Report of the proceedings of the National conference on infantile mortality : held in the Caxton hall, Westminster, on the 23rd, 24th, and 25th March 1908, president - Right Hon. John Burns.

REPORT
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON
INFANTILE MORTALITY

HELD IN THE CAXTON HALLS, WESTMINSTER,
on the 23rd, 24th, and 25th March, 1908.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INFANTILE MORTALITY.

National Conference

ON

Infantile Mortality

Report of the Proceedings of the National Conference on Infantile Mortality, held in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on the 23rd, 24th, and 25th March 1908

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PREFACE.

In view of the success which attended the National Conference on Infantile Mortality held in 1906, little need be said by way of introduction to the Report of the Proceedings of the Second National Conference on the subject.

Among other results of the former Conference, the Notification of Births Act, 1907, deserves some reference as the outcome of the efforts of the Conference.

The passing of that Act was due in no small measure to the enthusiasm of the Committee of Members of Parliament, who were supported by unmistakable evidence of public opinion, and it was with the view to supporting that Committee in promoting further legislation to remove or remedy some of the many evils of the problem, that the Conference—the report of the proceedings of which is herein embodied—was held.

It cannot be suggested that, even yet, have all the phases of the subject been discussed, but the Executive feel gratified that their efforts have met with so much success, and confident that still further remedial measures will be undertaken in the near future.

Caxton Halls,
Westminster, *March* 1908.

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REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

Monday, 23rd March.

Reception and President's Address.

The reception of Delegates took place on Monday evening, 23rd March 1908, at the Caxton Halls, when the President delivered his inaugural address.

Mr Alderman Broadbent (Huddersfield) occupied the chair, being supported on the platform by the Mayor of Westminster, Sir John Tweedy, Sir Shirley Murphy, Dr A. Newsholme, Mr Herbert Samuel, M.P. (Under Secretary of the Home Department), the Lord Provost of Glasgow, the Mayor of Hammersmith, Dr Leslie Mackenzie, Lady Alice Shaw Stewart, Mrs Edwin Gray, Mr J. W. Gulland, M.P., Dr A. K. Chalmers, Dr S. G. Moore, &c.

The Chairman announced the receipt of letters of regret at inability to attend from the Duchess of Montrose, Countess Carlisle, the Bishops of Wakefield, Hereford, Ripon, and Birmingham, Lord Robert Cecil, M.P., Lord Mayors of Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Mrs Tennant, and Mr Nathan Straus of New York, reading one paragraph from the last-named letter:—"The interest which your President, the Right Hon. John Burns, has evinced, in preparing a Pure Milk Bill in the House of Commons gives me very great pleasure." The Chairman formally introduced the Right Hon. John Burns, M.P., the President of the Local Government Board, to the gathering, and expressed the hope that the key-note of the Conference would be, "Let us be practical." That had been the motto of the first Conference on Infantile Mortality, they had started with that aim, and they had kept to it as an Executive Committee all through. They had happily succeeded in keeping away from unpractical or unworkmanlike methods and measures, and he trusted this feature of the Conference would be continued throughout. The hall mark of genuine utility was put upon their work by the fact that, first, their gracious Majesties the King and Queen had consented to be the patrons of the Conference, and, in the second place, that Mr John Burns, the most practical, thorough, and genuine man with whom it had ever been his privilege to come in contact, was their President.

The Right Hon. John Burns, M.P.—Mr Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen,—A year and a half ago in this hall you—may I say we?

—inaùgurated a great and a good movement, the results of which will be revealed to all of us as the short years go by; and so far as the interest that you have created, the sympathy you have evoked, and, if I may add, the attractiveness that caused thousands of people to concentrate their eyes and their attention upon this subject, has produced results on behalf of the object you have at heart, that has exceeded my most sanguine expectations. The first sign of this is the increased literature that you can find has been produced within the last twelve months. We have had many books, a large number of pamphlets, and there have been meetings, discussions, and controversies in the public press which could not have occurred to a like extent if your excellent Congress of 1906 had not been held. Now the great success of your first Congress is demonstrated by one small thing that signifies much, and that is the extraordinary popularity of your first Congress Report. It is difficult to get a copy. My own personal copy has gone the round of several people, and it would not surprise me if you find it at a future book sale because it had the Chairman's signature just above my own. You have stimulated all the responsible agencies whose interest you set out to evoke; and what is more important to this practical Conference, the Government Departments have responded, and Parliament itself has not been deaf to the appeal of the Children's Cry. It is my duty as your Hon. President to indicate briefly what has happened within the last eighteen months or two years. Since your movement began we have had the inspection of school children, which is quite germane to the special subject of infantile mortality, because it is not much good bringing children into the world, preserving them for the first twelve months, if they are to be neglected at subsequent stages. I mention these things because we are beginning to concentrate on the child. We have the inspection of school children, the optional feeding of school children in certain districts, a Bill to secure pure food; we have, and this is also slightly germane to the subject, a Butter and Margarine Act, which after all is important for young children, when you realise to what extent, as happened in my day, bread and butter is the staple food and diet of children after they have left the milk bottle; we have an agreement for the international prohibition of night work for women, to which this country has subscribed; and the Home Office, who has shared with my department the honours and labours of this work, has added the Laundries' Hours Act, which is important when we know how often women are engaged in laundry work under conditions that we are determined if possible to prevent. Beyond that we have a great Children's Bill brought in by Mr Herbert Samuel, whom I am pleased to see here to-night, which in many ways that I need not enumerate protects children as they have never been protected before. That Bill will deal with baby farming, it will deal with protection from fire of young children, with overlaying, and with cruelty, which I am glad to say is not so prevalent as is too often said. And most important to our subject, an inquiry is being con-

ducted into the comparative mortality of infants where mothers are employed in factories and workshops, or are engaged on home or other work, and even where the mothers are unoccupied. If that inquiry will also deal with the health of the surviving children, which is in my judgment equally as important as preventing children from dying, then that Home Office Committee will bring together a great mass of interesting matter that I trust will guide us to properly and quickly take further steps for the object we have at heart. I come from the Home Office to the Local Government Board. We have shown in that Department, I think, all the sympathy that could have reasonably been expected. We have remitted the surcharges on existing milk depots ; we have passed the Notification of Births Act ; we have allowed the appointment of health visitors, and encouraged the adoption of the Notification of Births Act, and I have promised, and am preparing and hope to pass this session, a Milk Bill that I trust will go a long way to securing the objects which you have in view. We are giving special attention to the subject of tuberculosis in animals, food, milk, and human beings, and we are obtaining special Reports on infant mortality, which will collect and co-ordinate in an intelligent form, I trust, new aspects of the problem that will be an advantage to this movement. Generally, I think it must be admitted that we have taken a paternal interest in milk, the mothers, and the babies, and at this moment we are supporting Local Authorities in efforts to devise preventive rather than palliative remedies. Now, some of you would perhaps like to know to what extent the Notification of Births Act, which is less than three months old, has been resorted to. It is right I should give you the figures up to date. Seventy-two Local Authorities have expressed a wish to adopt the Act, and the Local Government Board have approved. The localities include 32 county boroughs, 14 other boroughs, 14 urban district councils, and 12 metropolitan borough councils, and beyond those we have a large number awaiting approval, and in which Local Authorities are seeking advice. So far the Notification of Births Act has worked exceedingly well. It was launched well, and the Local Authorities are adapting themselves to it as quickly as one could reasonably expect. I will give you a typical instance of a district which one would not expect would so quickly and so effectively have adopted the Act, viz., the royal borough of Kensington, which in many aspects of public health sets an excellent example to other districts. But in a well-to-do district like Kensington I find that 50 per cent. of the estimated births have been notified already, mainly through the parents of the children ; that is an exceedingly good sign.

Beyond this we are witnessing one or two new controversies which your movement has produced. I had thought that as regards liquids the merits of pot-still whisky against patent-still whisky held the field, but these rival liquids have been entirely eclipsed by the controversies raging round the various forms of milk diet for children. We have at this moment in the medical

press the sterilising Montagues fighting the Pasteurising Capulets, and the refrigerating champions, with cold and scientific disdain, are looking on at the others to see who is likely to be the winner, and so far all of them have conducted their controversy in a humanising way. I trust that whatever may be the difference between the various schools of milk diet that the babies will gain, that the community will not suffer, and that even the disputants will get solid interest and some pleasure out of the fray. My own choice on this subject, if I may express it, is natural milk. If this is not possible, and there are some instances and there are times when that is not possible, then the next best thing is cow's milk, and after those such of the best variants of cow's milk as are suited to the particular infant. In my judgment, Mr Chairman, a mother cannot and ought not to sublet her maternity. She ought not if she wished subcontract the sources which she alone commands to any bottle or to any artificial food, and your Conference, if it had done nothing else but bring home to mothers, who are disinclined to rear their own children in the natural manner, which though old-fashioned is after all the best, the error of their ways, would deserve every support for this branch of its work alone.

Now, Mr Chairman, I come, if I may for a moment, to the figures. With infantile mortality, as with other things, Britain starts late, but in spite of self-depreciation, which is our chief characteristic as a people—that is because we are a free people—we are making some progress; it is only bureaucratised countries that do not criticise themselves; everything is done for them, and the luxury and freedom of self-criticism and self-depreciation does not prevail. I was talking the other day to a German, and he measured the greatness of any country by the extent to which they disagreed among themselves, and he said that in that regard Britain was pre-eminent. In the matter of infantile mortality some people think we are lagging behind, others think we might move faster, but we are doing in this as we do with nearly everything. What did we do with motor cars a few years back? I can as an engineer remember everybody complaining; every car you saw in the streets of London was either an American, French, or German car; yet I have great faith in the persistent virtues of our own people—optimistic faith, in fact. I said, "That's all right, we're a bit late off the start, but we will arrive there," and in ten years' time we had displaced America from the third, Germany from the second, and we are wrestling with France for the first place in motor car construction. So it is with infantile mortality and all questions relating to infants' food. But in the main essentials of health Britain leads; in infant mortality even we are far ahead of comparable countries, that is countries where industries flourish, where mothers labour, and where babies decay. If you will allow me I will give you one or two comparisons. In England our mortality is 132 per thousand, in France 137, Belgium 155, Italy 172, and in Germany 204, so that on those figures there is no need either for despair or disappointment. But it seems to me that a

country that can show those figures, with our opportunities and with the lead that we have maintained for fifty years in general sanitation, ought to do better even than that. Now, it is only fair, Mr Chairman, that I should say that this relatively declining death rate which we are now beginning to see, although some contend the figures are stationary, is due not only to your movement but is the indirect consequence and result of other movements that have preceded it. I will take the year 1870, if I may, for reasons I will presently disclose. We find that the general death rate has dropped from 22 per thousand in 1870 to 15 per thousand and that connotes the fact that in a year or two the drop must reflect itself in diminished infant mortality, because you cannot pull down the general death rate without affecting the infant death rate. Our birth rate has dropped from 35 to 27 per thousand in the same period, which is perhaps not quite so satisfactory a sign, but as I once said before, I am not for a desolating flood of babies. I attach more importance to quality than to quantity, and what is more I attach more importance to the babies that are born not perishing, as too often they now do. We find that in 1870 the infant mortality was 153 ; in 1906 it is 132 ; but it has been up and down, though the general tendency is downwards. Now there is an interesting figure that we must not ignore, and that is the question of illegitimacy, and when we consider how much more rapidly illegitimate children die at all ages, especially under one year, it is satisfactory for us to know that from 1870 to 1906 the illegitimate death rate has dropped from 14.4 per thousand to 8.1 per thousand ; when we know that tuberculosis, the ravages of which on the children through the milk and the mother we have not precisely determined, has dropped from 25 to 10 per thousand, that in itself is most satisfactory. I now deal with another thing, with which you are dealing in your Conference. When we know that apart from the diseases I have mentioned that one in particular, *i.e.*, syphilis, has diminished from 83 to 50 deaths per million, most important when we are dealing with ophthalmia of the new born, that in itself is a cheerful and encouraging fact ; but perhaps better to me are the following figures, because there is no darkness but ignorance, as Shakespeare said, and to the extent that you diminish ignorance, which is denoted by illiteracy, so do the fundamental conditions for healthy baby life prevail. What are the figures about illiteracy? If you run through your medical statistics —if I am challenged I have them here—you will find that where illiteracy most prevails among women there curiously enough the infant mortality rate is proportionate. But here are cheering figures for you in the next few years that are to come. In 1870 148 husbands per thousand signed their marriage lines with a cross, 16 only do it to-day. But let us come, better still, to the ladies, who in many respects are the better halves, whereas in 1870 199 women who married signed their marriage lines with a cross—and in too many cases it has been a cross and a burden to carry—only 20 do it to-day. Where in 1870 both husbands and wives signed

their marriage lines with a cross in 76 cases, only 4 couples do it to-day.

The length of life I am glad to say is increasing. In my own trade in thirty-six years it has increased from the average age at death of 38 to 54½, whilst the average age of wives of engineers has similarly increased to from two to three years shorter than their husbands, because they have to pay the price that all women have to pay and must pay by reason of the burden of maternity.

Now, Mr Chairman, if one looks at mere figures for illustration or argument, for the last forty years there is no great cause for rejoicing on figures alone. But figures are not always facts; no single fact is the whole truth, and figures have to be qualified by conditions and some facts by other facts. We must remember how the urbanisation of the people has gone on in the last sixty years. We have witnessed this remarkable change — where sixty years ago 75 per cent. of the people were rural and 25 per cent. were urban, to-day we find that 25 per cent. are rural and 75 per cent. are urban. We must remember how town conditions press hard on mothers and infants, how industry has taken from the home what the mothers should give to the home; we have absolutely not much statistical progress, but relatively, when we consider how people have left the country increasingly for the towns, there is no reason for us to be depressed. Relatively, infant mortality is declining. Nothing pleased me more than to see in to-night's *Westminster Gazette*—which in this matter has been a specially good lay friend of yours—that in Finsbury the milk depôt fed children had got in the matter of death rate as low as 35 per thousand. If in all districts the special preventive conditions generally prevailed, I believe we would witness a remarkable decrease in infant mortality, and as I said before, Mr Chairman, the anxious thing to me is, are the survivors better than the previous survivors? Taking the death rate from similar conditions I think yes. Certainly I do not see in the streets or in the schools the dirt, the filth, the neglect, the evidences of deformity that I used to see some twenty or twenty-five years ago. But are these cases in institutions, tucked away from public sight? Partly, but even there, there is an upward change and general progress, and I think it is due to the fact that the humanities are wider and deeper than they used to be. The amenities are rapidly increasing and the equities are advancing with very rapid strides indeed. There is another fact, too, with which we have to condition our statistics and registration which we used not to have. I look to Dr Newsholme, our new medical officer, to illuminate this subject diagrammatically, as Dr Newsholme so well knows how to do, between now and next year, but when we find, Mr Chairman, that while in 1881 we had two urban to one rural and in 1911 we shall have nearly four parts urban to one rural, there is need for us to remember that if you examine the statistics, making every allowance for town life and the increasing urbanisation of the people, there is no reason for us to

be depressed. If you take special urban areas where special efforts are made, such as at Hampstead—I am glad to see its medical officer here, Hampstead is now reaping the advantage of allowing its medical officer to try his 'prentice hand at Battersea—we find Hampstead, Battersea, and Woolwich approximating almost to the figures of the small town or peculiarly rural areas. Now, Mr Chairman, I am not a country bred or born man, I am a Londoner, and I am going to advance a theory that may not be accepted by the doctors, and to them I must defer, because at the Local Government Board we have to. But all the same I do not believe that town life is necessarily bad for children, given good mothering, good food and plenty of it—good food, right food, in sensible proportions, at the proper time by the right mothers. At ages under one week London, notwithstanding its defects, has 24 deaths per thousand and in fact London leads up to the first month of child life; that is partly due to the prompt medical attendance, and may I say the kindly medical attendance, attendance that in many poor districts goes unrewarded by fee—to the credit of the doctors. That low rate is due thus to the prompt medical attendance and care immediately secured in a large town, but after the first week London begins to lag behind. By the end of the first month London and the country are equal, and at the end of the year where London has 131 per thousand infant deaths the rural will have anything from 85 to 110. But I am very glad to say in some London districts, notwithstanding the defects to which I have referred, which town life engenders, we have six districts in London that I need not mention that are approximating to the best of the rural areas, both in infantile mortality and in the character of the children reared. Now, the town creature, as I have already said, is not necessarily a poor creature. The German burgher in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries put up a very good fight against the rural feudals that in vain attempted to invade and capture many German cities, which were defended by the German citizens. The Flemish artisan, the town dweller, the craftsmen of Ghent made short work of feudal and rural invaders in those days. The citizen soldiers in the Wars of the Roses showed that they could fight and endure as much as the purely rural people, whilst in ancient Greece and Rome the citizens were always equal in trained and skilled warfare to six times the number of their rural or their barbarian opponents. I hope to see the day, Mr Chairman, when the Hampsteads and the Wimbledons and the Batterseas will be able to hold their own in the arts of war—that is if these arts are necessary—as well as they do now in the crafts of peace, that is where physical strength, sound constitution, and the qualities of endurance are concentrated in strong bodies, not necessarily with long legs, because length of timber is not always a sign of being able to resist fatigue. I do not take the line at all that town dwellers by virtue of being born in towns are necessarily to be regarded as inferior to rural people. But, Mr Chairman, I would be unkind if I did not

mention your district, your work in connection, sir, with which deserves the highest praise and the highest credit. But when I find that in 1891 the infant mortality in Huddersfield was 184 per thousand and is now 97, I shall have to add Huddersfield to the Hampsteads, the Wimbledons, and the Batterseas of the future for raising stalwart citizens and strong men. When I find that even a town like Bristol has in the same period reduced its infant mortality from 184 to 98, when I find that my own parish has doubled its population and reduced in that period its infantile mortality from 176 to 115 per thousand, whilst in some wards we have as low a mortality as 51 or 52, I think we are rapidly approaching the time when we shall see well organised, well administered, sanitarily conducted urban centres wrestling with the small town and the rural area for the laurels in the reduction of infant mortality. Well, considering the growth of the population, the increase of difficult town conditions, there is no reason for us to be disappointed. I now turn, if I may, from this cheering examination to special districts—and here I am speaking only as an individual—to other districts where industry is carried on by the work of married women. I will take a town like Burnley. Bear in mind when I talk about Burnley of the figures I have given you about Huddersfield, Bristol, and Battersea. Burnley has 22,000 wives or widows, and of that number 7,500 are working, or roughly 33 per cent. Of 900 births in four months, 300 mothers outside home work were mostly weavers; the mortality of the children of the working women was twice as much as of the non-working married women. Well, it is a shame, and that is a condition which both husbands and wives, with municipality and Parliament, and the co-operation of all with each, must reduce, and remove as soon as possible. Of 486 infantile deaths in Burnley 343 were preventible, and here is a very significant fact; there were few deaths, in fact only 14, under one month, because during that month the mother fed her child at home, and was the child's own nurse because she was not at work. Now why should we have these deaths in Burnley—223 for 1903, 216 for 1904, 232 for 1905, and 212 for 1906, especially when in this connection I quote a paragraph from the *Times* the other day about the British breed. It said, "British bred animals, whether they be horses, cattle, sheep, or even pigs, are superior to all others in quality and stamina. There is some strange and admirable power in our soil and climate which puts stronger fibre and more entire stamp of excellence into the live stock bred in our islands than are found in the same breed or species in other parts of the world." If that be true of these animals why should not it be true of the mother, the working mother, the mother of whom Dr Saleeby in his paper to be read before this Conference says—

> "A mother is a mother still,
> The holiest thing alive"?

It is our business to see that Burnley has not that record in a year or

two to come. I pass from Burnley. We find that in Preston, Blackburn, and Bury the conditions that I have mentioned about Burnley also apply. The figures that I have quoted show clearly that the ante-natal conditions are made worse by factory work on the part of the mother; the post-natal conditions are made worse for both mother and child, and in health and life and vigour of married women before and after birth, factory work is bad for the infant, bad for the mother, it is not good for the father, and it is singularly mistaken for the whole community, because if you were to go into them the figures show that factory and workshop labour means immaturity, prematurity, deformity, subjecting the child to artificial food, which in my judgment is one of the chief causes of rickets and anæmic condition of children. Physically I am sure it injures the woman and it does the father much harm in many ways. I think it is not good for a man that he should have either his sense of domestic comfort or his attachment to his wife to some extent weakened, above all his sense of industry, and his standard of wages lowered by the fact that his wife under the conditions I have named is doing work that in too many cases he ought to be willing to do. I think that the *Manchester Guardian* the other day deserves credit for saying this: "Ignorance no doubt accounts for much waste of infant life. Lancashire's industrial conditions give her her bad pre-eminence; mothers who work in the factory cannot rear their children naturally, and the care and skill and attention necessary for successful artificial feeding are beyond them." That is true, and when we find that of the deaths in Burnley of children born of working married women are to be described thus,—of 172 deaths from diarrhœa, 156 were bottle fed and only 16 were breast fed—greater condemnation of factory work for married women, which takes the mother from the home and cuts off from her child the natural sources of its food at the most delicate and susceptible period of its life, could not be found than is amply illustrated by these tragic figures. Comparatively few deaths prevail in Burnley under one month, because the babies are breast fed up to that time, and we find again from an examination of the figures of Burnley by the medical officer of health that of 486 deaths of infants 346 were from preventible diseases, which in my judgment would not occur if the mothers were at home and not at work. We find in North Staffordshire a striking illustration of this; it is proved by the fact that in North Staffordshire, where women work more than in South Staffordshire, the abnormalities are 15 per thousand, as against 6 per thousand where less is done; and worse, in North Staffordshire, the married women's working district, the still births are 9 per thousand, whereas in South Staffordshire they are only 3 per thousand. I could go on, but it is not necessary for me to give instance after instance to prove the case that I have advanced. I come now to Islington, being a London district, on which I will just say a word or two. Of 220 infant deaths in Islington, 22 out of 220 only were breast fed, and 151 only of the mothers were in good

health, many of them were overworked, some were underfed, many improperly fed. Nearly all the mothers and infants would be better off if knowledge, attention, kindness, and experience were brought to bear upon the mother and child as is increasingly being done. This will and can be done if your Conference has the success that your first Conference proves it will achieve. I come now to another aspect of the subject to which special attention ought to be directed, *i.e.*, the extent to which the neglect of the mother before the child is born, the neglect of precautions immediately after the child is born, the effect of that upon the number of blind children and blind people we have in this country. Recently an excellent little book on this subject has been written by Dr Harman, which I should advise every one of you to read, and in it he shows that of the 25,000 blind persons whom we have in England and Wales, one-sixth of the total blind are blind from childhood, viz., 4,621. He estimates that of that 4,621 blind from childhood from 30 to 40 per cent. are blind because of the ophthalmia of the new born, owing either to ignorance, inattention, or incapacity either of the mother or some one else immediately after birth. And here is something that the men ought to remember, that there are pre-natal influences that are preventible, and due to both parents, mostly the father, and when we realise that to the causes I have mentioned from 50 to 60 per cent. of the blind from childhood are without sight through simple and elementary causes which wider knowledge and increased intelligence ought to remove, it is time we concentrated on this aspect of the matter, and prevented this curse to the child, this burden to the child as it grows up, and this tremendous calamity that it is to any nation. When we have, as we now have, 4,621 children or men and women walking about sightless because of the lack of that simple care and intelligence and capacity that we must see are concentrated upon the children at that time. Where are they? 25 per cent. of the blind are estimated to be in receipt of indoor or outdoor relief; 15 per cent. are supposed to be in homes or in partial work, all of them handicapped where not burdened, many cursed, as I said, by what a little thought, a little care, might have removed; and this Conference in checking infantile mortality will be reducing the conditions that make for ophthalmia of the new born, purulent ophthalmia, gonorrhœal ophthalmia—less frequent in the father than in the past—and I ask you specially to concentrate on that aspect of it. I have been asked to compulsorily notify this form of disease. Personally I do not think that necessary. I believe if this subject receives the attention of the doctors, the Midwives Board, the general public, and all the public health agencies, great good will be done in the direction of stopping this terrible scourge. I now come, Mr Chairman, to another thing for which we have to take some credit in connection with the subject with which we have been dealing this evening. We are introducing a new Licensing Bill, a Bill that is going to pass, a Bill that ought to pass, a Bill that had it passed forty years ago would have had a tremendous

direct and indirect influence on the subject that has brought us here this evening. I am glad to see that you welcome that Bill; some think it is not drastic enough, some think it goes too far. Well, I think you can leave that to the ordeal of legislation either to modify or to prune down. Personally I think the public-house is very bad for a man, it is worse for a woman, but it is positively intolerable for children. I hope that infants in arms and even older children on every ground will be excluded from public-houses. But it is only right, Mr Chairman, that I, a temperance man, should say what I have about the public-house, and add one or two other facts to qualify some rather sensational and exaggerated statements that have been directed to the aspect of drinking by women and as the alleged cause of overlaying. Well, I want if I may, and subject of course to qualification, a few figures that have been put in my hand by a coroner and pathologist in London. Here is a very cheerful fact. I do not believe that working-class mothers and working-class women are less fond of their children than other classes. You must not judge working-class mothers in poor districts by a conventional standard or by appearances. For instance, I was spending part of my last holiday looking around some of the poor streets in the neighbourhood of the Borough, and whilst I was engaged in doing this, in the neighbourhood of Tabard and Delph Streets, I saw a boy eight or nine years of age flying as it were for his life, running down a narrow passage. All at once I saw his mother, with a copper stick—she had been washing—and whilst his mother had been washing, the boy had probably been at the sugar or the jam, and as the boy ran towards me I heard his mother's voice, and she shouted, "Wait till I get you, you young rascal, I'll skin you alive." I held out my hands with that playful geniality which characterises all this ministry, and as a certain character said in "Beauty and the Barge," with too much affability, with the intention of jocularly stopping the boy. But the boy on being confronted with me, turned back and sought protection behind the skirts of his mother, who a moment before looked furious enough to carry out her dreadful threat. As I advanced towards her the copper stick was aimed at me, and she said, "How dare you touch my child?" (Laughter.) Well, now, if I had been a superficial critic—and there are lots of superficial critics about just now in regard to working-class life—(A Delegate—"There are")—there are—I am glad to be able to receive that special emphasis from so well informed a quarter—I should have been under the impression that that was a terrible sight. It was not, and the same thing these figures reveal with regard to the public-houses. Mind, I am dead against women going to public-houses, as much as I am of men, and particularly of children; but we must attribute to the right causes the resultant effects. I find in one district of London in six years 281 children have been found dead in bed with their parents; 240 of the 281 children were six months of age or under. Follow the figures, two-thirds of the cases were on Saturdays, Sundays, or Monday nights; the

superficial critic would say, "Fridays, Saturdays, Mondays, wages, drink; drink, wages." But out of 281 children suffocated in bed, or found dead in bed (20 cases only were due to suffocation); there were no instances of culpable neglect or of crime. These deaths are not due to drink to the extent that is generally supposed. But they were due mainly to the habit of working-class mothers, which we have a right to condemn, which we are bound to alter and remove as soon as possible by the education of the mothers, marketing on Fridays and Saturdays or on Mondays, or returning late from visits to relatives on Sundays, because we find on examination there are few if any cases after bank holidays, when I should say that the drink consumed per head was more than on Fridays, Saturdays, or Mondays in certain working-class districts. What is it due to? (A Delegate—"Overcrowding.") No, it is not. It is due to the child being taken out by father and mother to market between 8 to 10, 9 to 11, and 9 to 12 midnight, and the child gets a chill in the mother's arms, acute catarrh is set up, stoppage of the air passage and bronchial tubes follows, with convulsions, heart failure, and other things induced by the exposure of the child in the cold night air, a practice that I sincerely hope working-class mothers will discontinue and abolish as soon as possible. I am very glad that our friend Canon Horsley, who knows the poor and whose knowledge of London, like Sam Weller's, is extensive and peculiar, endorses that view, and would also agree as to the noxious character of the air in public-houses and its effect upon children. I now, Mr Chairman, come to practically my last points. What are the salient and broad facts that emerge from a consideration of this great subject? We find this. The other night when I had nothing particular to do I went through the wards of a London hospital at night-time with one of the medical officers. He took me into one of the wards where there were 80 to 90 children, and he said, "Mr Burns, look at the young rascals, aren't they healthy and strong?" I said, "Is that so?" and he said what is generally confirmed, that 80 to 90 per cent. of the babies are born healthy. That is the general view, the ante-natal conditions are less adverse than was formerly supposed, while good motherhood after birth of child is more necessary than ever as town life increases, as I have said before. No effort should be spared to make the life and lot of the mother well fitted for the children that are, and above all for the child that is to be. The year that includes expectation, and until the child is six months old—that is the year before and after birth of a child—in my judgment the mother should not be at work, but what home work she has to do should be light and suitable, and I believe that when a mother launches a child upon the world that child carries with it not only a good but the best gift that mortal can confer upon another. I believe that Lancashire, Yorkshire, and many other districts will have to keep the mother from outside work. I believe that after birth the mother must be at home as

much as possible and as long as possible ; she must be encouraged to nurse and feed her child, natural food if forthcoming, and if not the best of the substitutes must be used, viz., milk, milk suitable to the child, milk from the cow, kept clean and free from disease, milk out of clean churns, milked by clean hands, put into clean vessels, stored in clean places, conveyed to baby's mouth by clean vessels, not by the microbe traps and bacteria bottles too often in use now. I believe that in this country milk is not consumed to half the extent it ought to be, and although it is at once the most nutritious, it is also the most contagious of all mediums, and I hope that a new Milk Bill, which will organise the milk supply better than it is organised now, will enable us to help the farmer, because we cannot in my judgment get milk any cheaper than it now is ; and if we are to spend less on beer and more on milk, there is no reason for asking for cheaper milk. I believe that the farmer, the dairyman, and the shopkeeper can supply milk to us better than it now is, and do 25 per cent. more trade than they now do. There are many signs, I am glad to say, that farmers, dairymen, shopkeepers, and churn-vessel makers are alive to this, and that far from threat or panic action, all concerned must co-operate to enlarge our milk supply and supply us with something better. Now, Mr Chairman, my last word is, if I may draw a picture which you see every day in London. As I walk through my parish to my office every morning, what do I see in the streets of London? I see many varied and costly expedients and palliatives to mitigate preventible illness when the child is either newly born or before it is twelve months old. I see expensive carriages, with kind nurses, swagger coachmen and swagger horses taking from eight to twelve afflicted children to special schools. I see carriages, and motor cars and conveyances for people suffering from infectious diseases. Much money is spent on special schools, special institutions, kind doctors, kind matrons, and nurses, homes, excursions, holidays—every device is resorted to cure what we ought to have tried to prevent years ago. If half the money expended now had been spent on the mother, the child and the home, twenty, ten, or even five years ago, our special schools would not be needed, and these carriages for the afflicted would not be wanted. But, I am glad to say, Mr Chairman, that things are rapidly improving. No one is more convinced of that fact than those who have been concentrating their attention in the last four or five years on the child as we never did before. We are beginning to think of the mother, and at last we are beginning to think of the home, and I sincerely trust that a little Bill—a Housing Bill—will go through this session, the effect of which will be to considerably add to the amelioration of mother and child whom you have within your special ken. Schools for children we have in plenty, increasing, better built, and equipped ; what is needed more, in my judgment, Mr Chairman, is schools for adults, for fathers and mothers—fathers as well as mothers. Why do I say fathers as

well as mothers? Because we are witnessing this remarkable fact, the home life of our people — it reflects itself in the neglect of child-life—we see the specialisation of industry—the large capital, the big factory, getting larger; automatic, mechanical, and at times monotonous operation is succeeding the old hand industry. Nothing we can do can prevent that. We see that specialisation of industry, we see the subdivision of labour, we see the segregation of workmen in districts, and we are beginning now to see the segregation of sexes in their leisure for sport, play, and amusements. All these are throwing upon the wives and mothers greater work, worry, and at times unendurable care. This reflects itself in depression, lassitude, neglect, and these again are shown in many ways in neglected children. These can be counteracted, I believe, by the husband being told that he would do no harm if he were to help his wife more than he now does at home, if he were to cultivate the domestic sense to a greater extent than he now does, instead of going in vast masses, 50,000 and 100,000 in number, on Saturday afternoons, not even taking his little boys with him to the extent that he used to, gratifying the gladiatorial sense and spirit, shouting at men developing the wrong end of their anatomy, and in a hundred and one ways keeping the wife more and more to the monotony, even to servitude, of the working-class home life in which she and the children suffer disproportionately for that neglect. I trust that the over-athleticising of our sports and play, divorcing wife from the father, due to the interest and cause that I have mentioned, will cease.

In conclusion, may I say, do not let us expect too much from any one single remedy. Just as the causes of infant mortality are multiform so the remedies must be multiplex; we have got to awaken intelligence in the mother and husband, we have got to demand greater cleanliness, we have got to provide in better homes the means for cleanliness, we have got to provide far better and more food, we have got to ingeminate kindness and love, we have got to see that the child is better tended than the child now is; and the remedies for those conditions of things that have brought you here to-night must be individual, must be medical, must be legislative and industrial. But all in due order —decently and in order. All at one time if possible, but if not, then in well-ordered sequence, one after the other, and if, as a result of that co-ordination of effort, that co-operation of means for a common aim, for a good purpose and a beneficial cause, we each of us next year can register a lower infantile mortality than we now have, and through that healthier and happier lives for the children who survive, I shall be more than pleased and rewarded for what effort I have put forth in my office and here to-night. You, I know, will be gratified at the services you have rendered, in the happier homes, the healthier mothers and the more vigorous children that will be the outcome, the product and the result of the beneficial influences that have brought us all here this evening.

