

# The Midwife.

## QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

### ROYAL HELP.

The Queen has sent a subscription of £5 to Queen Charlotte's Hospital and Queen Alexandra has sent a similar amount.

### APPOINTMENT OF SISTER-MIDWIFE.

Miss Ethel Smithies has been appointed Sister-Midwife. She was trained at the Chorlton Union Hospitals, Manchester, and has been Ward Sister, District Sister, and Night Sister at St. Mary's Hospitals, Manchester.

## THE LAST MEDICAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

The Supplement to the last, and forty-eighth, Annual Report of the Local Government Board contains the Report of the Medical Department for 1918-1919. Reference is made to the grave fact that there was for the first time since the establishment of civil registration an excess of deaths over births in the last quarter of 1918 of 79,443, thus causing a decrease in the population to that extent, in spite of the fact that there was no infant mortality in that year as a result of war conditions and the influenza epidemic.

As may be readily imagined, ante-natal treatment suffered from the scarcity of medical practitioners during the war, but it is claimed that an immense saving of life resulted from the action of the Food Controller and the Local Government Board conjointly in providing during 1918 for the supply of fresh and dried milk, and of extra meat and butter for expectant mothers. Provision of milk and of sugar for artificially-fed babies attending at infant welfare centres was also made.

The provision of midwives both in urban and rural districts was, it is stated, aided by grants from the Board, and the Midwives Act of 1918 has enabled the local authorities both to provide midwives and to assist in their training. Of the certificated women on the Midwives' Roll one-fifth only are in actual practice as midwives; but 845 candidates out of 1,548 successful at the last examination declared their intention to practise as midwives—including 471 proposing to settle in rural districts. The Board has also authorised grants for "home helps" in working-class households at the time of confinements, and this will no doubt help to eliminate the insufficiently trained nurse. Emphasis is laid upon the necessity for the provision of maternity beds in homes and hospitals for the very large numbers of women, married and single, who cannot find suitable accommodation in their homes or lodgings. This urgent necessity "is one the need for which has been very slowly comprehended both by the

local authorities and voluntary associations." In certain conditions the utilization of a ward—named the "district maternity home"—in union infirmaries has been authorised. A substantial development of dental facilities for expectant and nursing mothers and also for children under school age is noted.

### A WISE DEMAND.

We commend the Women's Co-operative Guild on having issued a circular demanding the control of maternity centres by the local authority rather than by voluntary organisations, and adequate representation of working women on committees controlling them. They also urge an increase in the number of maternity and infant welfare centres, the provision of a sufficient quantity of milk to all mothers, and of more maternity homes; the immediate establishment of maternity committees, a service of home helps, a national midwifery service, and a free service of medical specialists.

### CLOTTING OF MILK IN THE STOMACH.

The *Journal of the American Medication Association* describes the result of an investigation recently conducted at the Jefferson Medical College. A subject was found who could regurgitate the stomach contents at will. It was discovered by observation that milk drunk rapidly left the stomach sooner and produced a smaller curd mass, than milk drunk slowly or sipped. Raw whole cow's milk formed a large, hard curd; boiled milk curdled in a much finer and softer form. The presence of much cream in the milk ensured the formation of particularly soft curds which were slow to leave the stomach. Skim milk yielded a very hard curd, owing to the absence of fat. Pasteurized milk yielded smaller curds than the raw whole milk; cold milk coagulated more slowly than warm milk.

### A PRAYER TO OUR LADY.

Look kindly where poor people are,  
Mary of Homes, keep trouble far.  
Shelter beneath thy prayers' wings,  
Mary of Roses, all young things.  
Keep children warm thro' winds and rains  
Of cold nights, Mary of Counterpanes.  
Send us high skies, blue days and fair,  
Mary of Swallows, bless the air.  
Paint lovers' days a rose red hue,  
Mary of Peacocks, green and blue  
All wandering men, abroad at night,  
Mary of Candles, give them light.  
Pray for me as I ring thy chimes,  
In my poor belfry, Mary of Rhymes.  
—From *Skylark and Swallow*, by R. L. GALES.

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