

The Midwife.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PREVENTION OF INFANT MORTALITY AND NATIONAL BABY WEEK COUNCIL.

(SECTIONS OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR HEALTH MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.)

Under the auspices of the above Association a Conference was held on the three following days: July 3rd, 4th and 5th, at Carnegie House, 117, Piccadilly; and the Public Meeting, in the Council Chamber, Caxton Hall.

It was a well-organised Conference, providing, according to the usual custom, for visits to Institutions. Among those selected were the following: St. Marylebone School of Mothercraft; Kensington Baby Clinic Hospital; the Notting Hill Day Nursery; the North Islington School for Mothers, and Infants' Wards; the Lower Holloway or South Islington Day Nurseries; the Mothercraft Classes for School Girls at the Montem Street L.C.C. School; the St. Paul's Crèche; the Stepney School for Mothers, and Babies' Nursing Home; the V.D. Department of the London Hospital; St. Pancras School for Mothers; Margaret Club and Day Nursery; the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street; &c.

So many and interesting were the subjects dealt with at the Conference Sessions that it will not be possible to give more than a very brief notice of them. When the full report is published later, our readers will have the opportunity of studying the proceedings in detail.

All those who are interested in Public Health activities are well aware that there exists at present much overlapping, which results in confusion, unnecessary expense, and—almost certainly—irritability and resentment in some degree on the part of workers and those who come under their care. We were glad, therefore, to hear Dr. Watkins, of Newton-in-Makerfield, emphasize the importance of greater co-ordination.

During the debate on "What form of care, including medical attendance, should be provided for children from one to five years of age," a very important point was made by the same speaker, namely, that Records kept at Infant Welfare Centres should be passed on to the School Medical Officers. Much difference of opinion was expressed on the subject of Nursery Schools. The rock on which the speakers split was the "responsibility of the mother." The male mind appears still to be fettered with outworn traditions in this respect. While frankly admitting that the *mother's place is the home*, nevertheless, home conditions of the working-class mother are often, alas! such that the baby's place must be sometimes *away* from the home, and surely the right adjustment must be "home from home" for the baby in nursery

schools, crèches, baby homes, &c. This is not the ideal, but until home and housing conditions improve, it is the nearest approach to it, and the mother is not deprived of her responsibility but rather assisted in exercising it. Arguing on these lines, Dr. Margaret Hogarth (Assistant Medical Officer of Health for the London County Council) stated that mothers could—if they so wished—come to the Nursery School and bathe their own children; she also pointed out that there is a great advance in the appreciation by the mothers of the Infant Welfare Centres. It was interesting to hear this speaker make a special point of the obvious—but often forgotten—fact, that parental responsibility rests with both parents, not alone with the mother.

The names of some of the experts who took part in the Conference will be probably known to some of the readers of this journal: Dr. R. A. Lyster, C.M.O., Hants; Dr. Ralph Smedley, C.M.O., West Sussex; Dr. Eric Pritchard, Chairman of the National Baby Week Council; Miss E. V. Eckhard, Tutor, Ratan Tata Department of Social Science, University of London; Miss Norah March, Secretary, National Baby Week Council.

Dr. Janet Lane-Claypon (Dean of the Household and Social Science Department of King's College for Women), presided at the morning Session on Tuesday. Dr. C. W. Saleeby lectured on "Atmospheric Pollution in Relation to Infant Mortality," a favourite subject of his; the importance and interest of it needs no emphasis. This great and important Conference was a practical illustration of the truth that all thinking people acknowledge now, namely, that the *Baby* is the most important asset of the nation. ————— B. K.

INFANT FEEDING IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT RESEARCH.

Messrs. Allen & Hanburys, 37, Lombard Street, London, E.C. 3, have issued a very attractive booklet on the above subject, which is full of useful and up-to-date information.

The following words of wisdom are from the speech of Doctor H. L. Coit, who headed the American Medical Deputation to the English-speaking Conference on Infantile Mortality:—

"It is a fatal error to expect the milk of a foreign species to be immediately adapted to and utilised by the human infant; the differences between that of the woman and that of a lower animal would indicate, even when given to the newly born with normal functions, that we must wait until the delicate digestive and assimilative organs can make use of the material designed for a more vigorous animal."

Messrs. Allen & Hanburys have made a special study of prepared infant foods for the last thirty years, and the Allenbury system, carried out progressively through the Allenburys' Milk Foods, Malted Food, and Rusks, when human milk is partly or wholly deficient, is the result.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)