The Mayor of Westminster, in moving a hearty vote of thanks to the Right Hon. John Burns for his presidential address, said that those who like himself had not been in direct touch with this movement, and who knew little of it, must have realised from the lucid and exhaustive manner in which the President had dealt with the subject, more than they could ever have realised before, the huge national concern and importance of the work in which they were engaged. It would be difficult for any one to traverse the statements which Mr Burns had made, and it would be difficult to add anything to the matters which had been dealt with. He was, however, quite certain that all would agree with him in saying that they owed a debt of extreme gratitude to the right honourable gentleman for his able and suggestive address. In concluding, his Worship explained that he had received an intimation from the Governors of the Infants' Hospital in Vincent Square, close by, that any members of the Conference who cared to visit the institution would be most welcome.

The Hon. the Lord Provost of Glasgow seconded the vote of thanks to Mr Burns for his inspiring address. Glasgow had been taking a great interest in this question, and as one of the representatives of the corporation who had attended the first Conference on Infantile Mortality, he testified to the great value of the address which Mr John Burns had given on that occasion. But they owed him a still deeper debt of gratitude for the practical and educative speech which he had made that evening, while they were still further indebted to the right honourable gentleman for the legislation he had been able to effect, and the promise of still further legislation made that evening. It was a matter of the greatest thankfulness on the part of those engaged in local government administration and those interested in the improvement of the condition of the people, that one so well trained and experienced in municipal service was directing affairs at the head of the Local Government Board. Reference had been made as to what was being done on behalf of the child, and it could without exaggeration be said that this was the age of legislation in the interest of the childhood of the kingdom. While the community were much indebted to the legislators for their support of the efforts of municipalities and social reformers, such addresses as the one to which they had gladly listened to that evening would add to the number of workers who sought to bring their personal influence and kindly interest to bear on the mothers and children, in order to lessen still further the excessive waste of infant life. In this connection, he referred to the work of some sixty ladies in the poorer districts of Glasgow, who were endeavouring to combat the ignorance of mothers, which had alone rendered the infantile death rate excessive. Five of those ladies were attending that Conference, and he was sure they would receive great encouragement and inspiration from the presidential address. It was highly gratifying to think they had on the platform that evening Mr Herbert Samuel, M.P., the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, who

was piloting the new Children's Bill through Parliament, and it would be most pleasing to hear a word or two from him.

Mr Herbert Samuel, M.P., said that he was happy to think that the Children's Bill, which he had had the honour of introducing into Parliament, had been received throughout the country with unanimous favour, and he anticipated, when it came before the House of Commons for second reading, it would be equally favourably received in Parliament. Although that Bill did touch some of the problems which the members of the Conference had specially at heart, there was another effort being made by his Department which touched even more directly and to a larger extent the question of infantile mortality. Thanks to the co-operation of many medical officers of health throughout the country, whose help he most cordially and gratefully acknowledged, the Home Office was engaged in a large statistical inquiry in many of the chief industrial centres, the outcome of which would be to place on a scientific basis the question of how far women's labour of various kinds contributed to infant mortality, and when once they had got that question scientifically put and answered statistically, the way would be clear for such legislation as Parliament might think practicable to get rid of the evils of married women's labour. But he desired to point out to that Conference that in using the power of law to limit, on the one hand, the evil of mothers' work in factories and workshops, on the other hand they must beware of doing indirectly another evil which they might not suspect. Let them beware lest by stopping married women's labour they gave a still further inducement to the falling birth rate, which was already a serious factor in this country, and thus by helping the further fall in the birth rate they might at the same time be fostering that very infant mortality which they were wishing to combat, by increasing poverty, which is the cause of much bad food and ill feeding of the infants of the nation. He was inclined to think that if it should be found necessary by the State to still further limit married women's labour, and especially in the period preceding and succeeding child-birth, it was a matter for inquiry whether it would not be also necessary to establish some system of compulsory maternity insurance, in order that the mothers, during those periods of compulsory illness, should not be deprived of that source of income to which they were accustomed. That was a matter to which he ventured to suggest that the members of the Conference might usefully give their attention. They were accustomed to speak of infant mortality as though that were the great evil with which they and he were endeavouring to cope, but after all infant mortality was only a statistical expression of bad conditions by which infant life is surrounded. The poor little babies who die are dead and gone, but the very conditions that have killed them remain, and will tend to make thousands of other children grow up infirm or defective, and deficient in some physical needs of a full life. They must never forget, and they must impress on public

opinion that in fighting infant mortality they were not combating infant mortality alone, they were not merely trying to save the lives of children who now die, but that in combating the cause of infant mortality they were also combating sickness and disease in adult life, and were trying to keep healthy hundreds of thousands of people who are now sickly. He had been led to speak more fully than he had intended, but this was a subject which he had very close at heart. In the last fifty years, thanks to better laws, thanks to the growth of medical science, the death rate had been reduced by one-third. That was a great achievement. Where two people die now, three would die if we had the conditions to-day which existed fifty years ago, and when ten years hence, as he hoped might be the case, they might see the infant mortality rate—which hitherto had been much too stationary—has been reduced from 120 to 80 or 70, or perhaps even 60 per thousand, then they would feel that they had a high reward for the labours in which they were engaged—labours in which no man had done a more active or more valuable part than his friend and colleague, their guest and President that evening, Mr John Burns, to whom that vote of thanks was so deservedly addressed.

The motion having been carried with prolonged acclamation,

The Right Hon. JOHN BURNS, M.P.—Ladies and gentlemen,—I am exceedingly obliged to you for the kindly vote of thanks that you have carried to me this evening. It has given me very great pleasure to come here. If in office, as I think we can safely say, Mr Samuel, we shall be, three or four years hence, I shall be delighted to come again. I can only say that between now and the expiration of our term of office in this Government, we have a plan, a policy, a programme on matters kindred to that which has brought you together this evening. As Mr Samuel so truthfully said, infant mortality only symptomatises a number of other social diseases that it is our business to mitigate and abolish, and to that aim each of us in our own Department are determined to do our best, not only to secure your thanks but to earn your praises; when we consider, as we now do, that nine-tenths of our work is administrative, is social, is municipal, you have in the administrative side of a Minister's work something upon which you can all agree, and I can assure you from the bottom of my heart that nothing will please every one of my colleagues more than to grapple directly and indirectly with the problems that infantile mortality reveals, and if, say four years hence, we come to you for that sense of gratitude which we are entitled to expect, you will say, "Well done, good and faithful servants, have another opportunity of doing better still."

The MAYOR OF HAMMERSMITH proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr Alderman Broadbent for his services in the chair, and said that as a member of the Public Health Committee of Hammersmith he had come to the conclusion that there was one man in England who could supply useful information on this subject, and that was Alderman Broadbent, who had been extremely good in

sending him various publications and answering questions as to the best and practical way of diminishing infant mortality. He ventured to urge on the Conference that in its deliberations during the next two days they should treat the working classes as human beings with a full share of human nature, who would not submit to be bullied, and, secondly, that they should not propose anything which would advance the rates abnormally. Empty property in London was a serious factor, and if they still further increased the rates they might knock a nail in the coffin of other valuable public health work or drive the people into still more confined dwelling spaces.

Sir SHIRLEY MURPHY (Medical Officer of Health for the County of London) formally seconded the motion, which was carried with applause.

Mr Alderman BROADBENT having briefly acknowledged the compliment, the proceedings stood adjourned.

TUESDAY, 24TH MARCH.

MORNING SESSION.

His Worship the Mayor of Westminster took the chair.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, said it was his privilege on behalf of the city of Westminster to bid the delegates a hearty welcome to the Conference. Those who were engaged in dealing with this vital question of infant mortality were to be congratulated upon the strides which had been made in recent years in the ventilation of the problems connected with it, and also upon the legislation which had followed upon their efforts as a direct result of their first Conference. For instance, there was the Notification of Births Act, which, as Mr John Burns had explained the previous evening in the course of his presidential address, had been adopted by many provincial authorities, and also by some sixteen metropolitan borough councils. It had been adopted in the city of Westminster, although they had not yet received the formal consent of the Local Government Board, which he presumed would be forthcoming very shortly. In Westminster there had been working for some years a Health Society, of which this year he had the honour of being President, and the ladies connected with that Society visited and educated the mothers in their own homes, and he was glad to think that that work had been attended with very gratifying success. From the statistics furnished by the medical officer of health it appeared that in 1891 in Westminster out of every 1,000 infants born 164 died before attaining the age of one year, but in 1900 that figure had been reduced—though it was still large—to 148 per thousand ; but to-day

throughout the whole city the average was only 103, which was emphatic proof of the great work which the Westminster Health Society was accomplishing. In the district where that Society first commenced to work the infantile death rate had been reduced no less than 40 per cent., *i.e.*, from 175 five years ago to 95 per thousand, and that 95 had to be placed against the 103 per thousand, the general average for the whole city of Westminster. The papers to be read to the Conference dealt with the matter from the experienced and expert point of view, but from the little study he had been able to give to it he had come to the conclusion that excessive infant mortality arises chiefly from two causes, and of these two causes by far the chief cause was drunkenness. He was, however, glad to think that drunkenness appeared to be on the decrease naturally, viz., temperance principles were spreading, and with a decrease in drunkenness he believed that infant mortality would decrease likewise. At the same time they must endeavour to adopt all wise, prudent, and practical measures for stemming the terrible tide of infant mortality, and he had no doubt, from what Mr John Burns had said, that the Government would be willing to take all possible legislative steps to promote the end they all had in view.

THE HUMAN MOTHER.

By C. W. SALEEBY, M.D., F.R.S.Ed.

Infant mortality, which we commonly regard as simply a phenomenon of mankind, is really one of the most salient facts of the living world, though certainly the lower animals, being speechless, are literally infants always. The lower animals have a far higher birth rate than man, the fall in birth rate and in death rate being a fact of untold antiquity, and dating from the dawn of life; and yet man alone ceaselessly multiplies. It follows that the infant mortality of man, appalling though it be, is the lowest known, as I showed at the Royal Institution last year. We are dealing, as moral beings, with a phenomenon of which Nature is horribly and almost incredibly prodigal. Its causes in our case, however, are wholly distinct from the causes of the sub-human early mortality. This is due to lack of nutriment or to destruction by other species for purposes of food. Such causes do not

obtain amongst ourselves, our infant mortality being due to parental, or rather maternal, causes which have no sub-human parallel. The fall in the mortality of the very young—I will call it infant mortality for convenience—has coincided throughout æonian evolution with not merely a fall in the birth rate, but with the rise of motherhood, which we may almost call a mammalian invention, and to which the mammalia, of which we are the latest and most promising, owe their dominance.

It is the chief paradox of living Nature that the infant mortality is lowest in that species the young of which are at birth more helpless and more utterly dependent upon motherhood than those of any other species. A baby is the most helpless and incapable of survival, without motherhood or foster-motherhood, of all living creatures, animal or vegetable—slightly more helpless, and longer helpless, than even the baby-ape; yet its race rules the earth. This helplessness—to which, say, the infant bacillus supplies the antithesis—is also an increasing fact in the course of animal and, indeed, vegetable evolution ; but it reaches an unprecedented extent in man, both as regards its completeness and its unexampled duration, on account of the essential difference which distinguishes man from the lower animals, viz., the lapse of instinct in order to make room for intelligence. Even the kitten can find its way to the breast, the baby cannot ; but man rules the cat.

I wish particularly to direct your attention to this psychological fact of the lapse of instinct, upon which the whole theory of the prevention of infant mortality, as I see it, actually rests. It renders the baby peculiarly, uniquely in need of motherhood or foster-motherhood ; but this is not the whole result, nor even the greater half of it.

The mother is also human, and shares the human loss of instinct. She has only the maternal instinct in

its essence. That could not be permitted to lapse by natural selection, since humanity could never have been evolved at all if women did not love babies. But of all details she is bereft. She has, instead, an immeasurably greater thing, intelligence ; but whilst intelligence can learn everything, it has everything to learn. Instinct can learn nothing, but is perfect from the first within its impassable limits. It is this lapse of instinctive aptitude that constitutes the cardinal difficulty against which we are assembled. The mother cat not merely has a far less helpless young creature to succour, but she has a far superior inherent or instinctive equipment. She knows the best food for her kitten, she does not give it "the same as we had ourselves," but her own breast invariably. None of us can teach her anything as to washing her kitten, or keeping it warm. She can even play with it and so educate it, in so far as it needs education. There are mothers in all classes of the community who should be ashamed to look a tabby cat in the face.

The human mother has only instinctive love *and* uninstructed intelligence. This cardinal distinction between the human and all sub-human mothers is habitually ignored, it being assumed that the mother, as a mother, knows what is best for her child. But experience concurs with comparative psychology in showing that the human mother, just because she is human, intelligent and not instinctive, does not know. This is the theory upon which all our practice is to be based and upon which the need for it mainly depends.

Further, the unique helplessness of the human infant demands a correlatively unique development of motherhood in woman, and it involves the proposition that the post-natal aspect of human motherhood is of unique importance in our case. It also suggests the theoretical conclusion, abundantly verified by experience, that the quality of motherhood is the dominant factor in our problem, and not poverty or any

other. Yet, again, it suggests the theoretical conclusion, equally well confirmed, that we are right in our proposals only in so far as we work through and by motherhood, and that, as I submit, the value of our proposals may be gauged, even before they are put to the experimental test, by this sole criterion of their conformity to the principle which I would call maternalism. From my point of view as a student of general biology the crèche and the milk depôt *must be* inferior to the school for mothers, meals for expectant and nursing mothers, and the like, whatever the statistical result in particular cases, not only because they infringe the maternalist principle directly, but because they tend to countenance its infringement indirectly, as in that supreme abomination beside which all other social customs are decent, quick, clean, and conscience-warranted, infanticide not excepted—the tending of dead machinery by a mother whilst others or none tend her own flesh and blood; as also because it is good for both mother and child in after-years that their vital and moral association, instituted by Nature, their grandmother, shall be unbroken.

I ask you to accept the principles of maternalism, thus briefly laid down, as cardinal, permanent, unalterable. There is no State womb, there are no State breasts, there is no real substitute for the beautiful reality of individual motherhood. The first, the last, and all intermediate words upon the remedying of infant mortality—more accurately to be called infant slaughter—were spoken by our President in 1906, when he said, "Let us glorify, dignify, and purify motherhood by every means in our power." In so doing, we must remember the cardinal peculiarity of human motherhood, its dependence from the moment of birth upon education, needless for the cat, needed by the human mother in every particular, small and great, since she relies upon intelligence alone, which is only a potentiality and a possibility

until it be educated. Educate it, and the product transcends the cat, and not only the cat, but all other living things. As Coleridge said,

> "A mother is a mother still,
> The holiest thing alive."

THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS AND WOMEN IN THE FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF WOMANHOOD.

By Miss ALICE RAVENHILL.

It is doubtless the complexity of social problems which so often deters those who deplore their results from a painstaking study of their contributory factors. Many streams of influence, social, economic, and industrial, for instance, have combined to flood the country with that wave of parental inefficiency which constitutes the problem under our consideration to-day, but no sustained effort has yet been made to trace these to their sources, no fundamental measures have been taken to stem the unsatisfactory directions of their currents, so that their force continues to be perverted to ends detrimental instead of profitable to the community.

Probably the greatest number of factors in this particular problem might be ranged in one or other of three groups, which would respectively include biological or physical causes, sociological or moral influences, and economic or industrial conditions. For example, some forms of parental inefficiency indicate that what has generally been accepted as an innate biological instinct, namely, intuitive care for offspring, is temporarily at least in abeyance ; others, which are traceable to ignorance, want of observation, carelessness, intemperance, or neglect of the elementary requirements of human infancy, spring in many cases

from an exaggerated individualism, from an absence of any sense of social responsibility, briefly from the moral failing of selfishness; while the social sores of poverty and pauperism, or the worse plague of unbridled extravagance, as well as the devitalising influences of insanitary surroundings, originate chiefly in the economic or industrial conditions included in the third group. If, therefore, the education of girls and women is to equip them to withstand the errors and to revise the misconceptions which detrimentally influence modern thought and action in respect of the obligations of maternity, its methods must be based upon a knowledge of biology, ethics, and economics, and must take cognisance of the more potent forces, hereditary, moral, intellectual and social, which will play upon the product of our educational system in its period of productive and more or less independent activity.

It is difficult to estimate at the present moment the relative weight of influence which these forces are bringing to bear upon early womanhood. All things, social and educational, are in a condition of flux and transition. Old standards and traditional ideas clamour for revision in the light of modern demands upon the human race, and that power of expansion, which Mr Chatterton Hill considers a fundamental law of life, is exhibiting itself with explosive violence, so that, for the moment, no definite opinion can be expressed as to the degree to which economic necessities will threaten to neutralise the biological instinct of parental care, or to what extent man's ethical standard will yield under industrial stress, or whether the claims of the State will successfully outbalance the exaggerated individualism characteristic of modern youth. What *must* be done, and that without loss of time, is to impress upon the public the fact that no amount of social culture can replace biological fitness, therefore our young people must be trained to preserve a truer perspective in respect of the claims of more or less conflicting duties

and desires, to be skilful in the accommodation of old-fashioned principles and practices to new and exacting circumstances, and to withstand temptations in the strength of reliable and up-to-date knowledge.

Three at least of the many innovations on conventional ideas and usages introduced by the great industrial revolution of the nineteenth century bear directly upon this subject of parental inefficiency. The same century in which women gained, at great cost, opportunities for a large and liberal culture saw also the transference to a new scene of action of a large proportion of the occupations which had previously engaged their whole attention; the extended employment of steam and machinery rendering it henceforth unnecessary that every household should be a workshop or every home a manufactory. Experience proved that a majority of the domestic industries could be more effectively and economically accomplished at centres planned for the purpose. The capacity which had qualified women for the extensive organisation of these multiple industries carried on in the castle of the mediæval baron or in the manor house of the seventeenth or eighteenth century squire, the administrative skill, the judgment, decision, sagacity, foresight, perseverance, moral courage, they exercised in these spheres were suddenly diverted into fresh channels or received an unrecognised check. In the first case, these qualities gained success for their possessors in the new sphere of higher education, and reopened to women professions and occupations which they had practised in the Middle Ages. In the second case, the energy suffered perversion, a recognised result of suppression or misuse. Thus the claims of domestic life were first narrowed, then despised or neglected, so that household duties became indeed drudgery, for no effort was made to apply to them the intelligence and energy which were meanwhile adjusting other callings to the demands of modern progress.

Throughout these years, the minds of men and women were alike mainly engrossed by the vast industrial and social changes which followed each other with unprecedented rapidity. The mushroom growth of factories and the associated reduction of domestic industries led also to a demand for cheap labour, of which an immediate result was the adoption of that system of false economics which compelled women and children to labour in factories and mines, and thus exposed them to the stress of keen industrial competition, and to the deteriorating effects of prolonged, fatiguing, over-specialised occupation. Associated with these new conditions of work were others which sapped the very sources of home life, namely, the aggregation of large numbers upon small areas, which led to dense overcrowding, and the provision of cheap, highly exciting forms of recreation, acceptable, almost essential, as a relief to physically exhausting and monotonous toil. Desires for more ambitious standards of dress and diversion were stimulated by improved means of rapid transit, by a cheap press, and by the general social upheaval which upset standards of living and fostered selfishness. At the same time, minds and bodies were strained well nigh to breaking point in their often fruitless efforts to make adjustments in this changed environment, and to keep abreast of new departures.

Now it is an accepted biological fact that when an organism is subjected to any severe and protracted strain, or to a series of conditions which diminish physical efficiency, the qualities last acquired are those to be first weakened and undermined. Prolonged devotion to the offspring during its period of helpless dependency is considered to be of relatively recent development in the human race. John Fiske and other sound authorities on social evolution have expressed the opinion that it is doubtful whether prolonged parental care can be justly described as a deep-

seated fundamental instinct. They find good reason to attribute its origin in primitive man not to instinctive tenderness and spontaneous affection for his offspring, but to self-interest, stimulated by the recollections of advantages derived by his own parents from the support and assistance he rendered them in childhood and youth, and to an ill-defined consciousness of the advantages to tribal prosperity of a more stable domestic life. Among all the primitive races, indeed, the child was held to be but one among other animate or inanimate chattels, and was treated with no greater, perhaps even with less, consideration than the most costly of these. The power of life or death over their children was exercised by parents certainly so late as the time of Calvin, which suggests that other sentiments could outbalance the parental instinct, even when it had gained considerable strength and stability, and before it was exposed to the rude shocks to mind and body associated with the social expansion of the past century.

Of course every one is familiar with examples of touching maternal devotion to offspring, common to forms of animal life far removed from the human, which seems to confute this opinion. But a brief consideration of biological facts affords evidence that, though widespread, this instinct is strictly limited in its duration, and easily susceptible to perversion in the maternal parent, while it is rarely more than temporarily present in the male of any species. At first it is solely antenatal in its manifestations, and subsequently it is confined to the immediately post-natal period. The cat, for instance, will attack her own kitten when the suckling period is passed, and similarly a puppy soon becomes a stranger whose presence is resented by his mother. That changes in environment or physical disturbances in the mother will lead her to neglect or destroy her offspring are familiar facts to the boy with his rabbits, or the farmer with more than one species of his stock. So that there are

unquestionably good grounds for the assertion that the parental instinct demands considerable stimulus and direction if it is to persist at all, and most certainly must these agencies be active if its ethical and economic relations are to be maintained when its purely physical manifestation is no longer physiologically stimulated. Thus, though the simplest evidences of care for the welfare of progeny can be traced among fish, it merely assumes the form of ante-natal interest in the eggs, and is gradually developed in response to structural arrangements, of which it is primarily the result. The basis for what ripens into love in the highest types of life assumes greater prominence in the case of insects, and presumably the rearing of offspring so immature as to demand post-natal care, has led to the preparation of burrows, nests, and dens, primitive homes, in which to secure their safety. A further growth of parental interest, intensive and extensive, is noticeable in the highest classes of bird life, when both parents share the duties of incubation and subsequent nursing of the helpless brood; the necessary stimulus for this devotion being found, it is said, in the instinctive struggle for existence.

Among mammalia the great importance of preserving the species at all costs has resulted in the evolution of so marvellously complex a constructive process on the part of the female that it is fitly described as one of the greatest economic processes of nature. This process reaches its highest development in the human race, but the cost to the mother is so high that it calls for compensation. Therefore, in order to achieve its full intention of perfect motherhood among the highest types of life, nature has planned a scheme of paternal as well as of maternal duties. The life of the mother must be preserved and sheltered, for upon it depends the food and natural shelter of her infant. She is therefore entitled to look for the maintenance of herself and her offspring at the hands of the father, at least during

the infancy of their family, and it is conventionally assumed that a man's desire to perpetuate his name and race proves a sufficient stimulus to secure the necessaries of life to his wife and children, and thus to relieve her of economic obligations. But, unfortunately, a realisation of the interdependence of offspring and mother, of the mother's physical and moral claims, and of the great economic value to the community of healthy children has suffered regrettable eclipse from time to time among the human race. It is true that considerable modification of paternal asperity in respect of the child is to be traced towards the end of the Patriarchal Age, but even then little thought was given to the preservation of infant life, for, with the exception of the Assyrians and Hebrews, the practice of infanticide is shown by historical records to have been a widespread archaic institution. Though normally confined to girls, it still prevailed among the Greeks and Romans, and persists even to-day among certain Eastern races, its perpetuation having no doubt been sanctioned by a variety of motives, prominent among which would be famine, poverty, a desire to promote national efficiency by the elimination of weaklings, and non-recognition that a new-born child is entitled to the privileges of humanity. It may also not be amiss to remind ourselves that the value of infant life as a national asset was hardly realised till the middle of the eighteenth century, and it was well on in the nineteenth before the effect on infant mortality of ill-nourished, over-worked mothers was first perceived. The publication of the Privy Council Investigations of 1861 and 1863 revealed facts which shocked the public mind, but unfortunately these facts were not sufficiently understood to stimulate a somewhat emotional, but wholly unpractical, electorate to insist on the adoption of measures calculated to effect the eradication of their causes. Even at the present day many fathers choose to ignore the fact that they are the legal guardians of

their children by nature and nurture, for though a child is unfortunately only entitled to recognition as a human being at birth, it is from that moment legally entitled to food, clothing, and lodging at the father's cost until capable of self-maintenance. This non-recognition of legal ante-natal rights reacts disastrously indeed upon the mothers as well as upon their infants. It inevitably tends to national deterioration, besides subjecting poor women to exhausting stress and toil when least fit to endure the strain ; the deplorable social consequences are well known, though often ignored.

When the conceivable biological explanation for diminished maternal affection is taken into account, together with the paternal indifference, possibly born of economic and industrial as well as of moral causes, the fact that the conditions of true motherhood seem temporarily imperilled among the poorer classes does not appear so surprising. Excessive egoism and absorption in the material sources of enjoyment are probably more actively promoting causes for this unnatural condition among well-to-do men and women, for here the stress on health and emotions is more directly traceable to gross luxury or to excessive and continued excitements than to fatigue, mal-nutrition, and financial disabilities. Indeed, those to whom from one or other cause, the profession of motherhood appears irksome and uninspiring are not wholly blameworthy. For many generations female education was limited by exclusive regard to the specific functions they were to discharge as mothers and housekeepers. According to one writer, family relationships were to overshadow the social and actually the divine in the lives of women ; they were even to be made the basis of a special moral code applicable to women only, and no attention was to be given in their education to other sides of their nature which craved for expression. The assumption in any scheme of boys' education, on the contrary,

was that it embodied means to develop in them all-round capacity in youth, leaving them free to adapt themselves to specific functions in later years, according to their occupations or social spheres. The absence of disciplined, cultivated minds and of training in accurate habits of thought among girls did not, however, conduce to the concentration of their energies to better purpose on the mechanical acquirement of dexterity in the ordinary domestic arts. Their restricted instruction but enhanced the wearisome monotony of daily doings, for it threw no light upon interesting underlying principles, and rendered no assistance to the solution of the physiological or psychical problems associated with child-rearing ; aspirations were checked, energies were frittered away, and the tendency to take false or unworthy views of daily duties was uncorrected by the development of power to form a clear conception of their dignity, worth, and intellectual demands. Neither was any provision made for the employment of girls where large establishments or a limited supply of young children offered no daily practice in the arts of housekeeping and of rearing babies. No consideration either was shown for the intellectual ambitions or for the economic needs of the many women who would remain unmarried, and who justly claimed to be prepared for self-support or for social service. Is it therefore surprising that a temporary reaction coincides with a partial attainment of long repressed desires ?

The ordeal, physical, mental, and moral, through which womanhood is still passing, in order to place its relations to life and to the community on truer lines, is one of great severity. But that it has already produced some good and practical results is an obvious fact. The world is more alive to the real gain to public welfare and prosperity which follows general recognition of the common human element in both men and women, the more broad-minded and unbiassed thinkers are perceiving that the specific

functions belonging to each sex demand substantially cultivation of the same qualities in early life, and call for equal educational advantages as a preparation for their performance; so that, through their efforts, the comparatively less liberal standard of education hitherto deemed sufficient and fitting for girls has been raised to that accepted for boys. It must now, however, proceed to a still higher level, and take into account the special capacities and requirements of a more complete womanhood than was conceived of in the past. The real problem before our girls' schools to-day is to plan a curriculum which will not only keep in view the harmonious development of mind and body, and the preparation necessary for a girl's future life, but which will also cultivate all normal faculties and interests by maintaining a just balance of subjects. And thus we arrive face to face with the subject which gives its title to this paper—In what way can our girls be best prepared to understand and to perform intelligently and cheerfully the duties and functions of perfect womanhood? And I say womanhood, and not motherhood, advisedly, for all women do not enjoy the privilege of maternity, but, with rare exceptions, all women are called upon at some period of their lives to assume responsibility in some public or private capacity for the nutrition and environment of others, while the majority find themselves also charged to a greater or less degree with the care of expectant mothers or with the mothering of infants and the education of children of tender age. There is also little doubt that as women equip themselves more efficiently for these responsibilities and discard traditional empiricism in their performance, they will be entrusted more exclusively with the direction of the more domestic side of large institutions, schools, colleges, asylums, and reformatories, where, if maternal instinct be present, it will gain satisfaction, and where, in any case, all the finest intellectual and moral qualities of good women

will find ample scope. Naturally it is to school education that eyes are now turned in the hopes of realising the ideal of capable, intelligent, practical, womanly womanhood; the "general educative impulse to bring home to the community" a sense of its responsibility for human health and progress, to which the Committee on Physical Deterioration referred, must evidently be fostered by intention, and demands to this end the aid of school machinery for the purpose.

But, because the recent trend and resultant stress of industrial and social progress have contributed to foster the modern girl's disinclination to assume the cares of maternity or to wear the yoke of domestic drudgery, because for the moment her sense of personal responsibility towards the race is enfeebled, and her eyes are blinded to her ignorance of the claims and needs of infancy, she will not be coerced into shaping a different course of conduct by compulsory and premature specialisation in the domestic arts. Time for her own individual development must be accorded her, her reason must be appealed to, her interest must be excited, and her own wishes as well as those of her parents must be considered. This last point especially cannot be overlooked, for there are still parents who attach more value to preparation for earning a livelihood than for qualifying as a perfect woman, and to whom the possible combination of higher education with the popular conception of a good wife and mother is not easily evident. Miss Catherine Webb drew attention to some points relevant in this consideration when writing in the *University Review* for June 1906. "To-day," she says, "the girl has become as much a wage-earning asset to her parents as the boy. . . . In the well-meant desire to promote the physical well-being of the nation, physicians and educationists alike are inclined to insist that, willy-nilly, . . . girls should early specialise as housewives and mothers, while parents still require

that they should become wage-earners. . . . The consequence is an unrecognised clash of interests between which the child is likely to suffer," and, may I add, the ideals also. This "clash" and its echoes resound to-day in some of the newer type of secondary as well as in elementary schools, and conduce to confusion of aim and much vexation of spirit. The economic interests of the parents and the ambitions of their daughters lead to a great striving after occupations external to the home. A recognition of her economic value has also brought to many a woman worker a corresponding realisation of, and desire to assume, her civic responsibilities, while it is not always clear to her that the adequate and intelligent fulfilment of domestic duties is one form of active citizenship or calls for the exercise of a trained mind. How can the short period of school life offer training in all these objects or serve to correct false values? It would seem that a scheme of education is required which must most certainly strengthen the feeble maternal instinct by judicious direction and encouragement, though in no way must it over-accentuate the emotional side at this very critical phase of girlhood. The science of home-making must be presented in its right light as a dignified and most important profession, in the elements of which all girls should be grounded, though recognition must be accorded to the fact that the more advanced branches of the subject may be legitimately left in the hands of well-trained experts. Woman's great and incomparable gift of motherhood must be set in a new light, and must be shown to involve broad and large culture if it is to be turned to its fullest account in later life. More attention must be given throughout the curriculum to indicating the true intention of education, namely, the better adjustment of mankind to his environment and the acquirement of power to exercise control over conditions. A truer judgment must be cultivated upon matters economic

and social, and a higher value than hitherto must be attached to moral and biological responsibilities. But to accomplish this, even partially, the period of elementary education must most certainly be prolonged, for few girls are sufficiently developed until fifteen or sixteen years of age to grasp the true meaning of school training as a groundwork for future action, to appreciate the relative value of claims and interests, or to connect lessons with life. Some revision and readjustment of time-tables would also be called for in the great mass of secondary schools, which are subject to the sway of external examinations, and further opportunities to study human life in its biological, economic, social, and national aspects must be afforded in institutions for higher education. Observation of existing school courses and a knowledge of college schemes, which it is hoped may be realised within a few months, afford satisfactory proof that the chapter on "Direct Preparation for Practical Life especially in the Home" in Miss Burstall's recently published book on "English High Schools for Girls" is not unduly optimistic. Some of those to whom is entrusted the education of our girls and young women at the present time are quite alive to the national need for more intelligent parenthood; but, while determining that it shall be gratified, they plead for patience, and point out that a movement of such importance and magnitude must be given time to grow, freedom also must be granted, so that it may develop along various lines, and a frank interchange of views, with ample opportunities for discussion on debatable points, must take place between the medical and educational professions.

Meanwhile, our far-sighted leaders call attention to the urgent need of this movement for two forms of support, parental and financial.

In the case of elementary school girls, parental opposition to training in domestic duties and in the care of infants has practically disappeared, *if* it be given

during the very limited period of school life, when time is unfortunately unduly short for the general training requisite for mind and body and when the child is not ripe for the teaching. In London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Gloucester, Dunfermline, and elsewhere, where a small proportion of the elementary school product has been caught on leaving school at thirteen or fourteen, and parents have been coaxed to allow their daughters to attend a six or eight months' course of technical training in housewifery, the results have, beyond all anticipation, confirmed the belief that this is the psychological moment at which to introduce this class of girl to the interests, obligations, and arts of home-making. She is at an age when she begins to think, when she has time to try her powers, when her mother is glad to trust her with some real responsibility in home duties, so that she has the chance of introducing new methods in cooking and cleaning, above all when her dawning womanhood reawakens her interest in babies, an interest healthily blunted during the immediately preceding years, when her leisure should be absorbed by play and suitable recreation, not by precocious mothering. I am convinced that it is by the adoption of such Continuation Courses that we shall strike at the root of maternal inefficiency among the working classes ; but it is a method which depends upon financial as well as upon parental support. Happily they have more than one economic aspect, for teaching on the economic and moral duties and obligations of parenthood and citizenship should find a natural place in such courses, the false economics of earning a pittance outside the home while its inmates remain neglected could be clearly explained, while the civic and national duties of each individual in respect of personal inefficiency can be emphasised. It is scarcely necessary to add that similar systematic training in suitable form must be provided for lads, upon whom also the duty of making provision for the wife's maintenance during the period of maternity must of course be impressed.

