

## The Midwife.

### BIRTH-CONTROL.

The Malthusian League, which has been trying for the last forty years to educate public opinion to the necessity for birth-control—both as regards quantity and quality of the population—has now been instrumental in establishing a Pre-maternity, Maternity and Child Welfare Centre, where mothers and infants may obtain medical advice. This will include (whenever the circumstances clearly point that on medical, hygienic, eugenic or economic grounds restriction or spacing of births is necessary) medical advice and instruction on this matter. Two doctors and a doubly-certificated nurse will be available at this Centre.

The public will agree with the Malthusian League in asserting as the League has done since first issuing a Practical Leaflet in 1913—a leaflet always sent out under carefully guarded conditions as to its proper destination and use—that birth control knowledge is a matter of vital importance to the health and well-being of the community, and should be a well-recognised department of the medical practitioner's work. But, as its economic importance to the users outweighs all other considerations, the public has found and will find for itself the means of obtaining and using this knowledge, failing other and more skilled advice.

In view of the growing public and Press expressions of approval of quality *versus* mere quantity for our future race, and in view of Lord Dawson's recent pronouncement to the Church Congress, it is urgently desired by the League that Birth Control teaching should become an essential part of all types of Welfare work in which medical aid is given.

To carry its beliefs into practice, and to show how Welfare Centres for Pre-maternity, Maternity and Child Welfare work should be really complete, a Clinic was opened at 153½, East Street (corner of South Street), Walworth, S.E. 17, on Wednesday, November 9th.

The public is asked to support this Clinic by sending the necessary funds.

All enquiries to the Hon. Secretary, 124, Victoria Street, S.W. 1.

### THE BANISHMENT OF TWIN SPECTRES.

Mr. Charles Edward Pell gave some interesting information concerning the declining birth-rate, and the question as to whether the decline is due to natural causes, before the National Birth Rate Commission last week. He pointed out that throughout human society it was found that the birth-rate rose and fell with the death-rate with remarkable regularity, if the necessary allowances were made for the varying age and sex composition of the populations concerned, and this was true whether the comparisons were between different countries, different classes, or different periods in the history of the same country. He showed

Dr. Halford Ross had proved that when hygienic measures in the Suez Canal zone had caused a heavy fall in the death-rate the birth-rate fell with it. Fertility bore a direct relation to social status, and social status implied different conditions of life. It was evident that a natural law was at work, and this conclusion obviated the necessity of assuming a state of moral decadence among the ablest and most intelligent classes. If research were vigorously undertaken, there was every hope that we might obtain an insight into the biological laws which govern fertility that would enable us to ensure fertilisation at will. It would thus be possible to obtain a regulated and differentiated birth-rate by means which would offend the religious susceptibilities of none, and which would open up a tremendous prospect of mental, moral, and physical improvement for the race, besides banishing for ever the twin spectres of over-population and de-population.

### IDEALS IN THE TEACHING OF MIDWIFERY.

We have received from Miss Olive Haydon, the Editor, a copy of "Ideals in the Teaching of Midwifery," which is a reprint, from *Nursing Notes*, of Lectures given at Teachers' Conferences, 1918-1920, at 12, Buckingham Street, Strand. The booklet includes, amongst others, addresses by Sir Francis Champneys, notes of a lecture on "Methods in the teaching of Midwifery" by Dr. Fairbairn, "Teaching Midwives how to express themselves" by Dr. Russell Andrews, F.R.C.P., and "Is a Special Training for Midwife Teachers Desirable?" by Miss Haydon herself. She answers it plainly in the affirmative.

Miss Haydon, who is well known as an arresting and stimulating teacher of Midwives, writes:—"There are a few gifted persons who, without any special training for teaching, do it inspiringly, originally, and brilliantly; they are not always the most learned in theory, but they are usually people with love and enthusiasm for their work; progressive, and intensely interested in 'leading out' the mental and physical capacities of their fellows. The born teacher loves the pupil to excel in his or her work, and even to excel the teacher himself. . . ."

"There are latent capacities in everyone that only need suitable environment and opportunity to develop, and our problem as practical teachers is how best to deal with each individual. . . . Personally I found Madame Montessori's book a great inspiration and encouragement."

A dance is being held in aid of the City of London Maternity Hospital, City Road, E.C., under the auspices of the Appeal Committee, in the Suffolk Galleries on November 16th. Lady Maurice is acting as hostess, and we hope it will have a great success.

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