dr. Fairbairn, on "Preventive Medicine in Relation to Midwifery."

It seems desirable that the example of a Post-Graduate Week should be widely followed in general hospitals for the benefit of trained nurses.

## BABY WEEK.

"Baby Week" appeals to us all, and is once more upon us, and will be held for the fourth time at the beginning of July, and conferences will be held not only in London, but at Leeds, Manchester, Brighton, Bradford, Wrexham and Crewe. The National Baby Week Council has done much to increase infant welfare centres, from 800 to 1,700 in England and Wales, and it has also identified itself with the new movement known as the Children's Era, which has the physical and moral welfare of young school children much at heart.

The special subjects to be discussed are: (a) Widows' Pensions; (b) The home and its substitutes: The care of young children in the home as compared with their care in institutions; (c) Infant Welfare work: A retrospect and a forecast; (d) The decay of parenthood and its menace to the race; and the speakers will include Mrs. H. B. Irving, Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher, Dr. C. W. Saleeby, Dr. H. W. Pooler, and Miss R. Smith.

## DENTAL DISEASE AMONG NURSING AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS.

Dr. Harold Waller, speaking at the recent Dental Conference at Manchester, emphasised the single clinical fact, which has come to light in the study of infants, namely, that diseased teeth in a nursing woman are capable of disturbing the health of her baby at the breast. The extreme importance of breast-feeding has now become generally acknowledged.

Many disorders of health in young children point to a common source of origin—some interference with nutrition in the early months of the first year of life.

Long-standing sepsis in the mouth has been found to be a widespread cause of ill-health among working-class women in country districts as well as in towns. It assumes various forms and lowers their general health much below normal.

There is at present a state of tolerance and indifference to the existence of disease of the teeth, and a reluctance to part with those decayed or diseased. Most people are not aware that bad teeth are responsible for a loss of general health. Careful investigation is advisable before attributing ill-health to the condition of the mouth. The Conference should be of value in spreading a truer knowledge of dental hygienics.

A case described of a breast-fed baby unable to digest its mother's milk was found to be due to oral sepsis on the part of the mother. After extraction of the teeth, the infant's condition rapidly improved. This case also showed that it is the presence of unhealthy teeth, not their absence which makes for harm. A second child was subsequently successfully fed.