Much more trouble, too, must be taken to make known the fact that biological principles apply to the vital processes of human beings, including that of reproduction. It is true that the general physical characteristics of vegetable life and the laws to which it is subject are now brought under the notice of an increasing number of school children in the form of nature study. They are familiarised with the general principles of growth and reproduction in plants, and are led to observe for themselves something of the influences of heredity and nutrition and of the capacity for and advantage derived from rapid adaptation to environment. If in the last year of school life girls were led on to trace in human life the qualities, requirements, and functions they had previously observed in plants and in simpler forms of animal life, not only would an admirable foundation be laid for these special Continuation Courses of training, but the great function of perpetuating life would be presented in an entirely impersonal, biological setting, and knowledge so gained could be employed later on to awaken a sense of the vivid responsibilities the function involves. Girls need help to understand the deep mysteries of maternity ; they need specific, detailed guidance, moral and mental as well as physical, at a difficult period of their lives. They must no longer be allowed to pick up their knowledge of the most vital of all human functions literally from the filthy lips of ignorance and vice ; individual direct teaching must be given at some time or other, with sympathy and tact, on the care and exercise of the newly acquired power. It is the firm conviction of many women, whose experience lends weight to their opinion, that those to whose guardianship girls are entrusted must prepare themselves to gratify suitably the legitimate desire for information and to raise the function of maternity to a purer level from the degraded, unclean abyss to which it has been debased. They must be prepared to recognise the

strength of temptation to the unlawful gratification of a fundamental instinct which proves overwhelming to some natures, and generally they must afford opportunity for wholesome confidences and sympathetic direction to girls, to whom too often no training whatever is vouchsafed on the physiological process, which affects, not them alone, but those for whose lives they become responsible. In secondary schools there is practically as much need as in elementary schools for tactful, truthful teaching on these physiological, economic, and moral aspects of the function of motherhood, though from a somewhat different standpoint and for rather diverse reasons. Whether the teaching shall be entirely individual and direct, or whether the phenomena of reproduction shall be touched upon in their biological setting, as a part of a world-wide process in class teaching on botany and zoology, is a matter for the head of each school to determine after consultation with parents and staff. This only is certain, existing ignorance and misconceptions are unjustifiable.

Unfortunately, however, opposition to any form of such instructions prevails even more widely among all classes of parents than among teachers. Ignorance and innocence, prudery and modesty are hopelessly confused, and though a few mothers are themselves able and willing to help and to instruct their daughters, a greater number deplore their inability for the task or deny its obligation. It is a serious anomaly that, in an age when every possible study is introduced into the curriculum, at a time when effects are being traced to causes, and the influence of deferred results is ever more intelligently appreciated by physicians and sociologists, when press and novelist publish pages of immoral, debasing, and nauseous matter, no direct allusion to the great responsibility attaching to the transmission of life is permitted between teacher and pupil, and a matter of supreme importance to the community as well as to the individual is habitually and

intentionally ignored. For though, as has been said, some attention to life processes characterises school classes in nature study, teachers hesitate to refer, after the first year or two, in even just proportion to those functions associated with reproduction; possibly from shyness or from dread of parental resentment. In just a few girls' private schools a little systematic teaching on the subject is attempted, happily with invariable success. Sometimes the biological method of approach is pursued, sometimes the moral obligations are first discussed; but, without exception, not only are the girls grateful, but their mothers also, while the value received is enduring, and prompts many expressions of appreciation in later life, when these girls have become wives and mothers. Thus tactful, restrained teaching in a few English private schools and published reports upon biological courses carried on in certain high schools in the U.S.A. (guaranteed as accurate by the Special Commissioners of the American Academy of Medicine) prove that both shyness and fear are misplaced. Naturally girls are merely introduced to the general principles of this as of other functions in these courses, that is to say, they learn but a very small part of the biological alphabet; but so helpful and successful does this prove that in one or two cases these school courses have concluded, for the last four or five years, when girls are about eighteen or nineteen years of age, with three or four lectures from a medical woman on pregnancy, child-birth, the care of infants, and a general consideration of the institution of the family, heredity, "the social evil," and a brief reference to the diseases, associated with immorality, which sap the bodily and mental vigour of a people. That the absence of suitable teaching on similar lines is one cause of existing parental inefficiency in this country to-day is an opinion I share with many other thoughtful men and women.

The measures now active and the methods in

general use to prepare for family life in our elementary schools are fairly familiar to all. Though admirable in intention they are susceptible of much extension and improvement. In respect of the household arts, secondary schools are, I think, doing and experimenting far more than is generally known. At one time only the dullards were encouraged to pursue the purely technical practice of cookery in the school, then fuller post-scholastic courses were provided for girls who were not passing on to a University career or to some immediate wage-earning occupation, a method which is being still further developed with advantage. Meanwhile the Board of Education "recognised" the subject in secondary schools, and encouraged its introduction, so that there are now in existence quite a variety of courses, all of a more or less tentative character, it is true, but all making for good results. Some are wholly technical and distinctly limited in scope, others are linked with one or more school studies, such as elementary chemistry and physics, or, in the case of needlework, with design, while one or two schools are remodelling their curriculum in such a way as to correlate science, literature, art, indeed almost every subject in the time-table, with home, social, and civic life. One or two of these schools find it even possible for all the girls to share in the delight of practically applying their knowledge to the arts of cooking and cleaning, without depriving them of the satisfaction of testing their intellectual attainments by the prescribed standard, matriculation at the London University, for instance, or similar qualifying examinations. Other schools find it comparatively easy to provide some of the scientific foundations for housecraft, but do not yet see their way to make a place for their applications without calling in the co-operation of the parents, in order that some practice in the arts should be acquired in the home, hoping that this method may also serve to forge useful links between the girls' two centres of interest, home and school.

Thus some of our most prominent head-mistresses are prepared to recognise the new movement in women's education, but they ask for the public support in three directions: money must be found for the necessary equipment, the point of view and the demands on time must be taken into account by those who regulate examinations and fix standards of attainment, and cultured women must have opportunities provided to gain an insight into the principles which underlie processes and to study the factors which have influenced conditions, in order that the demand for teaching power of the highest order may be met. There is good hope that King's College Women's Department, Leeds University, and Cheltenham College will before long offer courses of University status not only for this purpose, but for the advantage of all women who desire to pursue the subject in its more advanced stages, and thus to qualify themselves to elevate the sphere of home and family life to that national importance which is its due, while at the same time they introduce improved methods into conventional practices.

There is evidence also of more widespread and better organised efforts to reach those whose mode of life or whose age does not bring them within the range of any obligatory educational influence. In addition to the splendid work of health visitors and district nurses, other agencies of various kinds are active, such, for example, as the St Pancras School for Mothers or the Marylebone Health Association. The extreme importance of the matter is recognised by the London University Extension Board, County Councils, and various societies; lectures on the Requirements of Infancy and the Elements of a Healthy Life are offered and are found useful in raising the standard of parenthood among all classes, for among those whose lot is cast in very pleasant places an ignorance prevails, alas, which is out of all proportion to their opportunities.

The signs of the times are altogether far more hopeful than was the case but five years ago. The chief things wanted, as it seems to me, to quicken the seeds of good into more active life are—(1) a prolongation of the period of elementary education, in order that girls may be trained, not only in the duties, but in the *functions* of womanhood at an age appropriate for the purpose; (2) freedom to those in charge of secondary schools to test and to elaborate varied schemes, adapted to the requirements and future lives of their particular types of pupils; (3) financial support to the training schools and colleges where opportunities are offered to acquire purely technical skill in the arts, upon the intelligent practice of which human efficiency depends, or to pursue advanced study of those branches of the subject upon which civilised life is based in the home and in the community; (4) judicious encouragement by every legitimate means in all our young people, not in girls only, of a higher conception of the dignity, duties, requirements, and potentialities of human life and of the vital responsibilities of parenthood. To this end a better sense of proportion must be developed. In the laudable desire to provide social culture for the masses, the equally essential element in national stability of biological fitness has been overlooked or undervalued. As a matter of fact both lines of development must be pursued, and the rising generation must be trained to follow them. It is surely already evident that a lopsided method of education, designed only to the attainment of intellectual culture defeats its own ends. The youth of the nation must grasp the facts during its period of plastic impressionability that material and moral success have physical foundations.

Capacity for physical endurance is perhaps the only popular test of "fitness" ever applied to the national standard of vitality, therefore this conception of biological fitness must henceforth be enlarged; it must in

future include capacity for rapid adaptation to new conditions, capacity for self-control, capacity to reproduce life in its healthiest form, and capacity to resist immorality and the importation of foreign vices. This is not a task beyond the power of education to achieve, for true education means the development of all that is best in body, mind, and spirit. It *is* competent to strengthen that which is biologically or ethically weak, to reform that which is economically unsound, and thus to afford to the pregnant possibilities, now dawning on the social horizon, ample scope to bring forth fruitful actualities. But for this great achievement, time, patience, funds, tact, good judgment, and freedom to experiment must all be called into requisition and given fair play. Character, it has been wisely said, is the aftergrowth of activities under the influence of ideals, ideals which, to my way of thinking, must be permeated with the vivifying social principle of religion. The ideal of those concerned with the education of girls to-day is the production of a living, concrete, capable woman, possessed of any and every human virtue. I have briefly drawn your attention to some of the forces now directed towards or militating against the attainment of this ideal. In conclusion may I also remind you that the exhibition of these human virtues is the privilege of men as well as of women, and that it is only by the well-adjusted combination of male and female activities and ideals that the national reproach of parental inefficiency can be done away.

The CHAIRMAN congratulated Miss Ravenhill upon her paper, and said that having recently recovered from a severe attack of influenza it must have been a considerable strain upon that lady to have read the whole of her exceedingly able address.

Mr Alderman BROADBENT, before reading his paper, observed that he only differed to a limited extent from Miss Ravenhill, viz., that he would like to put the teaching of girls at an earlier age than she had suggested. He regarded the chief object of his own paper to be a suggestion for bridging over a temporary state of things, which,

when they had worked out what Miss Ravenhill had suggested, would be no longer necessary. If they had education of girls on on the lines Miss Ravenhill had suggested, it would be impossible that there should be in this country any mothers who were ignorant of the duties and functions of motherhood; but they had to bridge over a period say of ten or fifteen years until the happier state of things arrived.

EDUCATION FOR MOTHERHOOD AND INSTRUCTION FOR MOTHERS.

By Alderman BENJAMIN BROADBENT,
Ex-Mayor of Huddersfield.

I shall not have anything to say of a novel sort in dealing with the subject of education for motherhood and instruction for mothers, and most of what I have to say will almost inevitably be commonplace and self-evident. The whole importance of the subject is in the application of perfectly familiar truths to the practical purposes of the day and hour.

It is surely self-evident that the main function of all women is to become mothers, and it is just as self-evident that for the proper fulfilment of this function there needs a vast amount of knowledge, and this should demand careful training and preparation. Upon these manifest facts must rest all that I have to bring before you. But commonplace and obvious as these facts are, there has been a curious oblivion to both of them in all the actual dealings with the training and education of girls: a ridiculous but most mischievous prudishness seems to have almost abolished the subject of motherhood from our girls' schools; it has been kept out of sight as much as possible, as if it were something to be ashamed of, instead of being, as it is, the glory of womanhood.

I do not regard it as being within my province to deal at any length with the education of girls, although they are all potential mothers, and I take it for granted

that Miss Ravenhill has devoted her paper to that side of the subject more particularly ; but this much I should wish to say, that it appears to me most desirable that certain exterior facts relating to motherhood should be taught in elementary schools, and could be much more effectively taught at this stage than at a later period. In the minds of those who have to teach girls from twelve to fourteen years of age the thought of their future motherhood should always be present, but in the minds of the taught there should be a total absence of any consciousness at all on the matter. Incidentally and unavoidably some inkling will come to them, but it should be kept out of knowledge as long as possible. Just as we are told is the case with royal personages, the thought of their high destiny is always before those who have to train and teach them, but is carefully kept out of sight of the royal children themselves. So should it be with girls. It may be that in suggesting so early an age as twelve to fourteen for this preliminary teaching I am entering on a "debatable region," but I have no doubt on the subject myself, and it will be found by experience that there is a readiness to take in the teaching at this early age, which is clouded over at a later stage of development. After the age of fourteen any attempt at such teaching should be for the time abandoned, but with the idea of resuming it, if possible, at eighteen or nineteen years of age. The teaching will not be lost or forgotten, and when taken up again, as it should be, the character of it should be altogether different, That resumed teaching should be full, clear, and complete, without reticence or false modesty. There is a point where ignorance ceases to be innocence and grows to folly.

I do not desire, however, to develop any further this side of the subject. I wish to turn to what I regard as the main issue with which I have to deal. That is, the education of the actual mothers of to-day. That there is a need for education is unhappily too

well known. We have left these mothers ignorant when we might have easily taught them, and until there come the results of a wiser method of training girls, there is an enormous deficit to make up. There is no reflection on the mothers themselves—how could they know without being taught? and how could they learn when there was no one to impart instruction? It is the miscalculation and neglect of the educated classes that is to blame for this general and widespread ignorance on the part of the actual mothers of to-day. What, then, are the remedies of this ignorance? and how are the remedies to be applied? The answer comes very readily, "Teach them, of course." But the next question is not so easy: "How are you going to teach these mothers?" Consider for a moment the situation of most of these ordinary mothers of to-day. They are not mothers only. They are housekeepers generally, and cooks and charwomen and washerwomen, and nurses of older children. The baby is only one of an almost innumerable series of items which demand her attention—not to mention the fact that there is also the husband, who does not usually place himself second to any other item in the list. How are you going to do anything to educate a woman whose heart, head, and hands are already so full of work? Where and under what circumstances are you going to impart the needed instruction? Will you get them to come out to listen to lectures? By all means do that if you can. I have tried it, of course; I know how far this can go. It is not far. You may say, "They ought to be anxious to learn, they ought to come. It is a sign of their obdurate defiance of knowledge, and a proof of their love of ignorance that they do not rush to fill your lecture rooms." Look at the matter closely, and examine individual cases one by one. In how many cases will you find it *possible* for a mother to leave her home, even for an hour, without an obvious risk of neglecting some pressing obligation?

It is not at all that the mothers do not wish to learn. It is a matter of common experience that they are eager to learn ; their fault is rather that they are too willing to try anything and everything that they are told is good for the baby. If an audience were to be got together in proportion to the wish of the mothers to receive instruction, you would have to hire very spacious halls for your listeners. Whatever may be the case with the general public, there is no apathy, no indifference, on the part of the mothers to the welfare of their infants. But much as they could wish it, as a rule they *cannot* leave their homes. And it is both natural and right that it should be so. It is difficult for them to leave even when pressed by actual hunger for food, and though they know the food is waiting, and though they know that the welcome will be as kind and considerate as good women can make it, yet even then they often *cannot* leave the home without the risk. It is a heart-rending business to know the strong claim for help—to realise that little helpless children are perishing in their mothers' arms for lack of knowledge even more than for lack of food —and to be unable to get at them to give the help which would be so gladly rendered and so thankfully received. There they are, hidden away in their poor homes, mothers and babes crying out for instruction, as if they were shut in by some wicked enchantment away from those who would help them.

I think you will not take it that I wish to speak in the smallest degree in such a way as to discourage any such efforts as are represented by the School for Mothers in St Pancras, or Mrs Gordon's dinners for poor mothers in Chelsea, or such work as is done in the dispensaries. These are all as good as good can be, but the pity is that they are limited in their capacity for meeting the whole need. What we ought to secure is that it should be quite impossible for any mother or baby that needs help to be left outside the scope of our

operations. The evil caused by the lamentable ignorance, which is the only dowry civilisation gives to the mothers, is well-nigh universal, and the remedy must be just as far-reaching. That is to say, if we want to educate the actual mothers of to-day, we must leave none of them out of our field of work, and since they cannot come out to us, we must carry our help to them, and we must carry it to them in their homes. A huge task you will say. I grant it, huge indeed, just as huge as the ignorance we have to dispel.

That I define as the scope of the education we must give to the actual mothers of to-day—that is, to carry instruction to every mother in her own home. Nothing less than this will suffice, and nothing less than this should be the deliberate purpose and intention of all effort.

It may seem paradoxical to state that when once it is conceded that the requirement for instruction is thus limited only by the actual number of existing mothers, the whole problem becomes perfectly simple —not easy, but simple—and after all a simple problem is much easier than one complicated by all sorts of conditions and exceptions.

By taking it that every mother without exception must have offered to her the opportunity of receiving instruction in her own home, and proceeding to act on it, the very pleasing discovery is made at once that the ignorance which, viewed at a distance and as a whole, is so general and so dense, is by no means so alarming as might have been thought. It will be found, for example, that more than half the mothers are not ignorant at all ; on the contrary, they are quite capable of not only receiving but of imparting sound knowledge. Then it will be found also that of the remaining half, 50 per cent. of these, or one-fourth of the total, are ready and willing to learn, and will profit at once and carry into practical operation on their own babies, in their own homes, the instruction that is

given. There is then left only a comparatively small proportion, say 25 per cent. of the whole, who will make any continuous demand upon your remedial attention. Thus by attacking the problem as a whole you get it reduced at once to very much smaller dimensions than it appeared to present at the first examination. You have grasped the nettle and found that somehow it did not sting. If you had begun by saying that 20 or 25 per cent. of the mothers needed instruction, and had tried to pick them out one by one, you would never have succeeded at all in getting at those who most need, and who, at the same time, least demand your assistance; you would have missed these and probably wasted your energies on some of the 75 per cent. or 80 per cent. who do not need you so much, though many of them will be glad to have you. The 20 or 25 per cent. are quite sufficient to task every power that you can put forth. You will succeed with some, you will fail with others, but in every case you will have done some good, though you may not have effected all the good you hoped, and in some cases you will have become most painfully aware of the lowest deeps to which human nature can sink and there remain, apparently without possibility of recovery. But you have ascertained a large body of facts, and you know with some approximation to the truth what your problem is, and, what is still better, you have learned something at least that will be useful in tackling the problem. You have already tackled it and found that it is quite possible to solve it. If you are a person of an enthusiastic and hopeful nature you will even believe that you have solved it, and therein I shall venture to agree with you. You will have brought instruction within the reach of every mother: there your work ends; any mother that refuses instruction and rejects knowledge has at least had one small opportunity, and it is her fault or her further misfortune if she remains unimproved.

I almost wish that I could leave the matter just at the point to which I have brought it, because if I carry it further I shall have to appear egotistical and may even be assumed to be dogmatic. But it will be demanded that I should indicate the means by which this scheme of universal instruction to mothers should be brought into operation and carried into effect. Everything that I have spoken of is being done ; not always on exactly the same lines, but the same end is kept in view and is being reached, though the means differ somewhat. I do not see why I should not take as illustration the work with which I am myself most closely identified. Take the town of Huddersfield, with its 100,000 inhabitants and its 2,200 or 2,300 babies per annum. Every birth comes to the knowledge of the medical officer of health, 95 per cent. are notified within forty-eight hours of occurrence. Within the next two or three days a visit to the home is paid by a fully qualified medical woman, if no medical man is in attendance. If her visit is acceptable, the lady doctor will give such advice and instruction as may be possible. Where a relative or friend is in attendance the advice and instruction is generally accepted gladly, and where a midwife has had sole charge she is usually pleased to have the professional confirmation of her work. But it is one of the cardinal principles of this work that for the official lady assistant medical officers of health there is no right of entry, and it is understood that no threshold must be passed without leave asked and given. By that visit begins the instruction of the mother, and there is left printed matter as simple and direct and forcible as we have known how to make it ; and by this there is afforded the means of further instruction. If the case is ordinary the lady doctor's visit is not repeated, but, wherever it is thought suitable, further visits are paid by voluntary workers who, to the best of their ability, follow up the instruction already given, and in any case the visitor keeps in sym-

pathetic touch with the mother, and helps her at least to believe in her motherhood. Thus we aim at, and to a very great extent we actually achieve our aim ; that is, we bring within the reach of every mother means of instruction as to the best way to preserve the life and health of her child. We have an organisation which covers the whole town. It is not perfectly carried out in every part, but it is so far complete that every mother receives at least one visit, and that from a fully qualified lady doctor, and seventy out of every hundred mothers are regularly visited by the ladies of our Voluntary Public Health Union. As to the value of the work, I am at present not concerned to measure this ; time will show. But it seemed to me and to Dr Moore, who has been my prompter and adviser, and, if I may put myself so far forward, my coadjutor in this work, that we had devised the irreducible minimum of what was needful to cope effectively with the pitiable ignorance of our mothers, and bring some light of knowledge into every home where a baby was born.

No one can be more conscious than we are of the weaknesses and the defects of this scheme of instruction. There are wide developments which will demand effort as soon as we have made good our present position. It is an attempt, and whether it will finally succeed only the future will show.

There may well be many other lines upon which this lack of knowledge may be attacked, and I do not by any means speak of the Huddersfield scheme as perfect in itself, still less as being suitable to all other localities and to all other conditions. It is only the best we could contrive for our own case.

Before I close my paper, I should wish to emphasise two important considerations. The first is as to the authority by which this work should be carried out. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that the whole of the work in connection with the question of infantile mortality, and, in particular, this

of giving instruction to the mothers, should be carried out by the public health authorities through the department of the medical officer of health. We are in this country peculiarly fortunate in having our sanitary and health machinery so organised as to be most readily and conveniently adapted to this new, but perfectly natural, development of health work. In certain directions there may be some danger of overlapping and redundancy in the general question of the promotion of infant life and health, but, in the matter of giving instruction to the mothers of to-day there is nothing at present existing to enter into any conflict with the health authority. Neither the Poor Law nor, what is still more remarkable, philanthropy has at all occupied this ground, it is the medical officer who has rediscovered for us the baby and the mother. It has been the health authorities that have impressed upon the public the value of infant life, and the urgency of taking measures to preserve and foster it, and it is through the same agency that the educative work for the mothers of to-day can best be organised and carried out. There is no other means so immediately ready for use, as that of the health departments of our local authorities, from the Local Government Board itself down to the smallest administrative area. I regard it as a matter of the greatest importance that this educative work should be organised by the local authorities in the first place. But to be continuous and effective they will undoubtedly need all the help and assistance that philanthropic effort can give. With the proper co-ordination and co-operation of the official with the voluntary it is certain that the work can be done and done thoroughly and at a very small expenditure of actual money. But the health department must be the centre and pivot—the motive and guiding force—of the whole movement. At all costs, however, there should be no clashing or conflict of authorities. Every agency should be given its proper work and function, and

nothing that tends to educate the mother should be put aside as useless. To mention one particular, it should be a distinct aim to utilise the midwives as educational agents. Their work gives them special opportunities, and the recent legislation tending to improve their status and training, as well as the general action of the Central Midwives Board, will render them of increasing value for instructing the mothers as well as tending the babies. It would be a calamity if there should be any waste of force through some supposed incompatibility of interest or usefulness between health visitor and midwife. Probably it is sufficient to indicate the risk in order to avoid it; where the supervising authority under the Midwives Act and the health authority are one and the same, as is the case in all the larger boroughs, there can be no conflict, but it would be a great misfortune if, under any circumstances, through some misunderstanding as to who should do it, this work should remain undone. Every possible agency for the instruction of the mothers should be welcomed and used, and nothing should be refused.

This, however, leads me to the second point upon which I should wish to lay especial stress. I have spoken of the teachableness of the mothers, but there is here a very necessary word of caution. If we are to teach mothers—the actual mother with the baby in her arms and perhaps seven or eight others out of arms—we shall have to see that the teacher we send really knows something. There is no one so keen and so competent as an actual mother to form an opinion as to the worth of the advice offered her, and woe betide the incompetent person, male or female, who presumes to attempt to palm off pretended knowledge on a mother—scant will be the courtesy and cutting the contempt. If we are to instruct mothers it must be by means of the very best teacher we can send. By sending an ignorant or inexperienced visitor, if the object be to teach, we should do far more harm than

good. I regard it, therefore, as of the utmost importance that our official visitor should be beyond all question thoroughly trained and taught so that she may be able to demonstrate the value of her knowledge and experience without having in the least to assert it. The real worth of the visit should be self-evident, not only to the mother herself, but to any one, nurse or midwife, who may be in attendance. This high qualification is in my opinion essential in the official visitor, who has the specific work of instruction put upon her, but I would venture to say that it is not necessary to insist on any such skilled knowledge or experience for the unofficial visitors. They do not go so much as teachers and instructors, but rather as sympathetic and interested friends, and if they will listen with real attention whilst the mother dilates on the subject nearest her heart, and displays her own knowledge, even an ignorant visitor will be of real service and help to the mothers.

I have now completed in outline what I believe to be a practical scheme for dealing with the ignorance of the actual mothers of to-day. I have indicated the methods which appear to me effective and operative, and the means by which these methods are to be applied, and I have emphasised what I regard as essential to success.

I would, in conclusion, say that this scheme is based upon propositions fully thought out and carefully applied to existing conditions. I believe the principles upon which it is founded to be sound. Experience gained at the expense of much effort demonstrates this to be the case. But whatever its merits or demerits may be, the machine works. All I would at present say is, that all the indications are favourable, and call for a prolongation of the effort. When it has been worked sufficiently long we shall know whether it is a permanent success or not. It would even seem to justify the trial of some such plan in other places with such modifications as might be

considered useful. In any case, I suggest this as an attempt to instruct the actual mothers of to-day in the work of motherhood, and as an effort to stop some leakage of infant life, till there comes in the better instructed motherhood of, I trust, the immediate future.

APPENDIX.

A Short Account of the Huddersfield Scheme of Work against Infant Mortality.

The Huddersfield work against infant mortality is framed on a very simple plan.

The *mot d'ordre* is, "Help the mother to nurse her infant herself in her own home."

1. Notifications of birth reach the medical officer of health within forty-eight hours of the time of birth.

2. Two lady assistant medical officers of health visit the homes, inquire, advise, and help.

3. The notifications are sent every Monday to voluntary workers —ladies who supervise, visit at intervals, and help in the homes.

4. If the baby does not thrive, and is not under medical care, the case is referred to the medical officer of health, and appropriate action is taken.

The health department of the Corporation is the central part of the organisation. The official staff for this purpose consists of the medical officer of health and two assistant medical officers of health. The two latter are fully qualified and duly registered medical women. Nearly the whole of their time is given to the work in connection with infant mortality, and the medical officer of health exercises a general direction and supervision of their proceedings.

There is also a voluntary association called the Huddersfield and District Public Health Union. It is worked by upwards of a hundred ladies. There is a close and intimate relation between the municipal and voluntary portions of the work. This connection may be best seen by an examination of the diagram herewith.

By a special Act obtained in 1906 the Corporation have power for the compulsory notification of births to the medical officer of health within forty-eight hours. This Act has been in operation since 1st November 1906. So far there has been no difficulty in working it. The notifications within the time limit have been 94 per hundred of the total births. It is made as easy and as convenient as possible to make these notifications; a post-card is sufficient. Stamped and addressed cards are given to midwives, and on request to doctors and others, from the health office direct, or through the assistant medical officers of health or the ladies of the Public Health

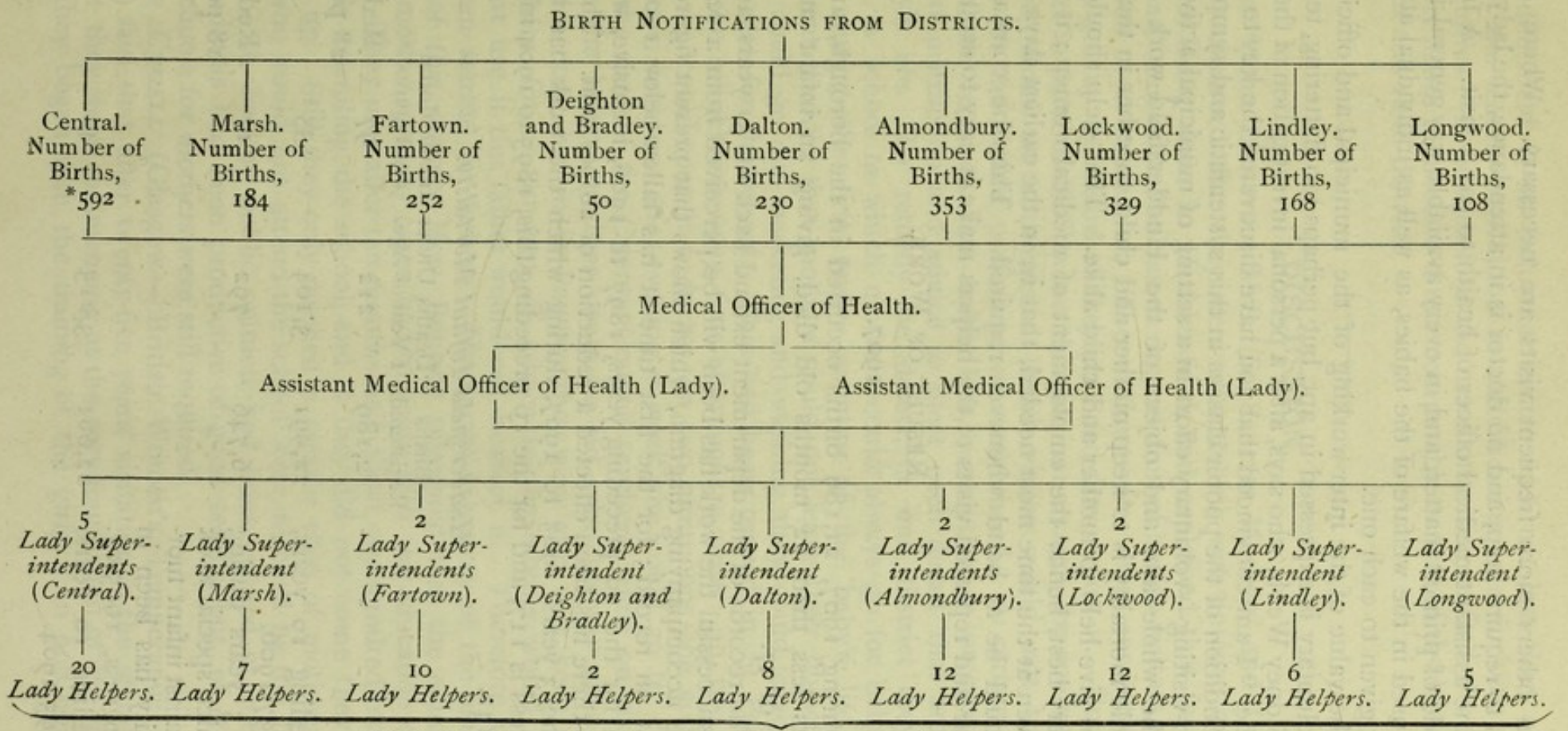
Union. Immediately upon receipt of the notification one or other of the lady assistant medical officers of health proceeds to the address given and verifies it. If the case is one where help or advice is likely to be of use, the opportunity for such help or advice is given by the visit of the lady doctor. There is no power of entry, and the visit is not enforced in any way. Cards and leaflets of advice on the care of infants, very carefully thought out, are generally left. Wherever practicable breast-feeding is urged, and if there is any difficulty in this respect help and advice are proffered. It is at the very earliest stage of her motherhood that the mother requires the best available advice, and it is just then that she most readily welcomes and assimilates teaching as to the best methods for her child's welfare.

This first visit by the lady doctors is followed by repeated visits in all cases where the circumstances call for them. It is at this point that the utility of the voluntary association comes into play. For the purpose of this voluntary association the borough is divided up into separate districts, corresponding as far as possible with the wards, but taking as a basis for a separate district the number of births. About 150 births per annum is the approximate number for one district. Over each of these districts is appointed a lady superintendent, and with her are associated a group of lady helpers, varying in number in proportion to the number of babies likely to be born. It is not reckoned that any one lady helper should have more than fifteen to twenty babies on her list.

After the first visit of the assistant medical officer of health the lists of babies are divided up into the districts of the Public Health Union, and each week the list of babies is sent to the lady superintendent of the district. She, in her turn, divides up the list week by week amongst her helpers. Each baby is thus placed under the supervision of some one or other lady helper, and she is expected to keep each under observation, and to do what she can for its welfare. In all cases where the child is not thriving, and where no medical practitioner is in attendance, she is expected to send to the public health department for aid. This does not involve any gift or charity. The visit is a visit to the baby, and for its health, and it is a rule that no dole shall be given in any shape. In cases of need the various official, religious, and philanthropic agencies of the town are communicated with, such as the Charity Organisation Society and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and the Invalids' Kitchen. In cases of sanitary defects, information is given to the proper health authorities. The visits of the lady helpers, like those of the assistant medical officers of health, are entirely optional on the part of the visited. A very simple formula defines the position—not to cross the threshold unless an invitation is given to enter, not to sit down unless a seat is offered, to remember that every "room" of a cottage has as much right to privacy as any lady's drawing-room. There is thus no danger of intrusion or of unwelcome interference. In some cases only a very occasional visit is required,

HUDDERSFIELD SCHEME OF WORK AGAINST INFANT MORTALITY.

(*Official in ordinary type. Voluntary in italics.*)



Medical Officer of Health and Lady Assistant Medical Officer of Health.

* All these numbers are estimated from the average of the last five years.

but in others more frequent visits are necessary. Where a case seems to require help, and no doctor is in attendance, the lady helper asks the assistant medical officer of health to pay a visit. A free use is made of printed matter, and in every available way general interest is aroused in the welfare of the babies, as well as individual attention being given to each one.

The value of the inter-working of the municipal and official with the voluntary is expressed in apt, but perhaps too flattering, terms by Mrs Sidney Webb, who says, after a personal investigation of the whole scheme, "I am convinced that you have discovered the key to raising the condition of the poorer classes in this systematic and sympathetic health-visiting—voluntary effort in a setting of municipal activity."

The whole aim and object of the Huddersfield work against infantile mortality is to keep mother and child together in the home, and to give help to mother and child alike. That help should be of the very best, hence the employment of medical women; it should be given at the time most needed, that is, in the earliest days of life; it should be at hand whenever required. This the constant and regular and repeated visits of the helpers make it easy to secure.

Result of Work.

1907.

During 1907, 21,189 births occurred in the borough, and 212 infants less than 12 months old died, giving an infant mortality figure of 97.

The records of the department extend back for 31 years, and how very successful the work has been will be perceived from a reference to the accompanying diagram, which shows that present figure is the lowest on record; for the first time it has fallen below 100. The mean for the 10 preceding years, 1897 to 1906, inclusive, was 135. Thus there has been effected a reduction of 28 per cent. The mean for the 3 years, 1905 to 1907, during which the work has been in progress is 117, and for the 10 preceding this, 1895 to 1904 inclusive, was 142.

Huddersfield Infant Mortality.

	Births Registered.	Deaths Under 1 Year of Age.	Infant Mortality Figure.	
1907 - - -	2,189	212	97	Reduction 28 per cent.
Preceding 10 years, 1897-1906.	22,991	3,104	135	
The 3 years during which special work against infant mortality has been in progress, 1905-07.	6,746	792	117	Reduction 18 per cent.
Preceding 10 years, 1895-1904.	22,661	3,215	142	

Huddersfield is an industrial centre with not less than 25 per cent. of the female population at child-bearing ages working in textile factories. It is therefore the more surprising to find the infant mortality figure reduced to a rate comparable to that of the healthiest counties and rural districts.

DISCUSSION.

Miss Dora Bunting, M.B. (St Pancras Mothers' and Infants' Society) observed that they were all watching with intense interest what was being done in Huddersfield, and explained that for years there had been in St Pancras an organisation of health visitors, which had been most successful. The workers were most energetic, and directly a baby was heard of they pounced down upon it. But they felt that in parts of St Pancras this was not enough, for any number of visits from an enthusiastic health visitor would not train a woman for the skilled profession of motherhood. A certain class of mothers required line upon line, precept upon precept, and constant instruction and advice to meet each detail that arose in a baby's life. To remedy the defect, in one district they had started a school to which mothers could always go for help and advice during the first twelve months of the baby's life. Mr Broadbent thought that mothers could not leave their homes, but if they could go out marketing and washing they could leave their homes also for the school. This had been proved in St Pancras, where the school was open four afternoons a week: on two afternoons she could consult a doctor, on two afternoons she could go to classes, and on one evening a week she could go to classes under the care of the County Council teachers, while on six days a week the hungry mothers could be fed. In this way some good had been done, but in St Pancras they were also very keen about the fathers, for no amount of advice to the mother would be of the least use if the father would not hear of it. Therefore a class had been started for fathers. Having told a story of the practical utility of this course, Miss Bunting suggested that the education of the mother in many cases had to begin with the education of the father. They now after ten months had about one hundred mothers regularly attending the school, and if they did not come they were looked up. Still they only reached a certain class of mothers, and those who would not attend the school were reached by the health visitors. A healthy public opinion had been created in the district, and this had been productive of good results, but, of course, more schools for mothers were still required.

Mrs Croall (Glasgow — British Women's Temperance Association) said that after twenty-five years' visitation in the slums, she felt that they were commencing at the very foundation of the matter when they began with the training of the girls. In one house a

young mother had asked pitifully with a baby in her arms, "What am I to do with it? I am afraid of myself." That mother had voiced the experience of many mothers who were not prepared for the responsibilities they had taken upon themselves. In the past, young men and women treated marriage as a joke; but there were great difficulties in the way of educating mothers, and clearly the best hope lay with the training of the girls. In the continuation schools girls were taught domestic economy, needlework, and many things that would not be of any use to them; but if they were taught the duties of wife and mother, the time and money would be spent to far greater purpose. She hoped that health visitors would impress upon mothers the great need for teaching girls something of their future responsibilities, of which at present they were densely ignorant. In this way the visitor would be an immense power for good. She deplored the sense of prudery which often prevented mothers teaching their daughters what they should know about themselves, and felt that it was the duty of those entrusted with this work by the municipality or others to do what they could to dispel such ignorance.

Mrs Edwin Gray (York—Health and Housing Reform Association), while agreeing, as a wife and mother, most heartily with the view that many mothers had not been educated for motherhood, and that they need the best possible education for the noblest and best function of womanhood, denied that there was any widespread dislike of motherhood. They should not forget that girls and men have married up to now because the girls loved the men and the men the girls, and the same thing would always obtain. This mutual affection forbade any general dislike of motherhood. No doubt there was a diminishing birth rate; but she attributed that to the growing standard of comfort which made people afraid to have large families, and not to any dislike of motherhood as such. It had often been said that mothers did not now care to nurse their own babies. She denied that, too; and, as a keen observer of all classes of mothers, thought that doctors and nurses were a great deal to blame for many mothers not nursing their own babies, and thought they should have put before them the plain matter-of-fact view. Men should raise their standard of their ideal woman; they did not want women to be tremblers, and the idea that an intellectual woman could not be a good wife and mother must be removed. Experience showed that the best kept homes and the best reared children were those of intellectual mothers, and it was quite practicable for good motherhood to be combined with intellectuality. It was a mistake to try and stop women developing their intellectual powers; besides, it was no use. They must direct those powers in the right way. Young men before they married should ascertain whether the young women of their choice understood housekeeping and motherhood, and, if not, ask them if they would learn before they got married, instead of being proud that his future wife knew nothing about housekeeping.

Mr F. W. Verney, M.P. (Buckinghamshire), explained the move-

ment in Buckinghamshire for house-to-house health visitation in the villages by ladies most carefully trained and prepared for the work. That movement had been inspired by one whose name would be honoured at that Conference as no other name would be, *i.e.*, Miss Florence Nightingale, who year after year had taken the keenest interest in this method of training and educating the mothers in the villages. He was glad to note how much in Huddersfield they had gone on the lines laid down by Miss Nightingale some fifteen years ago. Their plan was to invite a certain number of ladies to put themselves under the medical officer of health to go through a regular course of instruction in order to gain accuracy and thoroughness in knowledge. They were fortunate in having a medical officer who threw himself enthusiastically into the work, and prepared these ladies for examination by the medical officer in a neighbouring county. Those who passed were asked to go through a probationary period of three months to see if they had the necessary tact, sympathy, and patience in order to discharge their duties thoroughly and well. In this way they got four or five excellent health visitors who went from village to village teaching the mothers those things it was so desirable they should know, gaining the confidence of the mothers in an admirable way. They had been supported by the County Council, and, up to a certain point, great success had been achieved. He mentioned the matter to the Conference in order that those interested could be encouraged to extend what had been a successful work in the towns to the country villages, for the same principles which had succeeded in one place would succeed in another.

The CHAIRMAN observed they were glad to receive encouragement from a member of the Parliamentary party who had promoted legislation in aid of the cause they had at heart.

Mrs CARL MEYER, referring to Mrs Gray's remark on the way men chose their wives, said it had struck her that they had been talking a great deal about the education of women and girls necessarily from their point of view, but they forgot that men had a great influence on the woman's point of view too. It was curious with what want of care a man chose his wife compared with the amount of trouble he took in selecting a chaffeur or a stud groom. He would not think of engaging a chaffeur who had not had some years' experience in motor-car works, and knew something about the inside of the machine he was to drive; but he never seemed to stop to inquire whether his future wife knew anything about the inside of her own machine, or the machines of the children she would probably bring into the world. In the same way people would engage a coachman or a stud groom to look after valuable horses; they would not think of employing any one unless they knew where he had been and what his experience was, and he was paid at least double as much as the person whom they engaged to look after their children. If men would only have a higher standard of what a woman should know before she married, the whole community would be influenced and

woman's standard of knowledge raised thereby. The other point she wished to make was that every individual could in a small way help to initiate this movement, the movement Colonel Verney mentioned as existing in Buckinghamshire. That movement existed in many parts of the country, but it would be very much stimulated if people generally had more faith in the effort. In the small Essex village from which she came, with 900 people and 150 children, there was nothing done in the way of visiting the cottages, and, when she proposed the appointment of a parish nurse, it was said that nobody wanted it. By perseverance, and taking the money question largely upon her own shoulders, they did at last manage to get a nurse appointed, with the result that the health of the little community had immensely improved. If those who lived in places where there was no parish nurse would endeavour to get something done in this way, they would be doing a great deal towards solving this problem of infant mortality; and not only infant mortality, but also that sickness which crept on and made children unfit to wage the battle of life. With reference to the scheme at King's College for the higher education of women, to which Miss Ravenhill had referred, she had the honour of being treasurer of that fund, and was profoundly convinced that much as they tried to educate the women of the lower classes, they would never wholly succeed until they had also educated the women above that class. She was struck with the fact that although the children of the more fortunate classes, boys and girls, after receiving from ten to fifteen years of the best education that England could give them, they were still entirely ignorant of the consequences of imprudence with regard to their own health, and lacked any feeling of responsibility in the matter. The attitude of mind adopted by many young people in regard to their health was to go to a doctor for a bottle of medicine rather than alter habits of life which were injurious to them. For instance, what a girl wanted who was played out with pleasure was something to enable her to go on leading the same senseless, unintelligent life. Until they could change this result of long years of education there would not be any improvement in the attitude of mind of the so-called lower classes. She was glad to say that money was coming in for the movement at King's College; out of £3,000 required to carry on the work for six years, some £1,200 had been collected, and, if it could be continued for that length of time, it was felt that then perhaps some enlightened Government would take over the work, realising that it was a great asset in the nation's wealth to maintain this kind of education for the mothers of the future.

Dr H. Wilson (Weybridge) explained that, as a delegate from an urban district council in Surrey to the last Conference, he had since endeavoured to improve matters in his own particular sphere to perpetuate the work of the last Conference. The people seemed most apathetic about this subject generally in the South, lacking the energy and enthusiasm which had been manifested in the North.

Indeed, at that Conference the South of England appeared to be poorly represented as compared with Yorkshire, Lancashire, and other Northern counties. Although he had spoken to the chairmen of various district councils in Surrey, none of them had responded to the call to send delegates to the Conference this year. After the last Conference he had got the rector and medical officer to call a meeting with a view of urging the Local Authorities to appoint health visitors, but it was very difficult to arouse people who were happy and comfortable themselves. They had, however, in Weybridge had some health lectures on simple subjects of ventilation, sanitation, consumption, and other subjects, and a Social Service League had been formed, and a start was at last being made in the work of instructing girls and mothers, husbands and wives, in the duties of parentage. With regard to the declining birth rate, after considerable experience and many conversations with clergymen, family practitioners, and others, he had come to the conclusion that it was absolutely wrong to take a light view of this important question. It was an evil which was increasing throughout the country, and, although part of the evil was due to crass ignorance, in many cases it was not so; and he was reminded of the Bible words, "There is a way that seems smooth and right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Councillor DARBY (Poplar Borough Council) stated that he had received a great deal of inspiration from the first Congress on Infantile Mortality and expressed regret that there were so few clergymen attending the second Congress. The English nation always seemed inclined to put the cart before the horse, and while fully discussing effects gave no time to the consideration of the causes which produced those effects. The evil of incompetent motherhood and infant mortality were produced by the social economic conditions of the people, and he hoped the Conference would in the course of its proceedings look in that direction for remedies. After nearly five years' effort, they had succeeded in Poplar in getting one woman health visitor appointed. The economic and social subserviency in which women had been placed largely contributed to the evils they were discussing. It was all very well to urge that women should attend classes, but take the condition of things in Poplar. There were in that locality twenty-six factories employing 5,641 women, of whom 769 or 13 per cent. were married. How could they expect those women after an exhausting day's toil to attend classes at night? Many of those women were only casual labourers and did not know where the money for the next meal for themselves or children was to come from. In 1906 in Poplar 822 children died under one year of age. His object in speaking was to urge upon every one to push this matter to the front and get it placed on a national basis. After all the question was a national one and there was need for organised work all over the country. In Poplar the local representatives were not afraid of being surcharged; if money was necessary to be spent, they voted it first and talked about surcharges afterwards. His ex-

perience so far was that the women would listen to a woman health visitor as to how to cleanse, feed, and clothe their children, but how could they carry out what they were told when thousands of them did not know how they were going to get their next meal. He agreed with Dr Wilson that the question of the diminishing birth rate was a serious matter and would before long have to be faced. He regretted to think there were certain trade secrets freely discussed among the women themselves which led to that diminishing birth rate, and there was a deliberate attempt on the part of certain classes to prevent what empire builders wanted—increase in the population. The question would have to be faced, because every working-class woman felt that an addition to the family meant so much added misery and suffering for the whole.

Miss YATES (Hon. Secretary of the Bread and Food Reform League) thanked Alderman Broadbent for his clear and comprehensive explanation of how he and his friends were teaching in the homes of the people how the mothers could best rear strong and healthy children. She regarded it as of immense importance that they should teach working-class mothers how to feed themselves and their children properly. If through ignorance or poverty mothers were badly fed they were unable to suckle their children, and were thus more liable to yield to the craving for drink. Bad feeding and drink were the two leading causes of infant mortality. Mothers should be taught the values of different kinds of food and the advantages of good nourishing bread, finely ground, wheatmeal bread or good standard household bread containing those qualities which used to be retained in bread thirty or forty years ago before roller milling was introduced. If this were done the mothers would be better fed and more able to bring up strong and healthy children. As a result of the last Conference, an educational health and food campaign had been started to spread information on this important subject, and she believed that a right knowledge of proper feeding would be one of the most effectual means of preventing infant mortality and so secure to the nation the greatest wealth a wise people could possess—healthy and happy children.

Miss BLANCHE GARDINER (Women Sanitary Inspectors' Association), as one experienced in health visiting, said it was not sufficiently realised how difficult it was to get the necessary information in the first place, and secondly to compile the statistics after that information had been obtained. In gathering the facts, the personal equation came into play very strongly, not only the personality of the health visitor but also of the mother. Inquiry forms, although exactly the same in each case, were filled up very differently, according to the point of view of the health visitor. Midwives, health visitors, or C.O.S. workers looked at things with different eyes ; while mothers some could give exact and definite information, others were altogether inconclusive, while with others it was felt that what they said was not true at all. As to compiling statistics it was difficult to

give definite fixed figures about certain facts when the inquiry was not for one definite period of time. For instance, there was the Home Office inquiry referred to the previous evening by Mr Herbert Samuel which is to extend over a year. It sounded very easy to say compile statistics as to the occupation of the father, the health of the mother, the number of rooms occupied, and so on ; it would be easy if there was not time for things to considerably alter, if, say, the fathers were able to keep the same occupation all the year round. On a first visit a father might be a carman, and on the next visit a painter and later on a coalporter. It was under these circumstances very difficult to accurately describe his occupation ; the same thing occurred with the health of the mother, or with the number of rooms occupied. At one time a man might be in full work and able to occupy three rooms, but later on he might be unemployed, and then the family would have to move into two rooms or even one room. It therefore seemed to her important that health visitors should be allowed to compile their own statistics, because an ordinary statistical clerk, without a knowledge of the details, could not sufficiently appreciate each case. For instance one often heard it said that in a certain district 80 per cent. of the children were breast fed, 10 per cent. hand fed, and 10 per cent. received mixed feeding. But that information was really meaningless unless there was also recorded at the same time the exact ages of the children. At a week old perhaps 99 per cent. of the babies would be breast fed, but in a few months many of them would be hand fed, so that such statistics reduced the whole matter to an absurdity. This happened all along the line of infant mortality statistics, and one was apt to draw incorrect conclusions as to overlaid babies or drunkenness, because the mere facts were stated without a sufficient number of explanatory notes by those who did the actual work of visiting.

Mrs Pine (Woolwich Board of Guardians) felt pleased with the progressive line of thought running through the papers read that morning. For too long it seemed to her they had been wasting time and money with remedies rather than dealing, as Mr Darby said, with the causes that produced the evils. One of the biggest blots on our civilisation was this infant mortality, and she was glad to think that at last some practical issue was to be put forward that could be dealt with. Her view was that the heavy infant mortality was probably due to the economic conditions of the people to-day. The fact that so many mothers had to be in the labour market must necessarily have some ill effects upon their infants. Then, too, it was time mothers put aside mock modesty and properly educated their daughters. Surely there was nothing to be ashamed of in God's wondrous handiwork. It was a marvellous lesson to teach girls and boys of the responsibilities of their future lives. Having referred to the work in regard to infant life that was being energetically carried on in Woolwich under Dr Davies, the medical officer of health, she

concluded by pointing out that home life is the foundation of our empire, and each one should do the best that was possible to raise the standard to the highest level by the education of the people.

The MAYOR OF COLNE said that as a result of the first Conference he endeavoured to persuade his health committee to appoint a health visitor, but all sorts of curious objections were raised, and on the ground of expense the matter was shelved. He was bitterly disappointed, but inspired by the example of the Mayor of Huddersfield, he had offered to pay for a health visitor for five years if the Corporation would pay 1s. for every notification of birth within forty-eight hours. That offer was accepted, and as a result the infant mortality was reduced in the first year from 175 per thousand to 167, and last year it had fallen to 120 generally and to 77 per thousand among the notified cases. He regarded this as practical proof of the utility and advantage of health nurses.

Dr CHADWICK (Lancashire County Council) referred to the industrial conditions of his county and to the mill life of Lancashire towns. He said that although there had of recent years been an improvement in regard to the hours of labour the intensity of the labour had increased, with the result that many of the girls reached home in such an exhausted condition that any other effort was impossible. In a few years they got married, bringing children into the world without the slightest idea what to do with them or how to bring them up. That was one great cause of infant mortality which obtained in many parts of Lancashire. He had come across curious instances of how these Lancashire lasses tried to feed their babies. One girl had told him she had given her child ice cream and chip potatoes, and that child was alive and flourishing to-day. Another child nine months old had been fed on black pudding and whisky, and that baby was now a fine healthy child. These facts said something for the stamina of Lancashire people. A great deal had been said that day as to the organisation which would be available in the sweet by-and-by, but he favoured something being done at once. It had struck him that in the midwives on the register of the counties —in Lancashire there were some 1,100—they had some machinery which might do something to decrease infantile mortality. A large proportion of women were attended at child-birth by the midwives and not by medical men, and more, when the children grew up the women looked to the midwife as their guide, philosopher, and friend. If the midwives could be educated and utilised as a means of taking knowledge and light to these poor women an improvement would soon be seen. Dr Sargent, the medical officer of the county, had drawn up an admirable pamphlet on infant feeding and 80,000 copies had been distributed, and he had often gone into a poor Lancashire home and seen the mother in bed with her first child carefully reading this little pamphlet, which he had no doubt had been the means of imparting useful information to these young mothers.

Mr R. A. Leach (Clerk to the Rochdale Guardians) said that as representing a Lancashire town, after hearing from the last speaker of the invincible ignorance of that county, he ought to feel ashamed of mounting the platform. But the cases quoted were very exceptional indeed, and taking Lancashire lasses and mothers as a whole, they averaged pretty well with similar classes in other counties. While listening to what had been said that morning as to the widespread ignorance of mothers he had wondered how the race had managed to survive. He agreed with Mrs Gray, that while a man loved a lass the race was not going to be wiped out. What he desired to emphasise, however, was, as Alderman Broadbent had said, the importance in appointing health visitors, who were to go out and teach young mothers how to deal with babies, they should be careful to appoint the very best and the most competent teachers. Although that was his first attendance at that Congress, he had often attended Conferences where the question of infantile mortality had been discussed, and speaking with great respect to everybody, he had always been struck by the fact that the ladies who had most to say as to how a mother should do her duty were the ladies who were not themselves mothers. In Rochdale they had two lady visitors, who were very young women indeed, and who directly a birth was notified went off to instruct the mother how she was to deal with her baby. The only knowledge of maternity these ladies possessed in regard to maternity was book knowledge. He urged that if they were to give mothers the best instruction they must have lady visitors who had a knowledge of maternity beyond book knowledge. This reminded him of a case in which one of these young ladies went to a house where the sixth baby had arrived, and said that she had come to give the mother some instruction. The mother asked her if she had had any children herself. She replied, "No." Then said the mother, "Come when thou hast."

Miss Renaud (Newcastle) spoke of the advantage obtained under the Notification of Births Act, and pointed out how it enabled them to reach the mothers who were poor and in need of sympathy. In showing them sympathy their confidence was gained, and it was found they were quite ready to receive instruction. In Newcastle a school for mothers had just been opened, and so far had proved successful. There was an average attendance of twenty-five mothers. While she agreed with Miss Ravenhill as to the great desirability of educating girls, she felt there was an equal need for educating present mothers, in order that the mothers in their turn could educate the future fathers and mothers. In Newcastle they had notification of births for eighteen months before the Act was passed, and could speak from experience of 1,400 visits of the ready way in which the instruction given was received. During a strike the mothers of Newcastle were simply starving, and the task of feeding them had been attended with most beneficial results, especially as they had been able to obtain the co-operation of a number of ladies, some of

whom were always in attendance to extend to these poor women sympathy and help. Newcastle's experience in regard to the working of the Notification of Births Act was most satisfactory.

Mrs CARL MEYER asked, in reference to Mr Leach's remarks, if women were not to take the advice of women who were not mothers, were they to take the advice of men who were under a similar disability?

The CHAIRMAN suggested that questions should be reserved for the close of the discussion.

Rev. T. WAREHAM (Rochdale Guardians) said that when he had endeavoured to tell the members of his mothers' meeting how to bring up their babies, those Lancashire women had told him to go and play at marbles. But this was not an entirely ladies' question, and he feared that among such a multitude of counsellors as they had at that Conference they might not get perfect wisdom. He thought that one of the main lines upon which improvement would be effected was by getting the young and training them in school. He agreed with former speakers that there was nothing horrid or nasty in speaking to the young about God's best gift. Children were taught in schools how plant life was perpetuated, and that course of study might be used as a means of leading on to higher things. Maternity was a great gift from God, to perpetuate men in His own likeness, and there should be no mock modesty or prudery in our schools. In these enlightened days it was erroneous to suppose that our lads and lasses knew nothing, but their course of learning should be directed into right channels, otherwise they might go to unholy sources from which to obtain the information which they ought to get from those they looked up to with respect. The primary endeavour must be to take hold of the young women. It was said that an army goes upon its stomach, so does a nation, and therefore we should teach girls how to maintain strong bodies by rational and proper food, rightly cooked. These were the things that boys and girls should be taught in school, and they should not have to learn by chance what were their duties when they grew up to be fathers and mothers. There was abroad a tremendous amount of ignorance, which produced great pain and suffering, especially by the carelessness of men who looked upon their wives very often as anything but helpmates, and sometimes as their slaves.

Councillor JOHNSON, J.P. (Stockport), thought the last speaker in closing his remarks had touched an important point. A great deal had been said about training women and girls, but little had been said about training boys. In trying to reduce infant mortality they also needed instructors for men and boys, especially the young men, who would soon be the future fathers of the nation. Men seemed often to consider their homes very little, and he hoped to see the social condition of the working people raised. Men ought to earn more money than they do in the lower walks of life, in order that they could maintain their wives at home. No man had a right to

marry a woman unless he could keep her properly at home to mother her children. His view was that many couples married to-day, and the man did not earn enough to keep the household together, so the woman went out to work as well, and this brought in its train the many evils which had been referred to in the course of the discussion, particularly in the neglect of the children who had to be put out to nurse. From this point of view the need for educating the men was very great.

Miss M. Carey (Westminster — Women Sanitary Inspectors' Association) supported what her colleague, Miss Gardiner, had said about statistics, which were often misunderstood by persons not actually engaged in public health work, more perhaps in regard to infant mortality than upon anything else. Although a sanitary inspector and not a health visitor, she had conducted for a long time inquiries into infant mortality in three different districts. It had struck her directly that statistics on this subject would be difficult to prepare, so unofficially she had devised a scheme which would be most likely to give accurate results. Dividing the classes into breast-fed, hand-fed, and mixed, she took those who died on the breast—say for a period of six months breast-fed. The hand-fed were those entirely brought up on the bottle, and included those who had perhaps been a few days on the breast (a few days' breast-feeding not materially affecting a child's health), and for the mixed feeding she took those who had been weaned under the age of six months. The figures were taken out at different times in different districts, with the result that those three classes came out equal. Last year they did not, for the reason that last summer there was very little diarrhœa, and so the mortality among the hand-fed children was less than usual. Last year the number of breast-fed babies who died was very nearly equal to the two other classes put together, after taking out the cases which had died in a few days, in which the feeding probably had very little to do with the matter. There were seventy breast-fed babies who died, against seventy-nine of the two other classes put together. Summer diarrhœa was not prevalent, but bronchitis and pneumonia were very prevalent amongst the breast-fed children. Alderman Broadbent in his admirable paper had referred to the fact that 50 per cent. of the mothers visited were not ignorant; that percentage might have been put higher, but the fact remained that among the 50 per cent. not ignorant the babies died of just the same complaints as those among the ignorant parents. Lately she had carried her inquiries further, and among the well-to-do classes. A pathetic case had come under her notice of a mother who was feeding her child, which wasted gradually away, in spite of the doctor's advice that the child should continue to be breast-fed, and the mother said, "I feel I have done something wrong, and that my milk killed the baby." There was a medical question besides a question of ignorance, and a great responsibility rested upon doctors, to whom mothers properly looked for the best advice.

Bailie KELLY (Partick, Glasgow) bore testimony to the great usefulness of the Conference, and said that owing to the first gathering Partick had appointed a health visitor, and they had been careful to select the right lady, who, they were convinced, would be welcome in the homes of the people. Her work had been most successful, and recently it had been supplemented by a society of ladies who volunteered their services. Each lady had to take charge of from one to three babies for one year. A Civic Guild of Help had also recently been launched, the burgh being divided up into six districts, with a chairman, secretary, and treasurer to each. In this way every home was to be visited, and knowledge obtained of every infant in the burgh.

Miss OCTAVIA LEWIN, M.B. (City of Westminster Health Society), said that the members of her society were convinced that infant mortality could best be combated by home visiting, and co-operating with the local hospital. A great deal could be done by rousing parents to a sense of their responsibility. Cases were thoroughly followed up, but in visiting babies it was often found that other children in the home required attention, and these were also suitably dealt with.

Bailie W. F. ANDERSON (Glasgow, joint honorary secretary of the Conference) reminded the Conference that reports of the first Conference, for which there had been a great demand, were still available. He was gratified to think that after the first Conference many of the delegates returned home with the intention of being a missionary in their own locality. Even Mr Burns had returned to the House of Commons and had done some of the things they wanted him to do. He hoped that Conference would preserve that missionary spirit. The question of infant mortality was a national one and had to be faced by all classes. In Glasgow they had five branches of women workers, in addition to the official visitors, all of whom visited the babies whose births had been notified. The presence with them that morning of the Duchess of Montrose showed how the interest of the best people was being aroused in this great national problem. As Chairman of the Glasgow Unemployed Committee, he was convinced that neglect of the infantile mortality problem was a part of the unemployed problem, which the Government and the municipalities were having forced upon their attention. Men who came before his Committee were mostly men who had survived in the struggle of infancy, but they had gone into the battle of life sadly handicapped. They were the first to lose a situation and the last to be taken on. These men had feelings like other people, they had wives and children, and they perpetuated the weaker generation—a weaker generation even than themselves. So the problem went on. The Government had, a year or two ago, appointed a Commission to inquire into physical deterioration, and went back to the school age of five years. But that inquiry must go back to motherhood, for it was at the nearest point of birth that the greatest mortality took place. They must get

notification of the babies at the earliest possible moment, and he had been almost scolded by the medical men of Glasgow because he would insist upon the Notification of Births Act being put in force. He urged delegates to get that Act adopted in their own localities as soon as possible. Don't boggle about the miserable £80 or £90 a year for a health visitor, who was paid that because she was a woman, whereas if it were a man who was appointed he would get £200. He urged the adoption of the Act because there was no time when a woman so much wanted sympathy and help as when she brought a baby into the world. He hoped the second Conference on Infantile Mortality would be as productive of as much good as the first Conference had been, and that they would receive fresh inspiration to get the question treated as a national question, as it ought to be.

Miss ALICE RAVENHILL, in replying to the discussion, said that during the two hours' debate two points had forced themselves upon her. One was the great need for education on the whole of this matter. It had been a disappointment that the point of her paper had been left on one side. There had been no discussion as to the right education of the children, or of the means which could be taken to organise that education in order to prevent the results upon which nearly all the speakers had concentrated their energies. It was hoped that the opening meeting of the Conference would be devoted to underlying causes, leaving the treatment of results later. They must educate the whole community upon the biological relations of human life. For generations man had been a pinnacle; he had been thought to be immune from laws which were recognised as governing the plant and animal world. We had altered that view. Germany was setting an example. It was now the custom in Germany to send a notification to every father, before his boy left school, that a lecture would be given on the reproduction of life and the responsibilities associated with early manhood. The parent was asked if he would consent to his son attending the lecture, and he was invited to attend himself. Why could not the same kind of thing be done in this country? She thanked the two or three speakers who had supported her in the desire to see the education of girls in this matter, not only amongst the working classes, but also amongst the intelligent women. Remarks of the most highly educated women showed the value of a trained mind and a scientific attitude towards the whole subject. But it was impossible for the human mind to have a complete grasp of all subjects, and therefore we must have specialists, and while married women were rightly engaged in the practical care of their children, it remained for the unmarried women who had the time and ability to concentrate their attention on this question. Very much had been said about training the mother, but she would also urge the necessity of properly training the nurses of the children of the well-to-do. She knew of a sad case in which the health of a child of wealthy parents had been ruined in the first three weeks of its life by being dosed with whisky by a nurse. We must get

educated, trained women to look upon the right care of children as one of the highest vocations possible, and they should encourage girls with a good education in high schools to make the care of children a vocation, and so minimise the evil that was often wrought to-day by ignorance and stupidity. But in this whole question of education they must retain their sense of proportion; in their enthusiasm and their desires to do well by the children let them not get their perspective awry. In getting men and women interested in this question, it must not be allowed to obscure all other sides of life, and so prevent every part of their beings developing rightly. Women engaged in this work must be paid adequately. Was it right that a woman undertaking a long course of training should be offered £75 a year for anxious and important work? That was the scale for work estimated, as they had heard that morning; but again, this was also a question of education.

Alderman BROADBENT observed that while his paper had necessarily been confined to palliatives, the root of the matter was in Miss Ravenhill's paper. They wanted to cut off the supply of ignorance in mothers, to make it impossible that fathers and mothers should grow up needing instruction as they needed it to-day, which instruction we were bound to supply. It would be better to follow Miss Ravenhill's paper and instruct the girls, so that they should become competent mothers. Certainly they must begin with the girls, remembering that a girl was a girl and not a boy, or inferior sort of creature. She needed a different kind of teaching, in view of her different constitution. But education was the main thing, the palliative was doing what was being done to-day in many places for the education of the mothers. Let them cut off the supply of ignorance in mothers by the training of the girls who would be the mothers of the future.

Dr SALEEBY said he had only to put one thought forward. It was a text from Ruskin—"There is no wealth but life." In trying to inspire other people he wanted them to put their claims as high as they are entitled to be placed. Ruskin says in "Time and Tide"—"There is no wealth but life; therefore there are two extremes, you may say, of work done in a State—one absolute murder, because that is the destruction of the only wealth, which is life; and at the other end of the scale is rather the highest possible function any human being can be put to—there is no wealth but life." And when the question of money, £55 a year, for a woman who is creating the only real national wealth of the future, comes up, says so. That is the case of staking gold, which is dirt, against life; and remember the words of the poet who is afraid that it may be said of England some day—"She died, her veins choked with yellow dirt." Let this antithesis be uppermost in our mind, between life on the one hand, beyond all weighing, and gold, which is just an index.

TUESDAY, 24TH MARCH.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

THE POWERS OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS IN RELATION TO CHILDREN, AND THE NEED FOR FURTHER EXTENSION.

BY MISS FRANCES ZANETTI,

Inspector under the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, for the Chorlton Union, Manchester.

INFANTILE mortality, like other social evils, is due to a complexity of causes, and in its various aspects, pathological, sociological, and ethical, demands the attention of the doctor, the statesman, and the philanthropist, combined effort being necessary to solve the problem and effect a reform.

The subject bears a close relation to the causes of pauperism, and, therefore, from an economic standpoint, merits the thoughtful attention of those who administer the Poor Laws. It is a well-known fact that one of the most serious features of our high infantile death rate is that it is due to causes which, in addition to killing a large number of children yearly, so attack and undermine the constitutions of the survivors, that we have, as a burden on the State, an ever-increasing number of persons, useless, unemployable, and altogether "unfit," yet sufficiently prolific to be not only a trouble to-day, but a source of apprehension for the future.

The habitual pauper is of this type, and his children exhibit all the stigmata of degeneracy in their stunted, undeveloped figures, carious teeth, defective sight, and deficient mental and moral stamina. From personal experience I can instance numerous cases of pauper families in which, though the elder members are apparently normal, a quick deterioration is noticeable as

the parents sink lower and lower below the poverty line, till the youngest are physical wrecks.

As dispensers of the public funds, with a duty to future as well as to present ratepayers, Boards of Guardians should be empowered to check as far as possible the multiplication of the unfit, and, as Guardians of the Poor, should have full authority to protect the children of neglectful, incapable, and degenerate persons.

The powers of Boards of Guardians with regard to children are set out in (1) the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, and (2) the Poor Law Acts of 1889 and 1899.

I will deal first with the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897.

The provisions of this Act are briefly as follows:—Every person receiving or maintaining, for hire or reward, more than one infant under five years of age, or adopting an infant under two years of age for a lump sum, paid down, and not exceeding £20, shall, within forty-eight hours, notify the fact to the local authority, giving the name and address of the person from whom the child was received. A similar notification is required in the event of a child being removed, and all cases of death must be reported to the coroner within twenty-four hours. Local authorities have power to appoint inspectors to carry out the provisions of the Act, to limit the number of infants to be nursed in a house, and to order the removal to a Workhouse of any child nursed under conditions dangerous to health.

This Act has been in force since the 1st January 1898, and though a distinct improvement on that of 1872 (which allowed persons unregistered to keep as many nurse-children as they chose, providing one only was less than twelve months old), it is inadequate, and a source of danger rather than protection to those for whom it was ostensibly framed. So far back as 1901,

an amending Bill, drafted by the Poor Law Unions Association, was introduced in the House of Commons by Mr Spear, M.P., without, however, reaching a second reading, and though reintroduced in each succeeding session, it has always met with the same fate. The suggested amendments are briefly:—To include (1) cases in which one child only is maintained for hire or reward; (2) cases in which any child is adopted for a lump sum paid down, whatever the amount; (3) to raise the age limit of children included in the provisions of the Act, from five to seven years; and (4) to enable local authorities to remove any infant nursed by an unsuitable person or kept on unsuitable premises.

The suggestion regarding the "lump-sum" cases is unanimously approved. To specify any given sum —in this case £20—as a dividing line between cases subject to inspection and others exempt therefrom is to suggest to a wary baby-farmer a means of evading the law. In my ten years' experience as an inspector I have met with nineteen "lump-sum" cases, of which, in nine only, the amount received was less than £20. In several instances large sums of money had been given to the adopters, and, as a rule, these were questionable cases. In Manchester in 1905 the death (from starvation) of an infant adopted for a sum of £7 led to the discovery of a wholesale traffic in babies by a couple, who, by a double scheme of advertising (1) for babies to be adopted with a premium, and (2) asking for persons willing to adopt babies with a premium, had secured at least eight children, with sums varying from £10 to £60, whom they had immediately handed on, with very small premiums, to persons living in various parts of the town. Other cases of this kind have come to my knowledge, and, doubtless, there are hundreds undiscovered throughout the country, because particulars of the agreement between parent and nurse are almost impossible to

obtain, and it is to the interest of both to keep the transaction as secret as possible.

The other suggestions of amendment have met with opposition, especially that referring to the "one-child" cases. Opponents of the amendment declare that notification of these cases will cause a scarcity of good homes, owing to the dislike felt by respectable people to official inspection, and also that the price demanded by the nurses will certainly rise. These facts, it is said, will cause an increase of desertion, infanticide, and even suicide, on the part of the mothers. I see no foundation for these assertions. My experience is that a really good nurse, anxious for the welfare of her charge, regards the inspection of her house as a guarantee of her own respectability and suitability, as well as the most effectual refutation of the malicious slander and gossip of neighbours. I have the assurance of a large number of women to support this statement. Even in cases where some slight hostility is shown this disappears after one or two visits, as the nurse realises that the inspector comes as a sympathetic adviser. This, of course, does not apply to wilfully indifferent guardians; a wrong-doer naturally dislikes inspection. As a rule I find that a really affectionate mother appreciates the protection of her child. Many girls have asked me to recommend homes and to visit their babies, and several cases of baby-farming have come to my knowledge through the information of women who had removed their children from undesirable homes.

The contention that, with official inspection, the price asked for the child's maintenance tends to rise, is contrary to my experience. During the four years (1898-1901 inclusive) in which I inspected for the Chorlton, Prestwich, and Manchester Unions, out of 167 "nurse-children" within the meaning of the Act 14 only were maintained for a sum exceeding 5s. weekly, whilst 23 were maintained for less than that

amount. From January 1902 to December 1907, during which time my work has been devoted exclusively to the Chorlton Union, I have a record of 14 cases in which sums exceeding 5s. weekly (viz., 5s. 6d., 6s., and 7s.) have been paid, and of 10 of less than 5s. weekly, out of a total of 307 children, whereas, during the same period, out of a total of 240 "one-child" cases, the record of charges for maintenance is—

1 case	12s. 6d. weekly.	4 cases	7s. weekly.
2 cases	10s. ,,	2 ,,	6s. 6d. ,,
3 ,,	8s. ,,	30 ,,	6s. ,,
2 ,,	7s. 6d. ,,	3 ,,	5s. 6d. ,,

and only 27 for less than 5s. weekly.

With regard to other arguments against the inspection of these cases, I have not found, as a rule, that people take children to nurse from "motives of affection and sheer love of child-life." * The women whom I visit readily admit having taken the child to augment their income, their usual expression being, "It pays the rent." Affection for a baby is shown in careful nursing rather than in a spasmodic haste to take it "from motives of affection." Where money is taken love of children cannot be considered the first motive, and sentiment alone would claim exemption from inspection for the nurse. The friend of the mother (to whom it is argued inspection is a hardship) is not always the best guardian for an illegitimate child, for obvious reasons. Some of these cases have been among the worst in my experience, the child being taken on the ground that one more or less in the house does not matter. The money paid is not sufficient for the child's maintenance; consequently it does not get sufficient milk, but is fed on unsuitable food, sleeps in an overcrowded room at night, and is neglected by day, whilst

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* See Circular issued in 1901 by the London Diocesan Council for Rescue and Preventive Work.

its nurse is occupied with more remunerative work. The following is a typical case of this kind :—

I attended a coroner's inquest on a case of a child, aged five months, whom I had visited a short time before, and found so neglected that I reported the case to the N.S.P.C.C. The cause of death was marasmus. From the evidence at the inquest it transpired that the old woman who nursed the child, and found everything for it out of 3s. per week, eked out her income by taking a lodger and going out cleaning. When she went out to work she had to take the baby with her, though it had very little clothing and was wasting away. This woman when asked by the coroner how she expected to keep a child on 3s. a week, said that she took him "out of pity for his mother in her trouble." This child when it died, aged five months, weighed only 6¼ lbs., though originally strong and healthy.

The opposition to the inspection of the "one-child" cases, strange to say, comes from a few societies devoted to rescue work and the protection of children. These societies exercise great care in choosing homes for their *protegés*, and the utmost vigilance in visiting the babies placed therein ; the success of their work is the result of these precautions. Probably babies supervised by them need no State protection, yet cases of cruelty and neglect have even been known to occur in homes chosen by noted philanthropic societies. This I consider additional proof of the necessity of adequate inspection for the thousands of "unwanted" children at nurse throughout the country, in whom no society is interested and for whom no one cares.

The strongest argument in favour of the registration and inspection of "one-child" cases is, that in this class are comprised by far the greatest number of nurse-children. In Manchester, during the four years (1898-1901 inclusive) in which I devoted the whole of my time to carrying out the provisions of the Act, I

inspected 809 children, of whom 167 only were "nurse-children" within the meaning of the Act. The percentage of cases to which the Act did not apply was therefore 79.3. It must be remembered that though probably the majority of the cases within the Act are notified, a large number of the "one-child" cases do not come to light. No doubt, if legally notifiable, the percentage of these cases would be found to be very much higher. For example, the number of "one-child" cases discovered or notified in 1898 in Manchester was 231, whereas in 1906 only 25 of these cases were reported in the Chorlton Union. It cannot be supposed that in a Union with an estimated population of nearly 400,000 there were only 25 "one-child" cases. The great decrease in the number discovered was due to the fact that whereas in 1898 I made a "house-to-house" visitation for the purpose of finding, as far as possible, the exact number of children, in 1906 I visited only such cases as were notified by the nurses themselves.

The amending Bill has been the subject of discussion at several Poor Law Conferences, at the International Conference for the Welfare and Protection of Children (1902), and at the National Conference on Infantile Mortality, of 1906, and on each occasion the recommendation of the inclusion of the "one-child" cases has been carried. Deputations have waited upon the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary, and the result has been that the amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, forms Part I. of the Children's Bill introduced in the House of Commons last month by Mr Herbert Samuel, M.P.

It is now proposed to bring under inspection all "lump-sum" cases, no matter of what amount; to impose penalties for neglect to notify such cases; to give the Local Authorities increased powers of removal of children from unsuitable nurses or premises; to increase the amount of the fines for offences, and also to increase the alternative sentences of imprisonment.

The inclusion of the "one-child" cases and the question of raising the age limit have, for the present, been left an open question, both having been referred for consideration to a Select Committee of the House of Commons, which is now engaged in inquiring into the merits of the case.

The Poor Law Acts of 1889-1899.

Under the provisions of these Acts Guardians of a Poor Law Union have power to adopt—

1. A child deserted by its parent.

2. A child whose parent, by reason of mental deficiency or of vicious habits or mode of life, is, in the opinion of the Guardians, unfit to have the control of it.

3. A child whose parent is unable to perform his or her parental duties by reason of being under sentence of penal servitude or of being detained under the Inebriates Act, 1898.

4. A child whose parent has been sentenced to imprisonment in respect of any offence against any of his or her children.

5. A child whose parent is permanently bedridden or disabled, and is the inmate of a Workhouse, and consents to the adoption of the child.

6. A child whose parents, or, in the case of an illegitimate child, the mother of the child, are or is dead.

"The Guardians may at any time resolve that until the child reaches the age of eighteen years all the rights and powers of such parent as aforesaid, or, if both parents are dead, of the parents, in respect of the child shall, subject as in this Act mentioned, vest in the Guardians, and thereupon those rights and powers shall so vest accordingly, and shall continue so vested whether the child does or does not continue to be maintained by the Guardians."

Guardians are empowered to compel parents to

contribute to the maintenance of children so adopted, and their resolution of adoption may at any time be rescinded by themselves or by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction.

The provisions of these Acts might with advantage be extended so as to empower Guardians to detain, under a magistrates' order, parents of children so adopted, especially when such parents are incorrigibly vicious or feeble-minded, since it is futile to relieve them of parental responsibility whilst allowing them liberty to impose further burdens on the State.

The detention for a time of unmarried mothers of infants born in Workhouses would probably have some effect in reducing the high rate of mortality amongst illegitimate children, by ensuring maternal care for the babies during their first months of life, and would often save a woman from a possible second fall, since this is frequently the result of physical weakness and poverty. Such detention need not necessarily be in a Workhouse, but preferably in institutions where mother and child can be received together. The question is a difficult one, and perhaps better suited at present to private philanthropy. There can, however, be no doubt that Guardians should have powers of detention over the typical feeble-minded women, who, time after time, enter the Workhouse to give birth to illegitimate children. An inquiry made some years ago by the M.A.B.Y.S. as to the cases that had passed through the maternity wards of one hundred and five Union hospitals showed that upwards of seven hundred of these unfortunate girls were feeble-minded and that many of them had passed through the wards before. Such women are a danger to the community; their children swell the death-rate, for frequently the elder ones are dead when the mother returns to the Workhouse, and when they do survive, it is in a condition of advanced degeneracy, with an ultimate certainty of becoming chargeable to the rates. There appears to

be a close connection between feeble-mindedness and a high infantile mortality. I know of many families in which the feeble-minded child is the sole survivor, and statistics collected by Miss Dendy show many cases in which many or all the brothers and sisters of a feeble-minded child have died in infancy.*

The feeble-minded are usually prolific. A case has been known in which there were no less than forty descendants of a feeble-minded couple in one Workhouse. All were feeble-minded and two-thirds were illegitimate.

Mr Amos Butler, Secretary of the Board of State Charities, Indiana, asserts: "Many of these women are the mothers of from three to six feeble-minded children. Five women of this class, not specially selected, are known to be the mothers of nineteen children."

Why should we allow children of this type to be born only to die in infancy or to grow up morally and physically degenerate?

Having regard to the relationship between feeble-mindedness, illegitimacy, and a high infantile death rate, I am strongly of opinion that the detention of persons unfit for parentage, together with a more energetic supervision over all children placed out to nurse, are not only desirable but absolutely necessary to effectively combat the growth of the unfit and the present deplorable loss of infant life.

DISCUSSION.

Mr R. A. Leach (Rochdale) said he desired to look at the paper from the Poor Law side, being a Clerk to a Board of Guardians. He was sorry to disagree with Miss Zanetti, but if she would look into the Act of 1899 she would find Guardians had

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* A typical case of a degenerate family:—"One child is maintained in a Home for the feeble-minded; four brothers and three sisters died at birth; three brothers were burnt to death in infancy; one sister is a dwarf."

greater powers as regards children of vicious parents and the feeble-minded, whose mode of life was vicious, than had been suggested. The paper itself showed this by a quotation from the Act. In view of the resolution of the first Conference on this subject he might be as a voice crying in the wilderness, but his Board—and it was not alone—was against the extension of the Act to bring in one-child cases. He quite agreed that if a child is taken absolutely for hire or reward, probably the amount of the reward was of more moment to the foster-parent than the child's life. Where they got a person taking two children for hire or reward, undoubtedly there was evidence in that fact alone that it was a business transaction. But there was a large number of one-child cases where it was not altogether a matter of reward, and if the Act were extended there were a large number of children now in suitable homes, specially illegitimate children, who would have to be kept in the Workhouse. Coming from an industrial county, he asserted that a large number of these children, now well placed with friends of the mothers, who had some return though not an adequate one—friendship brought the difference—if those persons were placed under inspection, they would not have the children, who would have to go into the Workhouse. Another thing was this. The present Act applied to two children who might be taken for as short a period as forty-eight hours; if they brought in the one-child cases they were going to bring under inspection all persons who might through friendship, and owing to the temporary circumstances of the parent, take a child for forty-eight hours. That would be a great mistake. The great remedy was to pass an Act of Parliament to prevent mothers from working, and though it might be revolutionary, they would not get a proper state of things until they had legislation prohibiting married women with children working in mills or outside their own homes. In Lancashire there were a number of one-child cases taken by relatives, and if it was a grandparent it was all right, although the grandparent might get a reward. In Lancashire, too, there were many cases of a child being put with a friend from Monday morning till Saturday night, and the extension of the Act would bring all those persons under inspection. He submitted that if for temporary reasons a child was boarded out at short intervals it ought not to come under inspection. If the Act were extended, parents, especially mothers of illegitimate children, would not be able to place their children as they do now. The paper was based on the assumption that there was cruelty, but from the reports of the N.S.P.C.C. they knew that some of the worst cases of cruelty were those in which the children were never away from their parents, and also that the worst of the cases were not always to be found among the lower classes.

Miss Brodie Hall (Eastbourne Board of Guardians) said that after speaking for seven years on the need for including the one-child cases, she had not a single new argument left. She had

heard Mr Leach before make remarks similar to those he had just given to the Conference, but she could not agree with him. She desired to express her warmest thanks to Miss Zanetti for the paper she had read. It seemed to her to be superfluous to speak to an educated assembly like that in favour of extending protection to one-child cases that was already by law given to two. It was one of the most idiotic arrangements she could imagine that one child is not worth protection and that two are. How the framers of the 1897 Act could have so lost their senses she had always failed to understand. A superior opinion to her own was that of the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, who had recently died, and certainly whatever else he did, he always had the interest of children at heart. She had never forgotten three lines of his evidence given before the Committee in 1896 which settled the 1897 Act. He was pointing out what she had personally found to be the case over and over again, that there is a certain immoral tendency in women of the uneducated and working classes, and he said to the Lords, "It is considered by these working classes that a law which will protect two children in a house and will not protect a single child in a house is a law which it is not worth while for the authorities to enforce." She considered that was a most important argument in favour of making a perfectly equitable inspection of every child placed out for hire. It had a very bad moral effect upon the working classes to think that two are protected, but that they can do whatever they like with one. Having quoted a case which showed that a case of cruelty to a single child had gone unreported because as the inspector visited another house close by where there were two children it was thought that the inspector would, as a matter of course, find out the single-child case too, Miss Brodie Hall pointed out that evidence was ample to show how unfairly the present Act worked, and that in many cases single cases, partly through ignorance and partly through intention, were being slowly done to death. In cases where the parents had gone away the foster-parents brought the children to the Workhouse where they invariably succumbed sooner or later, being unable to survive the treatment of the first year or eighteen months of their lives. Mr Leach had suggested there was a popular feeling that the Act, if extended, would do an injustice to people who take children for a little while during the absence of a parent on a holiday or during illness. In all her experience she had never come across a case of that kind, so presumably they were rare compared with the majority of cases. But the principle all through our system of government was that the minority suffered for the good of the majority, and are content to do it. She argued that the hardship which might be suffered by those few people who take a child for a week and so on must not be considered as against thousands of children who are utterly neglected or cruelly treated. As she had said in her evidence before the House of Commons' Committee then considering the extension of the Act, they had not only to consider

the children who were literally murdered—they hoped they were very few compared with the total number—but they had to consider what was infinitely more important, the hundreds of children being brought up in conditions of ill nourishment, insanitary surroundings, and ill treatment, often through ignorance, as would cause them in the future to become a burden on the State, instead of being self-supporting citizens of the empire. That was her chief objection to the exclusion of the one-child cases. As Miss Zanetti said, many of these children were being brought up as wretched little specimens of humanity who would never be able in the future to support themselves, but they would come on the rates and be a great expense to the community—a great deal more expense than the few children who might be put on the rates at the present moment. Dealing with the contention of various rescue societies that now a home could be got for one-child cases at 2s. 6d. a week, and that if they were put under inspection it would raise the price, Miss Brodie Hall emphatically contended that inspection would never raise the price. Under the Boarding-Out Order the inspection was extremely rigorous, and a high standard of comfort was required in the cottage, yet not once during the twenty-three years' inspection under that Act had one penny been added to the expense of the foster homes. But she did wish to point out, and had admitted so to the Chairman of the Select Committee, if they meant that the 2s. 6d. homes, being wholly inadequate, insanitary, poor, and undesirable, would not be accepted by the Local Authority as suitable, she agreed; but were they justified because a few rescue societies wanted to get cheap homes for their very carefully-inspected children—the societies inspected them very well for themselves—were they to let all the rest of the children outside London be ill-treated, insufficiently fed, and so on? That was a most unfair thing to ask. In conclusion, she said that those interested in the extension of the Act owed a deep debt of gratitude to the Bishop of Stepney, who was Chairman of the London Diocesan Rescue Society, which had been the most persistent opponent of the extension of the Act. His lordship was very careful, and would not at first commit himself to the amendment of the law, but after personally examining the question, he had come to the conclusion that it was desirable the law should be altered. He had put it to his Council last January, and with only four dissentients out of that large Diocesan Association it had been agreed that they should withdraw their opposition to the amendment of the Act. They owed the Bishop a great deal of gratitude for his action and for all he had done to help them, and she hoped the result would be the attainment of the desired end.

Mrs Greenwood (Finsbury—Women Sanitary Inspectors' Association), referring to the one-child cases, said that her experience gained through visiting was that there was a necessity for their inspection. In one case a woman had two children die under her charge, but the case

could not be reported because one of the children was a relative. It did not come under the Act, but it was a flagrant case of neglect. She wished to support what Miss Zanetti had said with regard to allowing mothers to suckle their children, especially the illegitimate ones, for six months at least. It was a sad thing to see these poor mothers go out at the end of fourteen days physically weak, unable to work, and yet obliged to put their children out. But there was another class which needed help too, viz., the children of widows, respectable women, who through no fault of their own were placed in a dependent position. She had come across many such cases in which the woman had lost her husband, sometimes even before the baby was born and sometimes afterwards. But whatever their position might be the Board of Guardians took no notice of the needs of the infant, and the woman had to leave her child and go out to work. If she only had one child she got no outdoor relief at all; if there were several children, the elder ones were put into an expensive Poor Law institution at a cost to the ratepayers of from 15s. to 21s. a week, and the mother was then obliged to put the baby out to nurse, while she could go out to work to maintain herself, and, as the Clerk to the Guardians had told her, the only alternative was for the Guardians to warehouse the woman's furniture, and for the mother to go into the Workhouse for a period during which she could suckle her child. That was a repugnant course to any respectable woman, and as Miss Zanetti had read her paper it had struck her that there ought to be some other institution besides the Workhouse where dependent mothers, brought into that position through no fault of their own, could go in order to give the child a fair start in life. There were a number of widows deprived of the support of their husbands by various causes, and provision of some kind ought to be made for them.

Dr S. G. H. Moore (medical officer of health, Huddersfield, joint hon. treasurer of the Conference) associated himself entirely with the tenor of Miss Zanetti's paper. It hardly seemed to him that there was any necessity to support her contentions, but after the remarks of Mr Leach, it was desirable to point out that the Conference was concerned with the unfortunate infants and not with anything else. Mr Leach had said that if the one-child cases were placed under inspection the children would be forced into the Workhouse. Nobody wished that to happen, of course, but if that was the alternative to the destruction of the child then there was no objection to it whatever. The Guardians were not Guardians of the rates, but of the poor, including those poor illegitimate infants. Mr Leach's arguments, however, did not in any way minimise the importance of the subject dealt with by Miss Zanetti. There was perhaps a tendency to attach an undue importance to the question of illegitimate children. Of course, intrinsically it was an important subject —the peculiarity of the circumstances connected with such class accounted for the tendency to give it greater importance—but after all it

was only a part of the whole subject of infant mortality. It was true that the deaths among the illegitimates was deplorably high, but when one approached the question from the Poor Law and practical point of view, when it was remembered that the illegitimates constituted 4 per cent. of the total births or even less, when one got the true perspective, one realised that the infant mortality of the illegitimates was after all a secondary matter. But the whole question of what is to be done with illegitimate infants, those lacking a mother's care, the children of widows and of fathers who have become permanently insane, the problem did not seem to be capable of solution, or at any rate ready solution. After consideration of the question in all its bearings, and in light of his experience, he had been driven to the conclusion that there was only one proper way out of the difficulty, viz., they must adopt the French system, and recognise that every infant had a right to a fair chance of attaining a reasonable, healthy, well-equipped maturity at the hands of the State. Therefore it was necessary that the problem should receive the attention it was beginning to receive at the hands of the Legislature. It would then be recognised that there must be instituted a Department of the State which would, without absolutely any question in any shape or form, receive any child that has come into the hands of the State. These helpless infants were not worthless or negligible; each one should be given a fair chance of becoming effective and efficient as a valuable asset to the community.

Dr STANLEY B. ATKINSON, M.A. (Mile End Board of Guardians), observed that in Miss Zanetti's paper, excellent as it was, there were several unavoidable omissions. Particularly one side of the work of Poor Law Guardians had not been referred to, viz., the fact that Guardians can and in many cases do subscribe to charities out of the rates, charities which are assisting in the prevention of cruelty to children. The only voluntary society mentioned in an Act of Parliament, or one of very few such societies, was the N.S.P.C.C., which was brought into the Act of 1904. That society was mentioned specifically almost as an official body, in that their inspectors might be employed by Boards of Guardians in order to make investigations and act as witnesses. As a new Guardian in Mile End, he would like to know from any Guardian present whether there had been any case in which the power under that Act had been utilised. Personally he knew of no case in which this power on the part of Guardians had been put into operation for the protection of children. In Mile End recently a marriage took place very privately between a lady who had had nine illegitimate children and the man who was father of three of them. The woman was mentally defective, the man was mentally defective. His point was that in cases like that power should be given to some authority, a coroner's jury or some other body of sensible men, to say that a surgical operation should take place.

Mr F. G. MACKERETH said that on hearing Mr Leach's remarks

he had sent out for a paper called *Dalton's Advertiser*, in which a portion of the advertising space was given up for persons prepared to supply rooms for accouchements, and for persons desirous of getting rid of or taking nurse children. In the current issue were ten advertisements in respect of accouchements, and seventeen of homes for children. Having read a number of striking advertisements for taking nurse children, he contended that these showed emphatically the great need for inspection, and said that the opposition to the inspection of one-child cases came from people who took the greatest pains themselves to inspect the children they placed out. It was therefore not so much a question of opposition to inspection, as opposition to official inspection, and he suggested that it might be possible to arrange for the inspector to be licensed from the Home or institution who were supposed to have charge of the child, and report need not necessarily be made to the official inspector.

Mrs Meyrick Wood (Hammersmith Board of Guardians) expressed her gratitude to Miss Zanetti for her practical, sympathetic, and exhaustive paper. Those Guardians who were present could not possibly consider that the question of illegitimate children had loomed too large in the discussion. Could that question ever loom too large before them? In fact, the treatment of illegitimate children must always be before Guardians; it had them by the throat. A great deal was done by voluntary agencies to help young mothers, to find them places, and to put them on their feet again; but, unfortunately, so often the babies suffered. They felt that the Workhouse was not the place for a young girl of respectable parents, and, while they were anxious to move her straight from the infirmary to a Home or situation, very often the girl would not hear of a Home, and, moreover, the funds at the disposal of the ladies interested in the case would not always meet the expense of a Home. So a situation was found, the baby weaned when a month old, and a foster-mother engaged. This was a common story, repeated again and again with variations. The child separated from the mother dwindles and pines; the strong babies live, the weak ones die. But the point was that experience shows a weak and ailing baby might with care grow up to be a strong and healthy man or woman, so that facile acceptance of this mortality should be combated. Some Unions got round this difficulty wonderfully, and where there are kindly women of the leisured class much could be done, but in many places no such help was forthcoming. Then cases had to be dealt with quickly in one way or another, and they were not always dealt with wisely. In these days every one was in favour of classification, and she would like to see a suitable Home attached to every Workhouse, or to a group of Workhouses. It should be away from the Workhouse, and situated preferably in the country, and be under the strict supervision of a committee of ladies. Laundry or other work might enable it to become self-supporting. The inmates should be under instruction; but it should be a Home, and not too institutional. Guardians should have power of detention in

certain cases, not as a punitive, but as a preventive and protective measure. Second and third cases would have to be dealt with differently, perhaps in the Workhouse itself; but power of detention was the first step, and the future of these girls and their babies should be regarded as coming within the province of the Guardians. At present their stupid method was not to recognise the difficulty, and to leave the girls, even the helpable ones, to spurts of effort, often experimental effort, sacrificing the children too often. She felt that undoubtedly a splendid work was being done by some voluntary agencies, but it was not always consecutive or consistent, nor carried far enough. The public were being roused on the question of the feeble-minded. Undoubtedly many of these young mothers were mentally deficient; but many were not, and there was a great deal to be said in favour of the detention of most of the unmarried mothers, and certainly protection for all infants.

Dr H. SCURFIELD (Medical Officer of Health, Sheffield) having heartily thanked Miss Zanetti for her paper, said he had not the same horror of children coming into the hands of the Poor Law authorities as Mr Leach appeared to have, because—at any rate, in the North—Boards of Guardians had village or Scattered Homes in which children could be well brought up. He did not think there could be a better system. The statistics supplied by Sir William Chance, and quoted by Dr Macnamara, showed it was not the children brought up under the Poor Law who peopled the Workhouses when they grew up. It was one of the most satisfactory things that Guardians were able to bring up children to become self-respecting citizens who did not return to the Workhouse in after-life. Seeing this was the case, he would like to urge Boards of Guardians to exercise more freely the powers they possessed for adopting children until the age of eighteen. This was especially necessary in the big towns, where a large proportion of the population lived outside public opinion, and where children were often brought up under awful conditions. When the Guardians did that, the ratepayers would waken to the necessity of doing something with the parents. He could not understand how any one could help agreeing with Miss Zanetti as to the need of inspection of the one-child cases. At the deputation which waited on the Home Office recently there was one clergyman and one lady Guardian who used the same arguments as those of Mr Leach, and suggested that it was really the parents who were guilty of the worst cases of cruelty. If that were true, then logically they ought to advocate the abolition of family life and the establishment of platonic nurseries, removing babies from their mothers directly after birth, and then at feeding time let the mothers higgledy-piggledy into the nursery. He thought, however, that the major opinion would be that the mother was the right person to look after her infant, and it could hardly be seriously suggested that a foster-parent was less likely to be cruel than a mother. He therefore hoped that the Conference would speak out with no uncertain voice as to the protection of this

class of singly farmed-out child. He was entirely in agreement with Mrs Greenwood as to the need for more adequate relief for widows with young children. However much they might believe in or differ with regard to the endowment of motherhood, they would agree with the payment of widows with young children in order that they might be properly reared. For a woman to have to go out at the time she was suckling her child was a monstrous injustice, and showed that they had got to go a long way before they appreciated the duties which motherhood performed for the State.

Miss SMITH (London County Council inspector under the Infant Life Protection Act), dealing with the official inspection, said that during the fourteen years she had been an inspector under the Act, her death rate had always been rather less than that of the Registrar-General for all classes of infants at the same age. She thought it would be recognised that the class of children coming under their notice was handicapped as no other children were. They were necessarily hand-fed, and were born less robust than ordinary infants. She was sorry to say that a great many of them were not wanted. It was no uncommon thing for her to be told that the parents had hinted, or even directly asked, the foster-mother not to try and keep the baby alive. In face of that they had a lower death rate than the general rate; but it could not be regarded as on all fours, because the children did not come under the inspectors until they were at least a fortnight old. As to the objection to official inspection, and that respectable people would not take the children if they were to be subject to inspection, she could only say that during her fourteen years' experience she had not found that to be the case. Objection to inspection arose from two causes. First, ignorance on the part of the person to be inspected as to what inspection involves. That objection was soon got rid of; or, as Miss Zanetti said, one or two visits removed it entirely. She had, for instance, been asked if inspection meant visits from the police or a midnight visit. There was, secondly, a class of nurse-mothers who did strongly object to inspection, and those were the class whom it certainly was not desirable to keep as nurse-mothers. Women had to be told to keep their children cleaner, the house cleaner, and that they were otherwise unsatisfactory. In her opinion the difficulty of getting respectable nurse-mothers had nothing to do with inspection, but rather with the uncertainty of the payments for the children. Scarcely a day passed but she came across a case of the mother disappearing. Very few women took in a nurse-child for any other cause than to supplement their income, but she had a dozen cases on her books in which after a woman had got fond of a child she would not part with it at all. She was not there to suggest remedies for this difficult problem. Perhaps her views might be considered too revolutionary; but, if there could be obtained security for payment, there would be no dearth of respectable nurse-mothers, whether inspected or not.

Alderman SOLOMON (Swansea), having referred to the fact that

the voice of gallant little Wales had not been heard on the platform, said that if the forecasts of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws were approximately correct, the work of Guardians would soon be transferred to the local councils, and the representatives of those local councils would be better qualified to discharge their new duties by the discussions which had taken place at that Conference. Criticising Miss Zanetti's excellent paper for what it did not contain, he said that he would have liked to see some reference to the powers of Boards of Guardians in dealing with the relief cases mentioned by Mrs Greenwood. Up till recently Guardians could insist upon widows maintaining one child and had given them the princely sum of 1s. 6d. a week to maintain each of the other children. Swansea had increased that amount to 2s. and an adjacent Board had given 2s. 6d. If magistrates made orders for 3s. 6d. and 5s. for a child, it was absurd to expect mothers of legitimate children to maintain them on 1s. 6d. He would like to see Guardians go even further. The question was largely wrapped up in another social question, that of housing, and in many places housing conditions were a disgrace to this Christian country. In reply to Dr Atkinson, he mentioned that his Board gave £5 a year to the N.S.P.C.C., and £75 to the Jubilee Institution of District Nurses, and that was one of the best investments Guardians could make. He advocated the detention of tramps' children and the cost of their maintenance made a national charge. The present difficulty was that if detained the children would have to be maintained by the local ratepayer, whereas they were really a concern of the nation at large. If these children were dealt with a great deal would be done to stop the future supply of the vagrant class.

Miss Pye (Ranyard Nurses), supporting Mrs Greenwood's views, said all would agree that the place for children to be brought up in was the home, and that the mother was the person to bring up the children. Under existing conditions it was almost impossible for a widow to bring up her children properly. She had either to spoil her home by going out to work or else enter the Workhouse. As a nurse she could testify to the enormous number of children whose lives were being ruined in this way.

Mr W. M'Crindle (Secretary of the Scottish National S.P.C.C.) said that those in Glasgow interested in this great question were entirely at one with Miss Zanetti's views as expressed in the paper. They went straight for the inspection of one-child cases, and they had no doubt as to the urgent need for the registration of the one-child home. They had given evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in this direction, and they believed that the amendment of the law was likely to be effected. In Glasgow the Local Authorities worked in harmony with the Society, and nearly every week brought cases to their notice. The Society stepped in for the protection of the children where the Local Authority did not or could not act under statute. They had gone even further and

pressed the Select Committee to give further powers for removing children from the homes of immoral or drunken parents, for a great many parents were utterly incapable of bringing up their children properly. It was a disgrace to the nation and an injury to the children that they should be allowed to be brought up in some of the homes that existed to-day. So far as the North was concerned they would support any movement for further legislation to deal with the evils of child life to-day.

Rev. P. S. G. PROPERT, M.A. (Fulham Board of Guardians), as the clergyman referred to by Dr Scurfield who went to the Home Office against the extension of the 1897 Act, said in these matters they ought to be guided by evidence rather than by opinion. He always felt that we seldom learnt from history. The evidence before the Lords' Committee in 1896 was most conclusive, and he would like to know how many of the delegates had studied that evidence. An important official, the administrator of the Act working under the L.C.C., gave evidence dead against the extension. From what he had heard at that Conference he could have imagined that he was in an advanced Socialistic meeting. He gathered the State was to do everything in the direction of infant mortality. The mother and widow were to be endowed ; the mother was to be paid for her natural work. He contended that children were a natural burden, and the more the State interfered with natural laws the more artificial would civilisation become, and the more dangerous would be its tendency. He came from a populous Metropolitan Union where, in consequence of the policy they had adopted, they had been able to reduce the statistics, but endowment seemed to be the favourite principle of the Conference. Personally he was more familiar with disendowment. He thought that people ought to be helped to maintain themselves, and to-day woman's work was in great demand.

Dr SCURFIELD and Mr LEACH having raised points of order,

Rev. P. S. G. PROPERT said that he would be prepared to move a resolution on the subject. His points were that the proposed extension of the Act was opposed to the evidence laid before the Houses of Parliament in 1896, it would interfere with individual liberty and personal responsibility, and it would increase the aggregation of infants in baby farms. After twenty years' experience he believed it would lead to the loss of the best kind of homes, and lastly would increase the cost of maintenance and throw unnecessary burdens upon the parents or on the State and be likely to lead to greater evils than those which exist at present.

Miss ZANETTI, replying to the debate, dealt with the objections to the inclusion of one-child cases. Mr Leach had referred to cruelty, but she had said little about that in her paper. When the 1897 Act was in the making it was stated that it was not aimed at the cruelty of baby farmers, but against the thousands of ignorant girls and women who by their carelessness and ignorance were causing unnecessary suffering to thousands of infants and children

throughout the country. She did not find that ignorance had decreased appreciably. Only the constant visiting and advice of a competent person would bring about a reduction in the improper treatment of babies through ignorance. She had too much faith in womanhood to think that the majority of women ill-treated their nurse-children, and she did not therefore base her wish to extend the Act on cruelty. But if she had wanted to excite interest by startling headlines she could have given many instances of the kind resulting from advertisements such as Mr Mackereth had read. As to Mr Propert's suggestion on the aggregation of children in Homes, Local Authorities had power to say how many children might be received in each Home, and under that condition there could not be aggregation unless the Local Authority failed to exercise proper supervision. Her paper proved that official inspection did not increase the price for maintenance. Very few cases within the Act received more than 5s., but in the cases outside she could not say why the large amounts had been received. With reference to the compromise suggested by the Poor Law Unions Association, it was one she had mentioned to the Bishop of Stepney two years ago when he was then undecided on the matter. The Bishop had now withdrawn his opposition to the extension, and she thought what had impressed him was the suggestion that Rescue Societies should be allowed to inspect their own cases if the Local Authority thought fit. She had the greatest admiration for voluntary work and would be sorry to interfere with it, but voluntary workers often dealt in generalities and were often out of town when infant mortality was highest, but the paid inspector always had to be at her post, and voluntary societies often had paid officials too. Those opposing the extension possibly confused the two things. Official inspection was not necessarily officious. She was pleased to hear what Miss Smith had said from her fourteen years' experience. Personally she was more than welcome in the houses, and her difficulty often was to get away. She sometimes wished that all mothers had the same love for their children that foster-mothers often had. Mr Propert referred to the evidence given in 1896, and while she was not at liberty to mention names, she knew that some of those connected with the matter had changed their opinions entirely. Besides, what might be right in 1896 was not necessarily right to-day. The women themselves were the people who ought to know, and she had talked to many of them individually with a view of finding out what they thought. It depended how the question was asked. If one said, "You don't want the Act amended?" they would say, "No," but if one asked, "Would you like the Act amended?" they say, "Yes." If they were bluntly asked if they objected to inspection, the women would say, "Yes," but if the inspector said, "You don't mind me coming to see the baby sometimes?" they reply, "Oh, no, certainly not, come whenever you like; I am not afraid of any one seeing the child."

Bailie ANDERSON, in order to focus the views of the Conference, moved the following resolution: "That this Conference welcomes most gladly the Children's Bill introduced by Mr Herbert Samuel in the House of Commons for the amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, and recommends the Executive Committee to specially ask that it be so amended to include the cases in which one child only is put out to nurse." He said the Bill was to be brought forward for second reading that afternoon, and such a resolution would strengthen Mr Herbert Samuel's hands. As introduced the Bill excluded the one-child cases, and as it had been largely introduced as a result of their first Conference, and a resolution was passed on the subject by that Conference, it was appropriate, especially at that juncture, that the second Conference should follow the matter up. Mr Anderson added that he was not a so-called Socialist, so that Mr Propert need not have any apprehensions on that score. He had been connected with the Church for eighteen years, and regretted that in this social work the Church had not taken its proper place. He had had to go outside the Church into the world in order to try and get the problem solved. What he could not get over was that in Glasgow the legitimate death rate was 137 and the illegitimate death rate in the same ward was 297—the death rate of illegitimates being double that of the legitimate children, and when born the illegitimate was not less healthy than the legitimate, and when brought into the Workhouse their mortality was not so high. He urged that the time had come to end this scandal which was rife throughout the land from Aberdeen to Plymouth.

Alderman BROADBENT formally seconded the resolution.

Rev. P. S. G. PROPERT moved as an amendment—"That all words after the word 'That' be deleted, and the following words be inserted, 'While this Conference deplores the existence of many instances of cruelty towards children received into homes for weekly payments, it is not prepared to support the further extension of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, on the following grounds—(1) It will interfere with individual liberty and personal responsibility; (2) it will increase the aggregation of infants in baby farms; (3) it will lead to the loss of the best kind of home; and (4) it will increase the cost of maintenance and throw an unnecessary burden either upon the parents or upon the State, and be likely to lead to greater evils than those which at present exist.'" He explained that he did not move the amendment for the purpose of obstruction, but the mover of the resolution said he drafted it to focus the opinion of the Conference. But "so many men, so many opinions," and he did not think the Conference was all of one mind in regard to the proposed extension of the Act. He wanted to focus the opinion of that portion of the Conference. As to the enormous difference in the deaths between legitimate and illegitimate infants mentioned by Mr Anderson, it had been said that figures could prove anything. He had in his hand official figures of the Registrar-General

for eighteen typical counties in England, showing the number of illegitimate births to each 1,000 births for a period of ten years, also the deaths of all children under one year to each 1,000 births in the same period. In those counties where illegitimacy was most rife, there the death rate was least. Take Hereford, from 1893 to 1902 there were seventy illegitimate births to each 1,000, and the deaths of children under one year to the 1,000 births was 109. That was a rural county, but taking Shropshire, Cumberland, Norfolk, North Wales, Westmorland, and the North Riding, the table showed that the infant mortality was heaviest where illegitimacy was least prevalent, and in Warwick, Durham, London, Lancashire, and other counties where illegitimacy was rife, there was the lowest death rate, only about 10 per cent. He mentioned this to show that they must not be carried away by a particular set of figures, and that there was another side to the question stated by Mr Anderson. He believed he should get considerable support for his amendment, and urged that the greatest results would be obtained not from an Act of Parliament, but from education and moral teaching.

Mr R. A. Leach (Rochdale) seconded the amendment. He said that if the one-child cases were brought under the Act it would aggregate nurse-children in the Workhouses. Any child away from its natural mother in the Workhouse was well looked after, but it was equally possible for a child to be well looked after amid home surroundings in a private family. He urged that Miss Zanetti's view of inspection was inadequate, because inspection under the Act meant responsibility and legal liability for notification to the Local Authorities on the part of those keeping the child, with fines and conviction for breaches of regulations. This would result in a great many people who now took children from mixed motives and affection having no children at all. He had known in his forty years' Poor Law experience cases where children were taken for love, and some of the advertisements which Mr Mackereth had read he believed were *bona fide*, and who would not be inspected at all.

Dr Stanley B. Atkinson, M.A., said the statistics referred to by Mr Propert defeated his own case. The whole point was, should there be inspection or not? In a country village there was no need for an inspector, there every one was an inspector, and if a child died there were plenty of people who wanted to know why. But in the towns the illegitimate death rate was high, and it was there that inspection was needed, and yet did not take place. In towns people did not even know their neighbours. The figures put forward showing that in the country the illegitimate deaths were low and high in the towns proved the whole case for the need of inspection.

Dr H. Scurfield did not think that Mr Propert meant to defend illegitimacy as a means of lowering infantile mortality, and characterised the statistics put forward — viz., that infant mortality was lower in the country districts than in the towns,

and the illegitimate birth rate higher in the country than in the town, and putting the two together—as ridiculous. What ought to be done in order to obtain a correct view was to take each county separately, compare the death rate of illegitimate and legitimate children in each county and each town, and then it would be seen that the death rate of the former was always double that of the latter.

The amendment was then put and declared lost, and the motion was adopted with twelve dissentients.

M. Henri Coullet was unable to be present, and his paper was taken as read.

THE BEST MEANS OF HELPING THE MOTHER BELOW THE "POVERTY" LINE.

By M. HENRI COULLET, Paris.

The fact that the rate of infantile mortality is much above what it should be, and what it can possibly be brought to be, hardly needs being demonstrated. That 17 per cent. of our babies here in France should be taken away every year is a thing that cannot be put up with, especially at a time when the yearly number of births seems to be continually decreasing. Among the numerous means which have been tried of late to lessen the number of babies' deaths, one has given in Paris, and other places in which it was practised after the example of Paris, results which it may be useful to bring under the notice of all those who take an interest in the question of infantile mortality.

The scheme is, above all, simple and practical. It consists in giving free food to any mother who wishes to feed her infant. "To be fed and to feed," might be the motto of the work. The idea is indeed so simple that scarcely any person to whom it is introduced can help saying, "How is it that it was not thought of long before?" A great deal of pains and money have been spent on means of supplying poor mothers with sterilised or humanised milk. What was

the result? In many cases the food did not agree with the baby, and it did not thrive. In some cases it was not the baby but its brothers and sisters who drank the humanised milk. In many cases also a woman who was quite able to feed her infant on her own milk was deterred from doing so by the advantage of getting free milk for the child and having much less trouble in rearing it. What are the results of such proceedings? Our best doctors in France declare that out of six children fed on artificial food five have many chances of dying, while five out of six babies fed by their mothers are most likely to live. What work are we about, then, when we encourage a mother to give her baby artificial food? And let no one say that many women are unable to feed their babies. One of our highest medical authorities declares that scarcely five women out of one hundred are constitutionally unable to feed their infants. It is therefore evident that to persevere in the practice of encouraging mothers to use artificial food is going the wrong way. If these mothers ought to be encouraged to feed their children themselves, how is it, indeed, that offering free food to poor mothers was not a scheme resorted to long before? However it is, it has been brought into practice these last three years. The results have been published. They have also been witnessed by different persons, among whom one of the members of the present Conference, Mr Shelmerdine of Liverpool. In France, the Ministère de l'Intérieur, the Conseil Municipal de Paris, and Conseil Général de la Seine, have granted yearly subsidies to the "Œuvre du Lait Maternel," 17 rue Denfert-Rochereau, Paris, which created the first free restaurant for nursing mothers in the last months of 1904, and now possesses five such restaurants in full work in Paris.

Numerous newspapers and reviews have made its existence known in different countries, chiefly in the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy. The *Times*,

25th December 1905, the *Guardian*, 28th December 1905, the *Revue* (late *Revue des Revues*), Paris, 1st December 1905, devoted long articles to the free restaurants for nursing mothers of "Le Lait Maternel." A committee was formed at Turin to study the work. A free restaurant for nursing mothers was established in Nice in 1906, another was founded in the same town a few months after, another was created at Remiremont in Lorraine, and the "Social Union," Dundee, opened the first restaurant for nursing mothers in Great Britain in May 1906. Soon followed a second establishment of the same kind, both being now at work and doing the best possible work.

The five free restaurants of the "Lait Maternel" in Paris are situated in the poorest parts of the town, forming a semicircular line from the north to the east, and then to the south at the following addresses, viz., 12 rue Petit (19e), 49 rue Ramponeau (20e), 4 rue Neuve des Boulets (11e), 2 bis rue de l'Arbalète (5e), 3 rue Niepce (14e). They have supplied nearly 100,000 entirely free meals, and, it can be safely said, greatly helped in saving the lives of numerous babies. "It is very easy to speak of free restaurants for nursing mothers," some people will say, "and, indeed, it is very likely to bring about good results. But how can it be done? What to begin with? How much money will be necessary, and how can the whole thing be made to work?" Of course, if those people had a very strong will to try it they would do as Mr Shelmerdine or Miss Walker of Dundee did—they would come and see. Besides they would not have now to go a long way, *i.e.*, they would not have to go farther than Dundee. But every one is not at liberty to go to Dundee or to come to Paris. Those who cannot will perhaps be pleased to hear how the thing can be managed.

This is how the free restaurants for nursing mothers of the "Lait Maternel" began in Paris.

The association having been formed on the 31st of October 1904, the first restaurant was opened on the 1st of November. If it seems surprising that the place should have been got ready so soon, it must be said that the work began in "furnished apartments." Its first restaurant was established in the abandoned shop of a dealer in cast-off clothes. The furniture consisted of a table and two or three chairs. It must be said that the association was not very rich, its capital amounting to the sum of 10 francs. It was, however, sufficient to hire a furnished shop for a week, the price being 5 francs, and to pay for the first meals to be supplied. The first meals were brought in from the next cook-shop. They cost 35 centimes (3½d.) each. The surprise was so great in the neighbouring streets when it was known that a restaurant offered free meals that only one mother could be induced to believe it was true the first day. The next day she came with one companion, and many others followed afterwards. Of course, the 10 francs had been replaced, as they have been several thousand times since that day. A few weeks after the creation of the first restaurant another was started in December, then another in January, and two more in May, and now there are five at work. During the first year all the meals were brought in from cook-shops. How easy it is, then, for any one wishing to feed poor mothers to do the same. Just a little shop to be hired, a woman to be engaged for two or three hours every day to serve up the meals, and the bill of the cook-shop to be paid. Nothing can work more smoothly. And all those who are interested in the work know of a certainty that their money is employed in giving food to a mother, that the same food will go to the baby, that nothing can be made to go the wrong way, that the baby will get its milk whatever happens, and thus its life shall be preserved

The process of getting the food ready from the cook-shop can be recommended to persons wishing to

have a trial at it. In the course of time it will seem more convenient and much less expensive to supply the restaurant with a cook of its own. This change was operated in the restaurants of the "Lait Maternel" at the beginning of the second year. The expenses did not then exceed 50 per cent. of what they had been before and the food obtained was better. Of course the management of the work requires a little more trouble. The following is the way in which the business is carried on in Paris.

The restaurants are no longer in little shops with one table and two chairs. They are established in pretty large and well-aired shops, with plenty of sun in the windows when it can be obtained. They have not all of them yet got the desirable accommodation, but one of them at least will soon be what a good restaurant for nursing mothers ought to be. Let us describe it as it will be in two or three months.

The shop is divided into two parts by a sheet-iron partition, painted very light, about six feet high. The front division forms the dining-room; the kitchen is at the back. The walls of both kitchen and dining-room are painted very light. The kitchen contains a good stove, a coal box, a cupboard for the utensils, another for the food; sacks of beans, lentils, and potatoes are propped up in the corners. The walls, floor, and furniture are to be kept scrupulously clean. There are holes in the partition, and the cook can see what is going on in the dining-room. Here the utmost neatness is also required; the walls are as light as possible; the tables are made of marble or sandstone, the chairs of iron; everything must be washed several times every day. The floor must not be allowed to be soiled; a mat is placed by the door, and mothers have to come in with clean boots. A little footstool is provided for each mother, as it is quite necessary to hold and feed the baby while eating. There is a washstand in a corner of the room and a ventilator in the window.

There are many women in the room, and the air must be constantly renewed.

The setting up of such a restaurant will not cost more than £20 or £25, and then it will be indeed a restaurant.

Now any mother is welcome to come in. She will have to give neither name nor address nor reference of any kind. She has but to show that she feeds her baby. She finds in the restaurant immediate relief, and she will find it morning and evening as long as she feeds her infant. When the baby is over eighteen months the mother will have to bring a medical certificate prescribing her to feed the child for one or two months more if she wishes to be admitted. Thus every day in the five restaurants of the "Lait Maternel" she will find her meals from 11 to 1 in the morning, from 5.30 to 7.30 in the evening. On application she will also receive soup or bread and cheese between 8 and 9 A.M. On the walls of the dining-room the regulations are posted up. The first rule is to enforce silence. It is necessary in a dining-room which is to be frequented by women of every sort (since any one is admitted if she is a nursing mother) that silence should prevail, or else disputes might ensue. A second article requires mothers, when their babies are ill, to keep them at home, and bring them again with certificates that there is no danger of any contagious disease. Mothers ought to eat in peace and quietness, and to be, as well as their infants, secured from any contagion.

Now, what do they eat? At every meal they get soup as much as they desire, then lentils, beans, potatoes, cabbage, or macaroni as much as they wish to have. Bread, of course, in the same manner, and meat, mostly beef, sometimes veal or pork. The allowance of meat is about 80 grammes, a pound of meat being allowed for six or seven persons. Then they get cheese or a stick of chocolate.

How can the meals be prepared if they are not brought from the cook-shop? It can be easily managed. A reliable cook should be engaged. She will have in her kitchen two or three sacks of lentils, beans, potatoes. She will go to market with a member of the association twice a week to buy meat and vegetables. Every article bought will be noted down in her book. The quantities taken out of the sacks will also be written down, and at the end of every week it will be easy work for the member of the association superintending the restaurant to compare the quantity of food consumed with the number of meals served up. That member will soon know that a pound of meat will do for six or seven, a pound of beans or lentils for the same number, a pound of bread for two, and so on. A little practice will soon make him or her proficient.

A restaurant fitted up as described above will easily supply thirty meals between 11 and 1 with only one cook, and including everything, rent and all, the price of one meal will not exceed 3d. or 3½d. If it be borne in mind that for that price two lives are maintained—the mother's and the child's—that the child thus gets the best food it can possibly receive, and to which it has in fact a right, that for that price the life of a man or a woman who may become a useful and perhaps distinguished member of the community can be saved, one will hardly think that the free restaurants for nursing mothers do not pay.

THE BEST MEANS OF HELPING THE MOTHER BELOW THE POVERTY LINE.

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Synopsis.

Sec. 1. Scope of Paper. Public apathy. Maternity hospitals. Friendly society benefits. Position of the father.

Sec. 2. Three essential requirements of pregnant and nursing women :—

a. Adequate nourishment.
b. Freedom from overwork.
c. Skilled attention.

Necessary to diagnose cause of poverty before applying remedies :— A. Primary poverty and its causes. B. Secondary poverty and its causes. Mode of treatment applicable to each. Examples of secondary poverty and danger of false method of relief. Primary poverty ; how to get in touch with cases ; must be accomplished before birth. The " Baby's Welcome." The collector's opportunities. No fear but that necessary resources will be forthcoming.

Sec. 3. The three essentials. Expert knowledge must be utilised in procuring them. (*a*) Food must be rich in proteid. Modes of organising supply. Scope of State action at the present time. (*b*) Methods in Frankfort. *System* of some kind essential. "Industrial" mothers. (*c*) Scope for both State and voluntary activity. Midwives Act, &c. Present state of public opinion encouraging as regards funds. Health visitors. The St Pancras "School for Mothers."

Sec. 4. Reasons of public apathy. Necessary to stimulate parents of young families. Sudden awakening of interest through personal experience. Working-class parents must be included.

Sec. 1. The scope of my paper excludes the consideration of those mothers who come under the care of the Poor Law, those whose poverty amounts to destitution, widows, deserted wives and single women abandoned by the fathers of their children. These have their special problems, which are discussed in other papers by qualified persons. My object is rather to indicate

some methods of helping the mother, who, while falling under none of those heads, is yet depressed below the poverty line by the extra calls involved in motherhood, and is therefore, with her child, in danger of suffering a permanent injury. The intensity of need in this quarter is to-day barely regarded in England, and yet is there any phase in human existence which for complete helplessness can compare with child-birth, that crisis of utter dependence both for mother and for baby? We care for the blind and deaf, the halt and maimed, and rightly so, because we know that except among the well-to-do classes, their peculiar needs exceed the resources of their families. For the benefit of such the country is covered with well-worked organisations; but it is no exaggeration to say that to-day more people in England are giving their interest, work, and money to societies for promoting the welfare of horses and dogs than towards any effort for securing health and efficiency to a human mother and her helpless infant. For this object no organisation occurs readily to the mind; the lying-in hospitals of our great cities are many of them a heritage from the well-doing of the past, and in their modern uses referable rather to those schemes, necessary enough, for the instruction of medical men and the researches of their profession than to any organised effort for helping the poorer mothers and children of the population during the long period when such help is of paramount importance.

We may test the relative lack of interest as regards this incomparable crisis in the life of mother and child by another circumstance. Practically the whole of the working classes are insured for burial. In the remotest village of the kingdom there will be some agency for gathering pennies week by week to ensure a decent funeral at some unknown date; but for birth no similar provision is made — birth with its known date, its known expenses, and, if good nourishment and skilled attention are not available, its

known grave dangers. Three only of the large friendly societies have a lying-in benefit (30s.), and the monthly or quarterly payments required by these societies are beyond the earnings of any but the skilled artisan.

Again, the proper person to supply the needs of the mother is undoubtedly the father of the child; yet, short of destitution or actual cruelty, we, as a community, do nothing to punish neglect, nothing to oblige the unscrupulous father, by force either of law or public opinion, to perform his duty. Nor do we make any definite provision for the supplementing of parental effort in those other cases—often so tragic in their results—when it is power and not will that fails.

SEC. 2. What are the woman's physical needs during the months before and after the birth of the new citizen? They are simple, well defined, neither intrinsically costly, nor relatively so when we consider the expenditure involved in botching up the havoc worked by their neglect. Nor is an army of officials required to supply them, and indeed, if it were, the parents most worth helping would be the first to hide from its members the fact of their need.

The three essential requirements are :—

a. Adequate nourishment.
b. Freedom from overwork.
c. Skilled attention.

Before making any detailed suggestions as to the best means of securing these three essentials, we must consider the causes which have brought the mother below the poverty line; for there is always the danger that a hasty and superficial relief of symptoms may leave untouched, or in a worse condition, the original seat of the disease. The mother's poverty itself may be referred to two classes, of which the most prominent causes are seen in the following table :—

A. Primary Poverty—

(*a.*) Temporary misfortune, such as illness, a spell of unemployment, or slackness of trade.

(*b.*) Low wage and a large family. *Cf.* the condition of the respectable unskilled labourer with more than four children in the last three years before the eldest begins to earn.

B. Secondary Poverty—

(*a.*) Wages ample, but retained by father.

(*b.*) Wages ample, but misspent by mother.

In seeking remedies the clear distinction between A and B must be borne in mind, because, though the suffering of the child is the same under any group of conditions, its source varies, and with the source the cure. The community has at its disposal two modes of treatment, applicable each to its own circumstances. To the mother and child whose need is due to primary poverty, material help must be given ; the position of the others can only be bettered by the compulsive influence of public opinion, or the strong arm of the law ; and to apply to families in Class B the remedies applicable to A will bring, both upon themselves and many in like circumstances with them, the most widespread misery and evil. To give a few specific examples :—Mrs B. is an intelligent woman above the average ; was a dressmaker. Her husband was in the army ; they married on the strength, and spent some years abroad. During this period he was a good husband, and they had a happy family life. Around him was the compelling force of public opinion, the discipline of the regiment, the common life of the married quarters, the interest of the officers' wives in his wife and little ones. When his active service was completed he obtained employment in one of the iron trades, and during the war "boom" earned high wages, occasionally as much as £5 a week, but of this

only a small proportion was handed over to his wife. His frankly expressed view was that "he would not give the brightest woman on earth more than 30s. a week," and every week he spent £3 to £3. 10s. on himself and his own pleasures. His wages are now considerably less, though he yet has ample to keep his family in health and comfort; still he retains 12s. or 14s. a week, and gives his wife £1, with which to keep five children and two adults. This mother is below the poverty line, but gifts would increase her misery, for the £1 would drop to less. What she and her infant want from the community is the community's strength, supplied through the channel of public opinion; they need that high standard of demand which in years past kept that man all unconsciously to the right fulfilment of his duties as husband and father. Nothing less than this can reinstate her.

Take another case. Mrs D. is a respectable, hard-working woman, brought up by a thrifty mother who put her into service at twelve years old with a good box of clothes. In fifteen years she was only in three places. Now she lives in one of the most miserable courts of the city, but clings heroically to her old standard of housewifely duty. Her husband is in regular work at 28s. a week, but it is no uncommon thing for him to pay an ale score of 14s. as he returns with his wage on a Friday; the remaining 14s. only is handed to her, though there are five children; one or other of them is always under the Hospital at no cost to him. He has ill-treated her so persistently that her terror of him has produced chronic nervous twitching of the face. Gifts to her would probably have the effect in a single week of increasing the ale score and reducing the balance for her and the children. For he has a standard of duty: he has never yet given her less than half his wage. The irony of this case is that this man's 28s. is paid over to him by the com-

munity; he is a Corporation workman. But respect for the sacred liberty of one subject prevents the community's taking the simple course which would go far to release the woman and five children from their slavery, namely, to pay a due proportion of the weekly money straight to her. Again, she has a son of seventeen, put to no trade and drifting in with a bad set; he occasionally earns a few shillings, but rarely gives any to her for his keep; all is spent on himself, and already he too has struck her. A few years hence, in a time of "booming" trade, when even such as he will be carried along on the flowing tide and obtain an unaccustomed spell of regular work, he will marry some miserable girl. What of the effect on him and on his future family, if he sees at the birth of his baby brother the care and cost of the crisis borne not by those who are responsible for it, but by others, and his father's habit of spending 2s. a day on himself not one whit affected by his wife's need? To give material relief to Mrs D. at no cost to her husband increases her own misery, and prepares neglect and suffering for children yet unborn.

So with the thriftless mother. I know scores of cases where, in early married life, ample wages are coming in, but the mother is below the poverty line because, by investing in absurd luxuries, she has loaded herself with debt. It is no uncommon thing now for a young couple to start life together with £30 or even £40 worth of furniture obtained on the hire system, and this heavy liability the wife will increase to an indefinite extent when her baby comes by purchasing extravagant shawls and other needless finery from men who advance such goods and then call for weekly payments at the door. She spends her substance on what she does not need simply because others do it, and for the community to step in with a free gift of what she does need will merely mean that in other homes a piano and a phonograph (on the hire system)

will be added to the carved, veneered, bevelled-glassed sideboard and bedroom suite which within the last twenty years have come to form the ordinary wedding outfit of the two-roomed home. Here again, while protecting itself, the community has its duty to the helpless infant. The promotion of a higher level of public opinion and common-sense is the only really potent way of fulfilling this, and drastic methods of dealing with drunken and neglectful parents, such as will probably be advocated in the papers to be read to-morrow, will prove a strong stimulus to the merely thriftless.

But with primary poverty the case is utterly different. Here are found a helpless mother and infant in need of what the community has in plenty, not because she or her husband has flung it away in prodigal thoughtlessness, but because the degree of nourishment, rest and skilled care essential to pregnancy and childbirth have never been within her means. The problem in these cases is first to get at them, for not one in ten will put herself forward, and then to see that the right form of aid is given. To get in touch with these mothers, and at the right time, though difficult, should not be impossible. Charitable organisations only appear to find a small proportion of them, and even where the township possesses a systematic scheme of infant visiting, unless the Early Notification of Births Act is in operation the necessitous cases will be found far too late. In either case we do not get back far enough. Help before birth (especially as at this period the mother is less likely than later to assert her needs) is even more valuable than help after. The problem of taking time by the forelock appears best solved by the widespread establishment of maternity provident societies, such as are now coming into being under the more attractive title of "The Babies' Welcome."* Once

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* See Appendix.

make it the fashion, once make it as much the natural thing to join a "Welcome" directly the need arises, as it now is to put the baby into a death benefit society, and there is the needed machinery under our hands. An intelligent and kindly "Babies' Welcome" collector, without asking questions, soon gets a fair idea of the mother's circumstances and, when the weekly payment falls off in amount or the mother herself begins to look haggard, can do without a long and stringent "investigation," and it is well that she can, for at such a time help, if given at all, must be given promptly; the infant's development waits for no man's delays. We are not now discussing a case where the father is at fault. If there were any machinery for dealing with the negligent man, his very consciousness of its existence and that of the public opinion which had brought it into being would diminish such cases tenfold. We should still have left, however, the heartrending cases of primary poverty where father and relatives are absolutely unable to supply the mother's essential needs. It is a disgrace to England in such cases if the whole chances in life of one of her children is to be ruined for want of a few shillings. Yet in thousands of homes up and down the country this is happening, to our infinite loss and shame. Where the shillings are to come from, is a question with which I am not going to trouble myself. If we really recognise our duty, if our consciences tell us there is a need the community ought to meet—we do meet it. Homes for lost cats, for instance, find an excellent response from a conscientious public. I am not afraid that mothers and infants will find less charity than they, if only their needs are clearly voiced.

Sec. 3. Granted, then, that we have our resources, we must insist on wise management of them. We are too prone to go by rule of thumb, too unwilling to be guided by expert advice. In showing how the "three essentials" may be procured, I shall try to point out

where expert opinion is useful, and chief of all perhaps it dominates the question of Food.

(*a.*) *Adequate Nourishment.*—Here science tells us that it is not mere food, but the right kind of food that the child-bearing mother requires. Anybody who has not sufficient to satisfy actual hunger is destitute, but our mother below the poverty line is not a destitute woman; what happens to her is, not that she has nothing to eat, but that her tendency is to drop down to living on a diet of tea, bread, fat of some sort, and potatoes; this she strives to make palatable by adding the luxuries she dare afford—onions, vinegar, pickles, or an occasional savoury treat from the fried-fish shop. Now this is practically a proteidless diet. Proteid is the most expensive part of our food supply; but it may be said that in proteid and proteid alone is the foundation of every living cell in our body laid down. Moreover, careful experiment has proved that the amount of proteid consumed has an incomparably greater effect on the quality of breast milk than abundance or deficiency of any other constituent of the diet. To supply a mother, then, with food that consists mainly of the other two elements of food—starch and fat—is a despicable kind of help. Those who have anything to do with the relief of mothers below the poverty line ought certainly to know, if she does not, that the tissues of her infant's body are crying out for the body-building element, and that if they cry in vain, we shall have a shoddy, jerry-built frame in place of what Nature would build were she supplied with her true material. Haphazard gifts of money and grocery tickets, then, are futile, and so are free meals, unless carefully supervised by some one who knows the necessary science of food-values.

The principal body-building foods are, of course, meat, fish, peas and beans, cheese, skim milk, and oatmeal. It ought not to pass the wit of sensible people who deal with these matters to supply them.

Nevertheless much of our present effort is thrown away. Soup kitchens are doubtless useful institutions in their way, but for the pregnant or suckling mother, even soup composed of a quantity of bones boiled down with fresh vegetables—"good stock that you can cut with a knife when it is cold," as the proud maker will tell you, ignorant of the fact that as little as 1 per cent. of gelatine will make a liquid substance "set" in cold weather—goes but a little way to meeting the real needs of the case. It may be appetising and nice, but that is not our first aim. To be of any real good, it must be enriched with a nitrogenous food, *e.g.*, with the pulses, oatmeal, grated cheese, or the desiccated skim milk now on the market. The last named appears to be the cheapest obtainable form of proteid, for it is a by-product from cream, formerly utilised to rear pigs and calves, or even sent to waste by the purveyors of such luxuries of the well-to-do as brown-jar cream, the best butter or cream cheese. Now that the desiccation machinery is perfected, the valuable constituents of skim milk are obtainable in the smallest possible bulk, and a powder containing 40 % proteid and 40 % milk sugar can be bought wholesale for less than 3d. per lb. plus carriage. Desiccated whole-cream or half-cream milk for the infant has its advocates and its enemies; with that I am not concerned; but there is no question about the place that desiccated skim milk might fill in the mother's diet. With some constitutions it produces a form of indigestion, but this can be obviated by mixing it with an equal proportion of oatmeal, also one of the cheapest forms of proteid.*

The proper channel through which to convey this

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* 1 lb. proteid in peas - - costs 7d.
" " oatmeal - - " 7½d.
" " bread - - " 1s. 6d.
" " milk - - " 2s. 2d.
" " beef - - " 2s. 8d.

Vide Hutchison, "Food and Principles of Dietetics," ed. 1904, p. 176.

needed nourishment depends entirely on local circumstances. In the city there may be free meals or cheap restaurants, which can also become a centre of instruction for mothers. These are springing up in various places, notably Chelsea, St Pancras, and Dundee. Then in many places there are already soup kitchens and invalid kitchens, of which the distribution of special food to mothers might become a permanent branch, if wisely administered. Such an institution, however, may as well be left alone if run on the lines of one whose accounts I glanced at the other day; each meal, which may have been only a portion of beef-tea or soup and bread, cost, with administrative expenses, on an average, sixpence.

But the supply of nourishment to mothers need not be confined to places blessed with public kitchens and committees to run them. In a certain German town a very simple method exists. A number of persons, including not only those we call "the rich," volunteer to give a good meal a day from their own kitchen to a certain number of people in need and for a certain period. A small shopkeeper's wife will put her name down for one meal a day for one week; in like manner the well-to-do may offer to supply three portions through the four coldest months of the year. It is some one's duty to keep a list of the volunteers and a register of their offers; then when any case is notified, say by a midwife, the volunteer who lives nearest is looked up and told that her contribution will be called for during the next week or fortnight, as the case may be.

Many other simple arrangements will soon occur to any one putting her heart into this task. The main points to be remembered are the grave importance of the matter, and the absolute necessity of efficiency and promptitude. The mother's usual course, when it comes to the point of economising in *necessaries*, is to say, "The children must not go short, and father

has his work"—little realising the amount of work that she herself is doing. "The chemical energy expended daily in nursing an infant six months of age would be sufficient to raise a ton weight about 800 feet high, or more than twice as high as the top of the dome of St Paul's" (Hutchison, "Food and Principles of Dietetics," ed. 1904, p. 427). I think any one realising that physiological fact will allow that the mother wants at least as much meat, cheese, &c., as her husband. Once neglect it, and the costliness of subsequent treatment, together with the poor results obtainable from it, will soon enlighten us as to the paramount necessity of utilising all that science can teach us of the mother's physiological needs and of meeting them to the very best of our ability.

I have said that zealous persons will not fail to think out a means of so doing, but I make no suggestion of a large municipal or State system, because at the present time I see no probability of its success. The mothers of 1928 may have been educated to a different view of citizenship, but our problem is how to help the mothers of 1908. Family pride, our feeling for home life, and the costliness of official administration, must all be borne in mind; and surely State and municipality have at present ample scope for their energies in coercing the careless parent. I have no wish to lay undue stress on this side of the question; I would gladly affirm, if I could, the rarity of such cases as I instanced above; but a detailed acquaintance with the homes of some 1,600 infants has forced me to the view that, in a large proportion of cases of mothers below the poverty line, the only real help to give is the enforcement of a higher standard of duty; and while among the remainder, where poverty is the result of misfortune, not crime or folly, the material needs of the mother must be supplied, it is still individual treatment, not bureaucratic machinery, that is required. For these mothers it may be possible to find some

form of "voluntary effort in a setting of municipal activity," but treatment must be individual and personal, first, because only thus is efficiency secured, and second, because the best sort of mother eludes the "official."

(*b.*) *Freedom form Overwork.*—The quotation from Hutchison given above is some indication of the enormous amount of vital force that a sucking child draws from its mother. To secure the mother's due quantity of rest we do nothing; though action at this stage will save much ineffectual patching up at a later date. A large proportion of the beds in our women's hospitals are occupied by mothers whose sufferings and costly treatment are due entirely to overwork, the result of their lacking at a critical moment a few shillings, or even one. Thousands of babies are condemned to bottle-feeding because the mother has been obliged to do the family washing one week too soon. These may seem homely details, but they lie at the root of the evil, and to cope with them ought not to be beyond the wit of woman. It appears, hitherto, to have been so in England, except among the Jewish community.

In Frankfort, there exists a system of supplying help to mothers which lightens this particular burden in a satisfactory way. It seems to have been fully worked out and might easily be instituted among us. A committee of women keep a register of such women as wish to hire themselves out for housework in cottage homes, where for any reason the mother is unable to attend to her own work. As to duties, payments, inclusion of meals, &c., a definite and clear understanding exists. Moreover, the "help" is held responsible to the community; she is bound to see that the children attend school punctually and clean, so that the money expended by the citizens for their education may not run to waste for a single day; she must ascertain what time the father requires his meals, and must have them ready at home or sent to his work,

as the case may be, so that his wage-earning is in no way lessened. If she fails in such duties she is taken off the register. When a cottage mother requires some one to take her place, she sends to the keeper of the register, who, knowing what women are disengaged, can promptly allot her one from her own neighbourhood. The "help" can be paid by the family employing her, or by some well-wisher, for one of the commonest methods of helping a poverty-stricken mother is to pay for a "help" during so many days or half days a week. Further, in all cases of lying-in and of prolonged illness on the mother's part, a member of the committee visits her and makes sure that she and the temporary housewife are doing each her mutual part. This supervision may sound unnecessary and alarming, but it is the hinge of the whole affair. That the system is successful is proved by the fact that from a very small beginning it has grown and developed continuously for some twenty years. More, it has offshoots, having instituted, for example, homes in which the children of widowers can be immediately received when left motherless, pending the father's arrangements for his household—an improvement on the miserable weeks or maybe months through which, in our country, children have to scramble somehow. Among us, the plight of the lying-in mother, even when she has made all her preparations and can pay for what she needs, is very often pitiful and dangerous. The promised neighbour fails her. Her husband loses half a day's work running distractedly from one to another of the women who, he is told, "go out to help," and perhaps at last brings home a thoroughly unsuitable person; by incessant worry on this score his wife's recovery will likely enough receive serious hindrance. I have known cases where a child's death can be clearly traced to this cause. How much worse, then, is the lot of the mother below the poverty line? Over and over again friends would gladly help her and "send in

some one," but they know not how to do it. System is wanted; promptness, trustworthiness, and a clear understanding are essential to efficient "help." Here, then, is a method by which something might be done to lessen the evil of overwork, if but a little knot of women with common-sense and energy would give their minds—and their hearts—to its adoption.

I have not touched upon the question of overwork due to industrial occupation, because that is an economic problem demanding separate treatment. If an industry requires the work of married women during the child-bearing period, then in justice to the community, and to other industries making no such demand, it should bear the extra expense involved in proper care of mothers. There should be maternity funds into which women can pay, and a subvention from the employer according to the degree of thrift possible under his wage scale. If the mother of average ability industrially employed, is below the poverty line, the industry is to that extent a parasitic one and the problem must be dealt with from that standpoint.

(*c.*) *Skilled Attention.*—Here, in the improved administration of methods well known to all present, but in different localities pursued with varying degrees of efficiency, there is ample room for municipal or State action. A thorough administration of the Midwives Act, provision when necessary of medical assistance from public funds, and the employment of efficient health visitors are obviously necessary. The greater the poverty, the more blamable is any laxity; when we have to deal with people whose own resources leave them little or no margin, we cannot afford to do other than make use of our own to their fullest capacity. Voluntary effort also has scope for activity in this matter. All over the country, well-to-do women might do far more than they are doing in the question of the training and supply of midwives. One of the best contributions to the problem is likely to be found in some

organisation similar to that of our district nurses, and worked in co-operation with it, combined with a provident club. Those who can will pay according to their means, and a living wage for the skilled midwife must be made up from voluntary subscriptions or from public funds; as to which, I shall not argue that point. If the work is being done, and done efficiently, by a voluntary committee but is too costly for voluntary effort alone, in the present state of public opinion an application for aid to Borough or County Council or to Parliament will not be made in vain. I am convinced that public money used for this purpose will prove as good an investment as any other expenditure from that source; only we have to wait for this view to commend itself to the main body of tax and rate payers. Meanwhile, healthy mothers and infants are still being done to death by the four-and-sixpenny Mrs Gamp. Had the question of the supply of midwives been dealt with as it ought to have been when the Act was passed, that dangerous type of woman might have been far nearer extinction than unhappily she is at present. I would urge all those connected with the management of district nursing who have not already taken up the matter to do so promptly in their own neighbourhoods.

The provision of skilled advice through the health visitor need scarcely be pressed on this Conference as a means of helping the poorest mothers. But there is another method of immense value and capable of great development, which has only to be known to be approved. Organisations such as the "Mothers' and Babies' Welcome" in St Pancras, are perhaps alarming in their prime cost to our present niggardly frame of mind, but in every case, so far as can be ascertained both here and abroad, experience has shown their utility to be immeasurable, and to offer a most encouraging return for all the money and energy expended on them. Any one reading the book lately published by the St

Pancras society will see their manifold scope and their promise of development. The great point about these institutions is that each child is examined at regular intervals by a medical practitioner, whereby incipient illness is checked; this cannot take the place of visiting in the home, but it is not the function of qualified doctors to expend their time on that work. Working in conjunction, the doctor at the "Babies' Consultation" and the skilled visitor in the home in their respective spheres of action are complementary the one to the other. It is earnestly to be hoped that all these methods of supplying the mother with skilled attention will receive in the future a much larger measure of public support.

SEC. 4. Increase of interest, increase of support, those are the needs. As I began by saying, it is undeniable that this question has not the attention it deserves. How stimulate the needful interest? What sources are we to tap for our enthusiasm? By seeking below the surface for the causes of public apathy we may get an answer. I am inclined to think that at the root of our extraordinary carelessness lies the fact that our sympathies are awakened by those whose daily needs absorb our own energies and affections. It is those who are in a position like our own that arouse our interest. The unmarried man or woman finds it easy to think about younger brothers and sisters, to work for school children, and Boys' Brigades —but babies! They do not enter their minds. Fathers and mothers of families who have passed the stage of having babies of their own to look after are absorbed in all that relates to growing children. But it is when the sight of infancy is fresh in the mind, when, by daily contact, the utter helplessness and immense potentialities of the new-born child are driven home, then is the time for full and active sympathy with mother and infant. But at this period mother and father alike are least able

to labour for others. The mother is absorbed in her own little ones, and the father has his way to make in the world. So it comes about that in the multitudinous energies put forth by humanity to meet every kind of need in its own race and even in the animal race, babies receive nothing approaching their due share. Yet they are humanity's most importunate and most important suitors, of all beggars the most deserving of aid. For them the enthusiasm of parents should supply the motive force of human charity.

Let me instance the case of a local authority whose medical officer of health year by year with faithful reiteration drew attention in the most plain spoken way to the rate of infantile mortality of the district, but without avail. One of the principal members of the council was a man in middle life who had attained a position in which his word carried much weight: his children were leaving school or out in the world. Then the unexpected happened, and after sixteen years' interregnum a baby ruled once more in the nursery. Within a few months the question of the prevention of infantile mortality was at last under serious discussion by that council of hard-headed men, and it was not long before a health visitor was appointed, the strongest champion of the movement being the father of that baby girl. If we want to bring efficient help to mothers below the poverty line, we must put their needs before those to whom they most naturally appeal. We want mothers and fathers if it is to be a big thing, and not least those of the intelligent working class; indeed there are sections of the work which they can do more efficiently than any one else. It is to be hoped also that the new Guild of Help movement, the keynote of which is individual care, will put the needs of mother and infant in the front rank of those they desire to meet.

APPENDIX.

[*Reprint, by kind permission of the Nurses' Social Union, of the leaflet issued by the Union; may be obtained of the Central Organiser, N.S.U., Kingston Grange, Taunton, at 7d. per doz. or 1d. each, post free.*]

PROVIDENT MATERNITY CLUBS.

The object of provident maternity clubs is to cut at the root of the loss of infant life and the ruin of health in after-years for mother and child, which are caused in innumerable cases by the lack of provision for confinements. If the heavy expenses on these occasions have to be met out of current wages, the mother often lacks proper nourishment and other necessaries. For want of a few shillings to pay for a neighbour's help, she gets up too soon and resumes her heavy housework before she is fit, whereby she may cause lifelong injury to herself. She is also likely to lose her milk, and this not only involves great trouble and expense in bottle-feeding, but the baby has much less chance of growing up strong and healthy, more especially as the temptation is great to give it other food before it is old enough to digest anything but milk. Improper feeding is the chief cause of the enormous infant mortality. Again, the debts incurred for the confinement have to be paid off during the following weeks, just when the woman ought to be able to spend a little extra for nourishment.

Now, although a confinement can be foreseen for months, lack of forethought, or the difficulty of keeping savings intact when the money is in the house, often result in little or no provision being made, and what is done is probably put off till the last month or two, when the woman often goes short to save a trifle. This is a fruitful cause of ill-health and infant mortality. Provident maternity clubs help and encourage women to begin saving small weekly sums as early as possible. The payments can be collected at mothers' meetings, by district visitors or by specially appointed visitors. A regular weekly visit is by far the most effective way of collecting an adequate sum. All payments are entered on the member's card and in the collector's book.

It is not advisable to give any bonus. It is bad in principle and unsatisfactory in practice. If the family circumstances are such that the woman is genuinely unable to put by a sufficient sum by beginning reasonably early, the case should be referred to some relief agency.

Nor are maternity bags to be encouraged in ordinary cases, as self-respecting women should not need the loan of *everything*. But a supply of *extra* linen or clothing will be found useful. Another advantage which may be offered to members is the loan of various sick-room requisites where these are not provided by a nursing association; or, again, the club may undertake to pay the fee of a

doctor if called in by the midwife. Some clubs give orders for milk, &c., but it seems better that the woman should be encouraged to lay by sufficient to provide necessary nourishment, besides the fee of a midwife.

The following are two of the existing provident maternity clubs:—

ST JOHN THE DIVINE, Kennington, S.E.
Hon. Secretary, Miss Bannerman,
68 Bonham Road, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.

WAKEFIELD BABIES' WELCOME.
Invalid Kitchen, Almshouse Lane, Wakefield.

The Kennington society may be taken as an example of a club which requires its members to lay by sufficient to cover all expenses. A copy of the member's card will be found below. The secretary arranges with the woman, at the commencement of the payments, what this sum is to be, and if this amount has not been paid up a month before the confinement is expected the case is referred to the Parochial Relief Committee, which decides whether the circumstances are such as to justify a grant.

In cases where it is obvious from the beginning that the woman will be unable to meet the whole cost, the Relief Committee is asked to make up the deficiency on condition that the woman contributes a certain agreed sum in accordance with her means.

The Wakefield Babies' Welcome makes no stipulation as to the amount, but receives any sum however small, though mothers are urged to join as early as possible. This society has a supply of nursing appliances on loan. A list of the articles lent is entered on the back of the member's card, and 1s. or 1s. 6d. is retained from her payments till they are returned in good condition. It is most essential that such articles should be effectually sterilised by a responsible person between each case, and they must on no account be handed on from one to another. The society also has an excellent popular leaflet explaining to mothers the advantages of the scheme.

Leaflets on the care of babies and of the mother's health will be found useful; *e.g.*, "Baby," by Edith Maynard (Simpkin & Marshall), 1d.; "The Mother's Catechism," 4d. a dozen (from Editor, *Nursing Notes*, 12 Buckingham Street, Strand); Leaflets on the "Care of Infants" (reprinted by permission of St Pancras Borough Council), 4s. per 100 (from the Central Organiser, N.S.U., The Grange, Kingston, Taunton); and various leaflets of the National Health Society, Berners Street, W.

Specimen Member's Card (*Kensington*):—

PROVIDENT MATERNITY CLUB.

Members to be married women living in the Parish of.....
....

Members should join the club seven months (or at least six months) before the expected date of confinement. All payments should be completed one month before that date.

The table below should be filled in, and arrangements will be made for payments to be collected weekly.

	£	s.	d.
Doctor			
Midwife			
Nurse			
Baby Clothes, &c.			
Extra Nourishment			

.....weekly payments at.....per week.

The money (excepting that for baby clothes, &c.) cannot be withdrawn until the time of the confinement, or of the member's removal from the parish.

When the money is needed, a post-card should be sent to the Secretary, who will call and arrange for the repayments. Repayment can be made in one sum or in weekly instalments.

Secretary..... .....

Address .....

.....

The other side of the card is used for the record of the weekly payments.

A complete set of the leaflets, cards, &c., used by the Wakefield Babies' Welcome, may be obtained of the Hon. Secretary, Wakefield Babies' Welcome, Invalid Kitchen, Almshouse Lane, Wakefield, price 3d., post free.

DISCUSSION.

Dr Mearns Fraser (Medical Officer of Health, Portsmouth) congratulated the author of the paper, and referring to the practical points raised, agreed that it was in the first few days of motherhood in which the best assistance could be rendered to the mother and to the infant. The two directions in which municipalities attempted to prevent infant mortality at present were those of milk depôts and health visitors, both feasible and excellent methods, the health visitor being the superior method. He feared the milk depôt encouraged the poor to wean their children before it was desirable, because the poor were inclined to come to the conclusion that municipal milk was just as good as the breast milk. Nurses dealt with the mother in the home, but the one direction in which municipalities could do much good was to remove the mother from her environment. In homes where

the parents were below the poverty line—he briefly described the poor conditions—it was marvellous that a child could be reared at all or that a mother could escape puerperal fever. What was wanted was to get that woman out of the house for three or four weeks, and give her a good start. That could only be done by providing maternity homes. He thought a good deal would be done in the right direction by a system of municipal maternity homes, which would be the centre for all work in connection with the prevention of infantile mortality. There the mother would be properly cared for and instructed how to bring up her child. In connection with the home the health visitors could also work, and in many places such an institution would have a tremendous effect upon the infantile death rate. His experience in a large town confirmed his view on this matter. The Union Infirmary did not meet the case, because poor and respectable women declined to go to the Workhouse. The poor would not seek the refuge of the Poor Law at ordinary times if they could help it, but at the time of a birth their objections were increased a hundredfold because they thought that it was casting a slur on a child if it was born in a Workhouse. Except in those few towns where there were maternity hospitals, there was no place where poor women could go in their time of trouble. A municipal maternity home, which he regarded as an important factor in the solution of the problem, need not be an expensive institution. There need be no resident medical man, many doctors would be found willing to give their services, and the institution would be a valuable training school for midwives. As to the legal power of Local Authorities to provide such institutions, he had prepared a scheme in 1906 on the lines indicated, under the section of the Public Health Act which gave Local Authorities power to provide hospitals for the sick. Application was made to the Local Government Board, who had replied that if a maternity hospital was provided in a town it would have to come under that section, but yet they did not think that a woman undergoing the pains of labour was a sick person within the meaning of the Act. So that until they got a higher opinion than that of the Local Government Board, it was not at present within the power of Local Authorities to provide maternity hospitals for the poor, although he thought there ought to be such power.

Dr Templeman (Medical Officer of Health, Dundee), referring to the method dealt with in M. Coullet's paper, said that in Dundee they dealt not only with the mother who had been confined but also with the expectant mother who was below the poverty line. Dundee had some extraordinary industrial conditions, and a high rate of infant mortality. The movement was not a municipal one, but due to the generosity of a private individual who had provided £300 to try the experiment for three years. It was conducted by a Social Union, and comprised a restaurant for nursing mothers. Its object was twofold, viz., to encourage breast-feeding and to discourage the employment of married women as far as possible, particularly during

the first three months of the infant's life, while thirdly a centre was provided for the education of the mothers. A large number of confinements were attended by the outdoor department of the maternity hospital, and in this way their names were obtained. The cases were visited before and after confinement, and all the mothers reported on by the ladies who visited them were fed for a month or six weeks before the confinement. The diet was a simple one—soups or broth, bread, meat and potatoes, with milk puddings; after confinement food was taken to their homes. They were only eligible for help at the restaurant while they were feeding the children themselves, and the dinners were given in the very poor cases, but sometimes they paid twopence a day. This system had been started in May 1906, and was the first of its kind in this country, and as convener of the committee in charge of it, he should say they had been extremely pleased with the results. The mothers were regularly visited, and they brought their babies every fortnight to be weighed. The mothers took the greatest interest in the chart showing how the babies were progressing. If the babies lost weight mothers were given advice as to what to do. Of course these methods only touched the fringe of the subject, but at the same time a measure of education was being given to those young mothers, and in Dundee great improvement had been the result.

Mr Alderman BROADBENT proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Mayor of Westminster for his services in the chair, and said that his Worship, who had conducted the proceedings with the utmost tact, discretion, and good judgment, was further to be thanked for having lent the hall to the Conference.

The motion was carried with acclamation.

The MAYOR OF WESTMINSTER acknowledged the compliment, remarking that the reward for his services had been the privilege of taking part in such important proceedings on such an important subject.

The discussion on Miss Boileau's paper stood adjourned, and subsequently a number of delegates paid a visit to the Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square.

WEDNESDAY, 25TH MARCH.

MORNING SESSION.

The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Liverpool took the chair.

Mr Alderman BROADBENT (Huddersfield), resuming the discussion on Miss Boileau's paper, which he described as useful and valuable, pointed out that the author had drawn a distinction between two classes of poverty, one of which could be helped, and the other class which it was almost impossible to reach. The mothers below

the poverty line were those deserving of the utmost sympathy and support. He knew from personal experience how intense was the struggle for respectability and for maintaining family life in the case of many of these poor people, who had large families and very limited means. If they were to preserve family life in this country, that class must have help. Sympathy and help, far more than mere monetary assistance, were sufficient if they could be given at critical times. In bridging over the critical time of child-birth among the working classes, who after all were the salt of the community, they were rendering the greatest possible communal service. It could be done on the lines laid down in the paper, and the Conference would do well to spend a few moments in considering the practical side of the subject.

Rev. Canon HORSLEY (Southwark) said this subject was the fringe of the problem; its heart was the drink question. His point was that existing laws should be put in force to a greater extent than they were. It was a defect in London boroughs that the authorities would not put into force the Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act as they might do, especially as regards milk. Taking Southwark, he found that Southwark, according to the Report of the Local Government Board for last year, headed the list, having taken 1,257 samples of milk, but the boroughs of Poplar, Stoke Newington, Greenwich, Marylebone, Chelsea, and Hampstead and Deptford only took 1,212 samples between them. That was not a satisfactory state of affairs, especially when the percentage of milk adulteration in London had risen to 13.3 per cent. against 10.5 in the previous year. Not all mothers could give their infants natural milk, and many were dependent on cow's milk, or that which was sold under that name. He felt that a great deal of illness and degeneracy was due to the fact that a great many borough authorities did not do their duty in this respect. A special inspector for work under the Food and Drugs Act was necessary; (2) more use should be made of private purchases. Little was done in this direction last year, but 20 per cent. of the samples so purchased were found to be adulterated in London against 9.3 per cent. for the country generally. In Paris any one could send anything he had bought to the public analyst, and that official at once sent off to the place where the sample was bought. Paris therefore led the way. (3) Samples should be taken not only by unrecognised persons, but also at unaccustomed times. In Finsbury 19.2 per cent. of adulteration was found in milk bought on Sundays, against 11.5 bought at other times. (4) Fines should be more adequate and progressive, as under the Margarine Act; it was a mockery that in 142 cases the fines did not exceed 2s. 6d., 59 being 1s., and 9 being 6d. each. (5) No preservatives are needed; and (6), if time and money were not wasted in procuring and analysing goods that are hardly ever adulterated, more could be done for the purity of the milk supply. Bottle-fed babies died more than breast-fed babies, and if the contents of the bottle were not

what should be the case a high rate of infantile mortality must ensue. Why potter about pepper when out of 2,117 samples taken only 17 were found to be impure? Why not leave bread alone for milk, when only one case of adulteration was found in 373 samples? (7) The number of registered milk sellers in any borough should be more generally known, so that it should be certain that every one should have his milk tested every year. Once a quarter, however, was the minimum for the detection of the fraudulent and the protection of the honest. Apathy, ignorance, and commercial greed still combined to sustain one considerable cause of physical degeneration, one potent factor in that preventible infantile mortality which it was quite fashionable, but sometimes quite hypocritical, to deplore.

Miss C. HUTCHINSON (York—Health and Housing Reform Association), emphasising the need for the adequate nourishment of the mother, suggested that in the schools for mothers now being instituted in many places there was an excellent opportunity for spreading information on the subject of food values. They must all agree with what Alderman Broadbent said about meeting the need of the moment. While it was important to ensure that the expectant and nursing mother was adequately nourished, they would also agree with Miss Ravenhill that they would not get to the root of the matter until by education they made the people who now must be helped independent of such help in the future. The report of the Bradford Education Committee showed that a great deal of good had been done by the information furnished as to the meals provided. The character of the meals and the cost had been scientifically worked out, and she would like to see something of the same kind of thing done in connection with schools for mothers. Often in working-class homes it was not that money was not forthcoming for the provision of proper meals, but that the mother did not know the best kind of food to provide with the money available. When the mother had learnt to provide the right food, the father would need also some education as to the eating of it. There was a good deal of prejudice in men's minds about three meat meals being necessary every day. The schools for mothers would provide the necessary machinery for such education, and there would be no extra cost.

Mrs GOURLAY (Glasgow—British Women's Temperance Association) explained the work that was being done in various centres in Glasgow, including classes, which were really a kind of school for mothers, and referred to the valuable work being done by voluntary lady workers. She emphasised this example, and appealed to the better class of ladies to take up in their towns and villages this work of baby visiting, which was always attended by such good results. It was a moral duty, for remembering the deaths of these children, they could not ignore the words of Ezekiel—"Their blood I will require at thy hand."

Dr C. F. G. SIXSMITH (Medical Officer of Health, Barry) said the three points laid down in the paper, viz., adequate nourishment,

freedom from overwork, and skilled attention, were of the utmost importance. He specially deprecated excessive tea-drinking among mothers, and urged that the whole question should be dealt with on an economic basis.

Mrs A. BADHAM (Maidstone) pointed out that in printed pamphlets giving advice to mothers there was a considerable variation. In one table the food was given as a tablespoonful of milk and two of water; in another, two of milk and one of water, and in a third three of milk and one of water. It would be advantageous if there were some uniform teaching on the subject.

Alderman GEORGE (Swindon), as a representative of the working classes, said his class deeply appreciated the efforts of ladies and gentlemen to improve their condition, but he warned the Conference against indulging in any patronage of the working classes. What the working classes wanted was work and opportunities to raise themselves.

Miss BOILEAU, replying to the discussion, regretted the absence of M. Coullet, whose paper dealt with a subject which had not received much attention. It was satisfactory to think so many speakers had insisted on the importance of food values being properly understood, and that the feeding of mothers was coming prominently to the front. The most important work was to deal with the mothers below the poverty line. There was not a single village in the country where something could not be done to help that class. There might of course be huge State or municipal schemes, but a great deal could be done in a humble individual way. There was also need to concentrate on husbands and fathers by a healthy public opinion, which would do a great deal to raise his standard of treatment of the mother. As to the variations between leaflet instructions, it should not be forgotten that there was also immense variation between babies. Any one leaflet would not meet all cases, and the instructions given in that way were necessarily very rough and general. She largely sympathised with the view of the last speaker, and felt, in this matter, there was after all nothing to compare with providing for the real need of the men, and that was constant work. She knew from personal experience how much it went against the feelings of many men that they were compelled to accept the help she brought for their wives.

The CHAIRMAN announced that an invitation had been received from the Directors of the School for Mothers, Euston Road, for any delegates who wished to visit that institution.

INFANT MORTALITY AS AFFECTED BY THE HABITS OF THE PARENTS.

By E. W. HOPE, M.D., D.Sc.,
Medical Officer of Health for the City of Liverpool.

It is well known that infant mortality varies widely, not only in different towns, but in the various wards or districts of the same towns. Poverty or riches, sanitary or insanitary conditions, occupation or the want of it, high birth rate or low, all play their part in bringing these variations about. But every extended inquiry into the intricate subject of infant mortality brings to light the fact that parents living approximately under the same social and sanitary conditions have such varying success in rearing their infants that the personal factor deserves a careful study.

With the infants of well-to-do people it is not necessary to deal at a meeting of this kind, and broadly speaking, the families who have at command all the resources of wealth show an infant mortality which is relatively small. It is amongst the less well-off sections of the community that the investigation is most important. We want to get at the facts, and the time and care involved in an inquiry into this aspect of the question finds its reward by enabling preventive measures to be more closely applied.

One of the most important factors undoubtedly is the amount of intelligence which the mother possesses, an intelligence which, if it is not innate, is difficult to acquire, and for which even education is but a poor substitute.

Every town, no doubt, is a suitable field for inquiry in this direction, but in a place like Liverpool, where the greater necessities have led to greater municipal effort, the inquiry is specially interesting.

There is in Liverpool a very large population

indeed, dependent upon unskilled labour of a very precarious character. Much poverty results from this, and an accentuation of the problem of dealing with that poverty.

The Corporation have expended very large sums of money in ameliorating the conditions of the congested districts and poorer parts of the city. Whole areas have been demolished, and new bright, airy dwellings erected in their stead; dwellings which none but those dispossessed by the demolition of insanitary dwellings are permitted to tenant. Every facility is devised for their comfort, baths and wash-houses are available, and a large staff of trained and skilled women are provided to give them such kindly aid as possible, to all dwellers in the poorer districts. Even food is provided for those infants whose mothers cannot suckle them, and on occasion, for the mothers themselves when inability to suckle arises from poverty and malnutrition.

These measures are not without their reward, and the diminution in the infant mortality in districts as a whole is encouraging. Still we want to come to closer grip with the question. When we find, for example, that in 874 families, taken consecutively on account of the fact that in each the death of an infant had occurred, the total number of infants born in those families had been 3,801, and that no less than 1,895 of them had perished, practically all in infancy—representing an infant mortality of 498 per thousand—it is obvious that we must go further into the question of the personal element. The extended inquiry shows, side by side with this, parents under the same condition, with the same income, following the same occupations, the same hard struggle against poverty, and yet all or nearly all of their children reared. The question arises, to what is this remarkable difference due? In the short time at my disposal I can give you only a very few illustrative cases, and they may be taken as samples of

a large number which have been specially investigated and reported upon.

As an illustrative case of an instinctively intelligent woman, I would quote that of Mrs E. of No. 6 T. Street, who has given birth to seven living children, all of them being quite healthy now, the youngest two being twins of four months old. The father is a dock labourer, and his wages are stated not to exceed on the average 12s. per week. The house is very clean and comfortable, and the children are well cared for, those of the school age attending school regularly. The mother, when she is able, adds to the income by taking in washing, and, as a matter of fact, was working practically up to the day before the birth of the twins.

The mother, who is suckling the twins, is receiving milk for herself from the Corporation Milk Depôt, and she is now receiving certain aid from other sources. Neither of the parents drink, and the condition of the home and the children present a striking example of what can be done even with very little money when none of it is wasted in drink or gambling.

Another illustrative case is that of Mrs McK., S. Road. Nine children have been born, all now living, the youngest eight weeks old; all have been breast fed. Husband some years ago lost his business through ill-health, from which he recovered. Of late years he has worked at the docks, his wife occasionally charring. All children clean. Home comfortable.

Y., 232 A. Street. Eight children, all living and well. Husband's wages £5 per month at sea. The woman was under sixteen when she married, and vows that none of her daughters shall marry at sixteen.

W., 47 E. Street. Eleven children, ten living. Home clean and comfortable. Average earnings of the father, 12s. per week. Youngest child six weeks old.

The number of parallel cases is exceedingly large, and very commonly the older children assist in adding to the family income.

Place in contrast with these cases, that of Mrs B., of H. Street. Mrs B.'s first infant died at the age of four months. The second-born is now living, and is eleven years of age. The third, fourth, and fifth died under eight months of age, the sixth is living, the seventh, eighth, and ninth died at a few months of age. The tenth, aged three months, is living, but is reported to be wasting, and is much neglected. The husband can earn up to 40s. per week, but both parents are intemperate. The midwife who attended at the last confinement states that the mother was lying intoxicated on the floor when she arrived, the baby having already made its appearance. Filth and wretchedness are the characteristics of the home, and the case is now being dealt with by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Unfortunately long series of cases of this description are recorded, in which obvious drunkenness in an extreme degree is the pre-eminent feature associated with the loss of the infant, the money wasted, the parents drink-sodden, and every feature of intelligent attention to the infant wanting. With these there comes the long string of examples in which the alternations between the gaol and the Workhouse are factors which make it abundantly plain that the children of the family have had no proper maternal solicitude bestowed upon them, and have perished in consequence.

Mrs G., who was married at the age of sixteen, is an illustration. Out of her ten children, three survived.

Mrs W. was married at the age of twenty, and has had eighteen children, four of them surviving. In this case violence figures more than once in connection with the death of the infants.

A. F., 112 R. Street. She has had fourteen children, only two of whom are living. She was married at seventeen years of age, and is now a dirty, neglectful, drunken woman. Midwife stated that the woman was drunk on each of her last three confinements.

In a different category are the cases of which Mrs J., of 2 in 8 Court, B. Street, may be taken as an example, her seven children having been born alive. One of them died at four years, one at two years, another under twenty-one months, and two under twelve months. One of the earlier born ones has survived, and is now eight years old. This boy has suffered severely from eczema; but the mother has never troubled to take him to the doctor. The youngest child is an infant, whose health is precarious. In this case absolute stupidity appears to be a large factor—whether the woman drinks or not is not apparent. The wages earned by the husband are stated to be 20s. per week.

Again, Mrs E. has had fourteen children, ten of whom have died in infancy, all of them being artificially fed. She is an incapable woman, and regards the death of her children as an inevitable matter.

A further series may be quoted in which the mothers, without following any special occùpation, neglect their children for long periods, either by going out casually to sell papers, &c., or by gossiping with their neighbours. The following are illustrations:—

Sarah N., 5 B. Street. Nine children, three living, six died in infancy. The mother very indifferent to the welfare of the children.

Agnes W., 5 V. Grove, has had fourteen children, three living.

Elizabeth R., 22 L. Street, has had thirteen children, of whom are two living.

These are examples of women who have been large contributors to the death rate.

Another factor in the prospects of life of the infant appears to be the actual number of infants born in the family, and the rapidity with which they make their appearance.

The resources of the average mother in poor circumstances are severely taxed by even two or three

little children ; the next one to arrive diverts attention from the rest, and as others come in quick succession, adequate attention is impossible.

During the last two years the returns of the corporation dwellings for labourers are interesting. These are new dwellings erected for the accommodation of persons dispossessed from the insanitary courts and alleys which have been demolished, and may be said to represent the poorest section of the poorest class in Liverpool.

A very striking feature is their remarkable birth rate, which, calculated in the ordinary way, is not 26, as is the case with the general birth rate of the whole country, nor 40, which is the birth rate of the district in which the dwellings are situated, but reaches the extremely high average of 55 per thousand during the last two years.

That the infants born, where life's battle is so hard, do not receive adequate attention goes without saying, and those who die appear to be rapidly replaced with others, a large proportion of whom meet a similar fate.

The lesson to be learnt is the great value of visiting the homes of these poor people, and giving such supervision and kindly encouragement as is possible to the mothers to persevere on right lines in dealing with the infant. Nor need the assistance be limited only to this. Every town has its agencies and its charitable organisations, by which the deserving poor may receive help of a material kind, and the visit of the Inspector of the Health Department is one of the best ways of bringing relief to those in need of it.

I desire to add a few words in reference to the Jewish community, and for the purposes of my illustration I take fifty poor—some very poor—Jewish families, taken consecutively. The family earnings averaged from 10s. to 30s. per week. The points which stand out are, first, that in every instance the children are well looked after, all suitably clad, and not

one ragged or barefooted child seen. The beds were clean, and always a cot provided for the baby beside the mother's bed. Domestic dirtiness is uncommon, but even where it existed all the mothers seemed to realise their duty and responsibility to their children, and to act upon it. Thriftiness and sobriety were universal; no drunkenness at all. A noticeable feature which always impresses the visitor is the attention given by the mothers to the children's food. In no single instance was the mid-day meal wanting; moreover, it is usually good and wholesome, and prepared in a way which the children relish. It must be remembered that some of these families were in receipt of relief from the Jewish Board of Guardians, but others, of course, are fairly comfortably off for that class.

With regard to the numbers of children born, the average number in the family is not large. The maximum was ten, and that only in one family; the average is five, but the figures as to the numbers who have died compare very favourably indeed with those of the Gentile races in the same social scale. In the fifty families, the total number of infants born was 255, and the number of deaths which have taken place amongst the whole number and at various ages, and by no means all in infancy, was 29—figures which speak very favourably.

Dr S. B. Atkinson, before reading his paper, urged that, in promoting the objects they had at heart, it was highly necessary that they should not be superior or didactic. It would rather injure their cause to adopt a patronising attitude towards the working classes. The argument of labour representatives often was that they did not want the interference of superior people in their homes. That fact must be realised, and he almost regretted the occasional adoption of that tone in the Conference when working-class representatives came on the platform who often had little sympathy shown for their views. Unless they allowed themselves to be talked to as well as talking at those whom they wished to benefit, he feared they would not do much good.

THE CARE OF CHILDREN NEGLECTED BY DRUNKEN PARENTS.

By STANLEY B. ATKINSON, M.A., M.B., J.P.,
Guardian and Borough Councillor, Member of the Central Midwives Board.

"I consider that children are the truest indices of the sanitary condition of a crowded neighbourhood."—George A. Walker, Surgeon, 1850.

There may be joint parental liability for the drunken neglect of infants. The father may indirectly neglect the family obligation, or may do so directly on account of his own selfishness or on account of the mother's intolerable drunken conduct. Then, in the last case, the wife will directly neglect both herself and her infant charge. Parents careless of themselves are little likely to be careful of their children.

The father is primarily "the head of the family," and he must provide "adequate food, clothing, medical aid, and lodging." In case of his absence or of incapability on his part, however, the mother stands in his shoes for Poor Law purposes. Where both are equally at fault the old common law principle holds—"Husband and wife are one person, and that person is the husband." In practical life the young children "belong" to the mother; sometimes an older sister is heard to speak of the latest arrival as "my baby." The mother arranges the churching and christening, the birth registration, the insurance, the vaccination, and, later, the schooling. In matters of corporal correction of their children the mother usually has the last word if not the first blow. Many fathers exhibit a lamentable ignorance of their children's sayings and doings.

An infant should no longer be regarded as a mere potential citizen. The child is a citizen—though a junior citizen—with personal legal rights even as against its parents' rights, but correlated with its parents' duties.

For too long have the rights of the father and of the mother exclusively been urged in considering public questions affecting little children. A child is a full subject of the King, and if slain by violent assault or injured by continued passive neglect, it should be seen that the toll for the exit or the maiming of a subject's life is not suffered to remain unpaid. The penalty should be imposed in order to serve as a warning to future would-be evil-doers. The forensic position once enunciated by Sir James Mackintosh must, however, be recollected: "This execution will not deter drunkards from murder; it only deters men who are sober from drunkenness."

"The embryo of a drunken mother is practically another drunken person" (Archdall Reid). The result of drunken neglect by one or by both parents may be manifest either in the death or in a slow gradation of decay of the health of the infant; it becomes the prey of chronic, if not acutely fatal, diseases. The fact may be noted that at birth fine children are incidental to simple poverty; puny infants, whom frequently the drunken mother cannot properly nurse, are the result of alcoholic intemperance. Similarly a Poplar boy said to me lately, "Father's a splendid fellow when he is out of work." Where drink, dirt, and neglect are the infant's lot, it may be necessary to take the parent from the neglected child or the child from the drunken parent, or even both from the prevalent vicious environment.

Although cases of gross neglect and cruelty make good "copy" and profound sensations when published, persons so guilty are comparatively few in number and are aggregated in certain restricted areas. The same offenders, by repeating their frequent sins, make it appear that there are more malefactors than is really the case. A little resolute and drastic action in the case of a few hundred notoriously drunken and neglectful parents would raise the local social ideal as to the

management of infants. What even the most degraded dislike is, what an artisan friend explained to the writer as, "a d——d good showing up." Experience shows that it is the same handful of people whose children attend school irregularly, and then in an uncleanly, ragged, and ill-fed condition, and among whom infant mortality and juvenile morbidity is high.

The peculiarly English inquest jury is said to explain the unique value set upon human life, except apparently upon the infants of the poorest, in this country. It may be necessary to have suspicious fatalities published in a coroner's court and beyond. The coroner should be informed so that he may set an inquest jury to probe the fatal circumstances in cases of infants whose death may have resulted from direct drunken violence, from being suffocated from the want of fresh air while in bed with parents, or from the carelessness of

> "Those detestable
> That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl
> Their rights and wrongs like potherbs in the street."

These matters are being pushed further as penal offences by the contemporary Children's Charter. Since 1897 all deaths in registered "baby farms" have had to be reported to the coroner. Mr Samuel's Bill will probably be amended so as to extend this method of reporting, notably to "single cases."

Several forensic statements may be cited in illustration of the attitude of the law with respect to infant neglect. A grandmother did not supply proper nourishment to her infant charge; there was no allegation of "drink" (*R.* v. *Mary Nicholls*, 1874): "A grown-up person who chooses to undertake the charge of a human creature, helpless either from infancy, simplicity, lunacy, or other infirmity, is bound to execute that charge without wicked negligence, and if such person by wicked negligence lets the human creature die, that person is guilty of manslaughter. Mere

negligence is not enough. There must be negligence so great as to satisfy a jury that the offender had a wicked mind in the sense of being reckless and careless whether death occurred or not." Any course of conduct likely to cause injury to an infant, whether such injury be physical or mental, is, it appears, technical "ill-treatment." Thus, where a woman having in her arms an infant was assaulted by a man, the child was so terrified that it died within six weeks of the assault from, as was stated, the shock of fear; the offender was held guilty of manslaughter.

At the Old Bailey (October 1905) a man was charged with not having provided suitable food for his lying-in wife, who, on that account, was unable to nurse or otherwise provide nourishment for her baby, with the result that the infant died. The inquest jury had found "murder." The stipendiary magistrate committed the father for "manslaughter by neglect," holding that he was directly responsible for the child's health. The Grand Jury threw out the Bill containing the latter charge, and the prosecution, as usual in such circumstances, declined to proceed with the more serious indictment.

At the Chester Assizes (July 1905) a married woman, aged thirty-one years, was sentenced to twenty-one months' imprisonment with hard labour. It was given in evidence that eleven days after her confinement she insisted on taking her baby, a perfectly healthy child, into bed with her while she was in a drunken state. Sleeping heavily, she "over-lay" or stifled the infant. The jury found her guilty of the manslaughter of her offspring by an act of gross and culpable neglect.

At the Leicester Assizes (November 1899) a man was convicted of manslaughter, who, having assaulted his wife, then more than eight months pregnant, so bruised the unborn child that, as a consequence, it died after birth. Mr Justice Maule ruled in 1848 (*R.* v.

Ann West): "If the child by a felonious act of the prisoner was brought into the world in a state in which it was more likely to die than it would have been if born in due time, and did die in consequence, the offence is murder, and the mere existence of a possibility that something might have been done to prevent the death would not render it less murder." There are thus legal aspects of Eugenics. Figures are given to show that 50 per cent. of the children of drunken mothers are dead-born or die within the first year, and that of the survivors 12 per cent. are "possessed" of epilepsy. It may be useless to advise care as to the selection of one's parents; in some cases it would be wise to exercise more care in choosing parents-in-law. Oliver Wendell Holmes has written, "The time to commence the education of a child is twenty years before it is born, by educating its mother."

The protection of existing babies from cruelty, exposure, and neglect, that is, apart from the above exemplary vindication of those done to death under the lack of care of drunken parents, may be approached from the social and from the legal standpoints.

I. The "social" means call more especially for feminine action. A sisterly appeal may be made to the primitive maternal instinct and sense of pity. In few cases do even mentally hypotonic mothers really prefer the "drink" to the baby. What lawyers call "malice," an evil expectation, is seldom present, even in shocking cases of neglect; physicians at children's hospitals and superintendents of children's homes have assured me on this point. The practical facts of infant morbidity must be enunciated; the mother's intelligence must be convinced that, if she persists in her harmful ways, she will ruin the prospects of her offspring's life right "from the womb to the tomb," and will herself be courting needless labour and anxiety in caring for a sickly and ill-favoured child. She must regard herself

as "baby-food," and guard her own health accordingly. Reasonable and attractive amusements must be made available for hard-working and hard-worked mothers. More practical results should be aimed at by leaders of women's meetings and girls' clubs. Schools for mothers should be popularised and the pride of motherhood fostered, so that a stigma would attach itself automatically to those who wilfully neglect domestic duties. Medical men and midwives must be more ready to preach "abstinence" in child-bearing and child-rearing women, and must insist that this virtue shall be rigidly practised in every lying-in chamber under their supervision. The older girls in public elementary (day and evening) schools must be instructed more specifically on the error and terror of the abuse of "drink." The employment of child-bearing women as home or outworkers must be discouraged. "Infant care" should be recognised as a definite branch of technical education for the wives and mothers of the subsequent decade.

II. The "legal" means of infant-protection are here summarised as those already possible and those desirable.

(*a.*) Among possible methods are those which are taken in order to prevent, if practicable, the need of legal action. A friendly worker or a health visitor may call at the neglected home from time to time in order to warn, to watch, and to encourage, with a lively hope of personal amendment, self-remedy in the parent. An inspector of the N.S.P.C.C. is usually an adept in such functions. The first-born of the former Conference, the Notification of Births Act, 1907, where that Act is sympathetically adopted, should aid in this matter. Homes from which the older children come in a very dirty, unkempt, and neglected state, frequently contain neglected younger children who are being trained in similar objectionable ways. Much information can be gained on these points from the school attendance officers, whose ears are regarded in

some streets as the appropriate receptacles for all the malicious gossip of the neighbourhood. Homes containing one or more babies should be watched, especially if year by year deaths are reported therefrom. Strangers or grandmothers may be the negligent parties.

Failing other methods, the Children's Act of 1904 must be enforced on behalf of an infant under improper care. This may be set in motion by "any person authorised by a Justice of the Peace" or by an appeal to the Guardians of the Poor through the parochial relieving officer or an inspector of the N.S.P.C.C. Apart from the penalties available for "an offence of cruelty" under this Act, it may further be urged as an economic investment, from the ratepayers' standpoint, to separate those who either actively or passively deteriorate in each other's society. The Poor Law Act, 1899, allows the provisional adoption by Boards of Guardians of neglected and deserted (*e.g.*, foundling) children, and the Certified Industrial Schools Acts allow the children of vagrants and of the homeless "not having proper guardianship," (*e.g.*, owing to habitual drunkenness) to be cared for by being admitted to the receiving room of a Workhouse pending inquiries. Under the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, and the Inebriates Act, 1898, they may be similarly detained until other suitable arrangements for their care can be made. The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868, was superseded in this matter by the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1904, in so far as "neglect" is concerned. Although the provision of "medical aid" is not specifically included in the later Acts, it is implicit when they are applied in cases of cruelty and neglect. All the above roads therefore lead to a Poor Law institution. Exposing an infant in arms for street-begging purposes is probably illegal.

(*b.*) Among desirable legal improvements for infant life protection are :—

1. The methods of feeding—"breast," "bottle," or "mixed"—should be included in the certificate of the medical cause of death of all children who die under the age of one year; the age at which the child was weaned being stated. Infant mortality is highest during the toothless months. The use of a cot or cradle for sleeping might be also noted in such certificates. The Central Midwives Board is directing its midwives along these lines.

2. Restrictions might be placed on the payment made at the death of an insured infant. We were informed at the former Congress that the Prudential only pays if the deceased was not less than four months old, and that in such cases, whereas the maximum payment is £6, the average is one-quarter of that sum. 80 per cent. of the infants of the poor are insured, largely with a view to a "decent burial." This may mean that as an *arrière pensée* death is an expectation, and the insurance might be called preferably "death and burial" rather than "life."

3. Children should be prohibited from entering "pubs or clubs" wherein intoxicating liquors are being sold and drunk. In many degraded localities, away from the main roads, are clustered what are known as "women's houses," sometimes locally as "cowsheds." Barmaids are seldom employed for this service. The presence of tiny babies in these licensed premises without doubt is a palpable sign of maternal neglect. Such an infant starts life as a moderate drinker if it is suckled by its mother; there are authentic records of babies having developed "gin-drinker's liver." It is an offence under the Licensing Act, 1902, for a person in a drunken condition to be in charge of a child. It would be well to keep such centres and sources of obvious neglect under supervision. It is doubtful if much domestic "secret drinking" or further neglect would result from the prohibition suggested.

4. At the request of one sober parent there might be permission granted for the infant to be nursed away from the sinister influence of the other parent. A parent may give evidence in a case of cruelty, even against a matrimonial partner. Already under the Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act, 1895, a matrimonial separation can be obtained on account of continued cruelty and wilful neglect of a wife or of infant children. Under the Licensing Act, 1902, the husband can separate from a wife who is a "habitual drunkard."

5. The fact of a bread-winner being a drunken person implies (*a*) neglect, (*b*) means whereby he can gratify the vicious inclination. Neglect of wife and family should be regarded, of itself, as a criminal offence. Any financial charges incurred by the Poor Law or by the police in dealing with and caring for inebriate persons and their dependents should be treated by the Guardians or other authorities as a debt incurred by the offender which he must pay to the uttermost farthing. This is already the rule with the inmates of reformatories and their friends; the Children's Act, 1904, goes so far as to provide that if any neglectful parent is in receipt of an income, it may be attached for the purpose of providing the maintenance of the children. In this way money will be diverted from profitless channels of expense, and the ratepayer will be properly protected from the illicit claims of those who cost the nation far more than the man in the street has yet realised.

DISCUSSION.

Mr F. G. MACKERETH said it was fitting they should be discussing this subject of the child under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, and that the reader of one of the papers should be the medical officer for that city; for, if any information were wanted as to social work particularly aimed at the amelioration of the lot of the child, one naturally turned to Liverpool to find out what was being done. He believed that the question of cruelty to children

was first taken in hand by Liverpool, and that the Liverpool Society was the pioneer of that work. Hospital nursing, too, was first started in Liverpool, and the Conference had had under discussion the question of health visiting, which was the natural sequence to hospital nursing. Dr Hope's paper was extremely useful, because it voiced the idea they all had in mind—the difficulty of dealing with these completely different sets of people living in practically the same house. Dr Newman said in his book on "Infant Mortality," "that this waste of infant life is in some way intimately related to the social life of the people," and there was no doubt that in trying to prevent it they had to get back to the actual person, in the actual house, nursing the actual baby, and they could only do that by personal friendship with the person who owned the baby. It was not a bit of good keeping a child out of the public-house unless they taught the mother why that child should not be allowed to go inside a public-house. It was not a bit of good rearing healthy children when, as soon as a girl of fourteen entered the factory, she was taught that gin was the right thing to take whenever she felt in physical pain. They must get behind the door of the one room in which the woman lived. One of the most useful lectures that had been given this year was Dr Braithwaite's Norman Kerr Lecture on the Causation of Inebriety, which established very clearly that inebriety is really a consequence of mental defect. The inebriate was invariably suspicious, invariably sensitive, far more so than was usually realised by the social worker. This was the case in all grades of society; further, women inebriates, in reformatories owing to cruel neglect of their children, were very seldom cruel when they had become free from the influence of alcohol. Councillor Adams, of Newcastle, had recently written to the papers to show that the health visitors found that since they had been at work women were drinking less in neighbours' houses; the influence of the health visitors was sufficient to stop a social custom they were teaching to be wrong. But schools for mothers did not reach the drunken mother; Miss Bunting's book showed that very clearly. The drunken mother, and the mother who lived in the furnished room, were not the sort of women to go to a school for mothers, yet they were the women it was particularly desired to reach. They could be got at through the Notification of Births Act, without doubt, and they could also be got at through the cleansing scheme. Dr Stanley Atkinson's handful of unclean children found in London would seem to be a pretty big handful. In 122 schools examined, out of 81,629 children no fewer than 14,889 were found to be verminous, and, as the nurses could not give much time to each child, a child had to be dreadfully verminous for the nurse to take notice of it. That was only in London, and, taking the country as a whole, a cleansing scheme would give them something to go on with. Medical inspection would also help. Dr Arkle, of Liverpool, and Dr Allan Warner, of Leicester, both found children stitched into their clothes. Now, there must be sympathy and tact; these

were really the keynotes of the Conference. Referring to work among mothers in Rotherhithe, Mr Mackereth observed that it was better to give an expectant mother food, and a nursing mother milk to drink, than to tell her not to go into a public-house, for in many cases the actual drinking of the milk stopped the entry into the public-house. Through the influence of ladies' work the awful drinking customs in certain streets had been entirely changed, and he believed the main thing wanted was to bring the drunken mother quickly within a circle of personal influence. Mr Burns thought that cruelty to children was exaggerated, and Dr Atkinson thought it was only to be found in patches. But he had not been able to find patches of cruelty bigger than the house in which the cruelty occurred. Cases of cruelty due to drinking habits were to be found in every part of England without exception, even in places where they would not expect to find them. Drinking habits were widespread, and cruelty occurred as a natural consequence. In the last report of the N.S.P.C.C. there were quoted 40,433 cases, involving 115,002 children; out of that number only 5.5 per cent. were prosecuted, and the balance was dealt with by warnings. But there were 2,254 prosecutions—the Guardians bore the cost of very few of them—and these were the pick of the bad cases, though in some instances there may have been prosecutions of the same persons twice during the same year. During the last three days current newspaper cuttings of cruelty cases had reached him dealing with 28 cases, involving 77 children, and the bulk of those cases were connected with drink, though not entirely. Now, on the N.S.P.C.C. average of 5 per cent. being prosecuted, these 28 cases represented 560 fresh cases, involving 1,500 children who had been wilfully neglected, so that the matter could not be regarded as small, or the view as to child cruelty exaggerated. He was certain that the Society needed forty additional inspectors in order to cover the whole country. Large districts were without inspectors, and some of the inspectors now had to deal with a population of 400,000, so that it was clear the figures given of cases of known neglect could be immensely increased. Then, too, he was certain that the question of life insurance had a great deal more to do with the matter than had yet been brought out, and that the figures given by the Prudential Life Insurance Company were inconclusive. The Prudential said that in the years 1879 to 1888 the annual rate of mortality per 1,000 insured children under the age of one year was 99.46, but this did not take into consideration the fact that the Company did not insure children under a fortnight old. Children who die in the natural course under a month would not be likely to be insured, and the Company say they do not accept the risk of illegitimate lives. After deducting those deaths, a lower figure was obtained than the Prudential gave. There was a curious connection between the curves for infant mortality and arrests for drunkenness; where county figures were taken a high figure for arrests for drunkenness coincided with a high infant mortality. In concluding,

Mr Mackereth contended that the great need was for trained social servants, official and voluntary, urban and rural. Women must be at the call of women to fight against superstition, ignorance, and disease; in fact, they wanted an army of amazons to fight against ignorance just as they had an army of police to fight against crime. It was ridiculous to allow a baby to be fed on whisky and saffron because it had got the measles. They had to get behind the case of simple drunkenness and find out what the home life was like. If that could be done in Liverpool it could be done elsewhere. Was it right that such a story as that which came from Sheffield, where a woman of thirty-two, charged with drunkenness, was found to be already a grandmother, could be told without a helping hand being offered to her? As Jeremy Taylor wrote, "If the people die for want of knowledge, they who are set over them shall also die for their want of charity."

Dr S. G. H. Moore, referring to Dr Hope's paper, which he said it had been a privilege to listen to, said that as he listened to that paper the question of infant mortality seemed to loom larger and larger as a practical question, while in the other papers, without depreciating them at all, it seemed as if infant mortality became more or less an abstract question, to be dealt with by an idealist in an ideal manner. As he had said before, and got into trouble for saying, it was time they started to try to save the lives of those infants who were perishing. He had some sympathy with Alderman George, and was sorry to think the tone of his remarks seemed to convey the idea that the working people resented help. When Alderman George asked for work in an ideal sort of way he was really asking for the cause of infant mortality to a very large extent to be removed. In the paper of Dr Hope there was just one thing he felt sorry about. Dr Hope referred to the large families of the poor and of feeble-minded parents. Dr Hope did not encourage them much, and seemed to regard the position as a hopeless one that we could not get away from. He hoped they would not be discouraged in any way, for it was not fully realised how many of these people whose children die in such terrible numbers are mentally defective. Undoubtedly there were a large number of parents who in the interests of the race ought not to be permitted to become parents.

Dr C. Killick Millard (Medical Officer of Health, Leicester) said the last two contributions maintained the high standard which had characterised the papers read at that Conference. Dr Hope had referred to cases in which large families had been reared on small wages, but they must remember that these women must have been exceptional, and after all it was the ordinary average women with whom they had got to deal. While in favour of home visitation of the poor, he endorsed the remarks of Dr Atkinson that they ought not to approach the poor in a superior way, and they should have due sense of the difficulties of social problems and the diffi-

culties of dealing with them. Referring to the rapidity with which some families increased among the poorer classes in Liverpool, he pointed out that it was possible to have a high birth rate without necessarily a high death rate, but at the same time the two things often went together. He did not deplore, from a sanitary point of view, as some did, the diminished birth rate, because it was quality rather than quantity which was wanted. He thought that the diminishing birth rate was rather an indication of a growing feeling among the working classes that it was better to have fewer children and bring them up properly, rather than to have children to the full extent of a wife's physiological capacity. He had much sympathy with Dr Atkinson's paper, and having through the Leicester milk depôt become intimately acquainted with the social condition of many mothers and babies among the poorer classes, he had realised the struggles they had to make to rear their babies. The more one saw of the actual conditions of the poor the more one realised their difficulties. He agreed with the view that medical men and midwives should rigidly insist upon abstinence from alcohol during child bearing, and believed that medical men could do more than they did in the way of advocating temperance, especially if they would set the example by practising it themselves as well as preaching it. It was not much good preaching moderation among the working classes, and it was desirable to show them that perfect health was quite compatible with total abstinence.

Mrs PINE (Woolwich Board of Guardians), as a representative of labour pure and simple, remarked that drink had loomed large in both the interesting papers read that morning. She could give a practical example in Woolwich, where in one corner was a part known as "the Dusthole." In that area there were eighteen public-houses and a high infant mortality rate. In another part of Woolwich where most respectable people lived there were no public-houses at all. They had a system of local option, and the people would not have a public house on the estate. She ventured to think that the Church might do a great deal more than it did in the cause of social reform. Her Board of Guardians dealt with a good many cases brought under their notice by the inspector of N.S.P.C.C., and there was cordial co-operation between the Public Health Committee of the Borough Council and the Board of Guardians.

Rev. Canon HORSLEY, as an old worker in Woolwich, said he had been under the impression "the Dusthole" had been done away years ago. His object in rising was to prove the intimate relation between drink and infant mortality as coming under his notice as a prison chaplain in the year 1876. He had kept a book of cases, and these he read out to the Conference, showing in a startling manner the enormous influence of drinking habits of parents upon the lives of their children. He urged that in dealing with statistics on this question, it was desirable to take ward areas and not borough areas, in order that factors which

would disturb the conclusions that should be properly arrived at should be excluded. In his district they had a voluntary dinner society, but he regretted to know that the funds were falling short this year. He did not know whether 12s. a week was considered a decent wage in Liverpool, but the Liverpool Corporation paid its employees 24s. a week, yet the minimum in Southwark he was thankful to say was 30s.

Miss BERNARD BOYCE (Inspector under the Norfolk County Council) explained what work was being done in the agricultural county of Norfolk. Most of the speakers she pointed out had dealt with the towns. There were in Norfolk seven hundred parishes, and the infantile mortality was greatest among the illegitimate children, who were not generally put out to nurse in strangers' homes. The illegitimate children were mostly kept by relatives, and there was great ignorance and carelessness exhibited in their upbringing. Cows' milk was at a premium, because most of the farmers sent all their milk to the towns and to London, so the babies had to live largely on condensed milk and water. There was, however, higher education given to girls and mothers by the Norfolk County Council, and plain homely talks were given in many villages with excellent results. The County Council had voted £240 per annum for the training of midwives who would reside in a parish or district, and they entered the homes of the people. This was found to be the best way of spreading simple hygienic knowledge. Four health visitors had been appointed for Norwich alone. She endorsed Dr Atkinson's suggestion that midwives should be urged to educate their patients against the evils of drink. Three years ago in the whole county of Norfolk there were only fourteen midwives, to-day there were one hundred trained women at work. Although the Notification of Births Act had not been adopted, in Norwich alone, since its passing, the health visitors found they were able to get to the houses more quickly than they used to, and a result had been that infant mortality had decreased.

Mrs CROALL (Glasgow) gave her vivid experiences of slum work, and urged the imperative necessity of women being prohibited from taking children into public-houses. It was terrible to think of the time many mothers spent in public-houses, and the education which was being given to children in drinking habits. She cited several extremely bad cases, and made a pathetic appeal for greater attention to this side of the work.

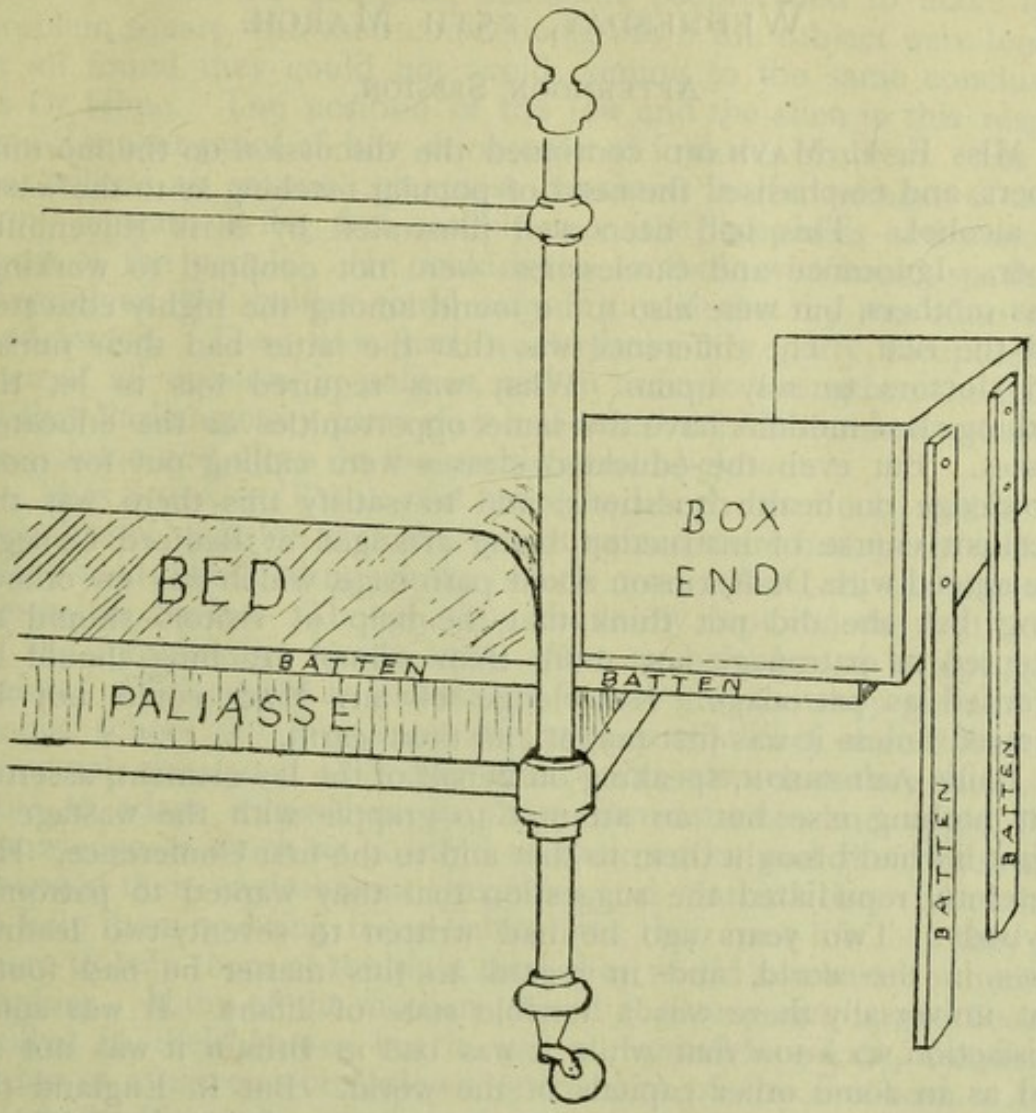
Dr H. MALET (Medical Officer of Health, Wolverhampton) pointed out that the evils of drunkenness were so obvious and widespread that there was some danger of other acute evils being overlooked. It was most desirable to bring home to people's minds what they did not always remember, the waste and extravagance of drinking customs. A working man earning perhaps 20s. a week would with his wife perhaps spend 5s. a week in drink, which was an altogether disproportionate amount to spend on what was after all a

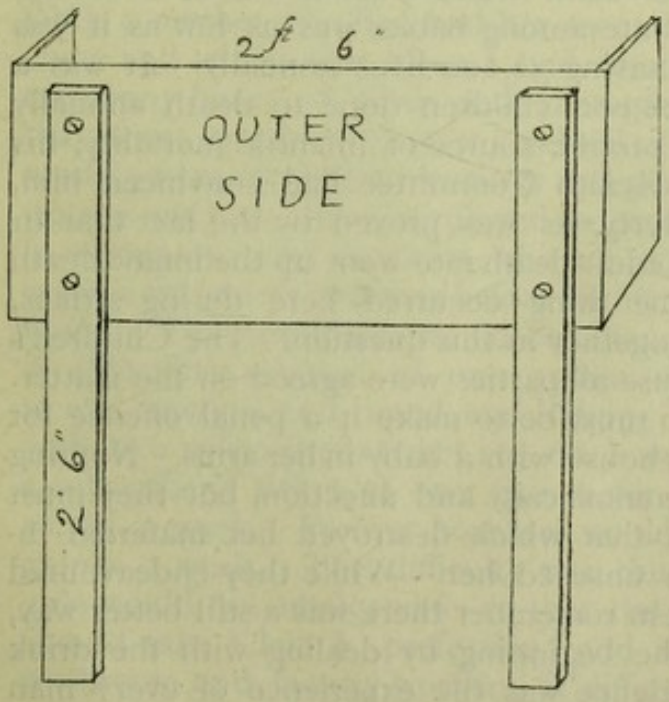
mere pleasure. If the money thus recklessly wasted were spent on the children a very different state of things would soon be apparent among the working classes.

Dr G. Q. LENNANE (Medical Officer of Health, Battersea) drew special attention to Dr Hope's paper, and said that the conditions of Liverpool were those which largely obtained in his own district, where 75 per cent. of the population belonged to the labouring class, with a large amount of casual labour. His experience in regard to a milk depôt was most favourable. In the five years since the depôt had been open the infant mortality had dropped from 163 to 115 per thousand, and while he would not lay too much stress on figures, it was clear the influence of that institution had been considerable. He agreed that figures should be given for ward areas rather than large districts, for in wards where destitution and poverty prevailed the infant mortality was high, and conversely in the better areas the rate was low, ranging in Battersea from 51 per thousand to 158. He commended the methods employed at Battersea to the earnest attention of the Conference.

Dr H. WILSON (Weybridge) referred to his former experiences in Southwark, and emphasised overlaying as a contributory cause of infant mortality in poor districts. Out of fifty cases he knew of only one in which the accident had happened to total abstainers. But this accident of overlaying was rarely met with among the well-conducted members of society, which pointed to the fact that the cause was largely too much drink. As a practical suggestion, he would give them an illustration of a cheap device for preventing overlaying, which had been suggested to him by a friend. He drew on the blackboard the diagram appearing on p. 161.

Mr Alderman BROADBENT, referring to the practical character of the two papers, said that at first Conference similar papers had been read by Dr Sims Woodhead and Professor Ballantyne, which were to a certain extent theoretical. The two papers read that day were eminently practical, so that with the Reports of both Conferences before them delegates would be able to master both the theoretical and practical sides of the subject. As to families being brought up on restricted means, he described how in his own district families would on small wages keep well conducted and well maintained, because the wife had all the earnings given to her, first of the husband and then of the children as they one by one went out to work. A careful housewife would in time turn the members of that family into little capitalists, without herself going out to work, and in that way they had the illustration of the perfection of a family. But, of course, while the children were young it was all hard work, and everything depended on the husband.





A cheap cot to prevent the suffocation of infants, made from a box at a cost of under one shilling. The inner side is removed; to the outer side are fastened two firm battens as legs; to the bottom of the box are fastened two horizontal battens, which are inserted between the bedstead and the palliasse and bedding. Size and finish can be to taste and requirements. When not in use the cot can be easily stowed away.

Wednesday, 25th March.

Afternoon Session.

Miss E. L. Maynard continued the discussion on the morning papers, and emphasised the need of popular teaching as to the waste on alcohol. This had been well illustrated by Miss Ravenhill's paper. Ignorance and carelessness were not confined to working-class mothers, but were also to be found among the highly educated and the rich. The difference was that the latter had their nurses and doctors to rely upon. What was required was to let the working-class mothers have the same opportunities as the educated classes. But even the educated classes were calling out for more knowledge on health questions, and to satisfy this there was the excellent course of instruction being arranged at Bedford College. She agreed with Dr Atkinson about patronage, which was an odious thing, but she did not think that the help of visitors should be accepted as patronage any more than school teaching should be regarded as patronage. Knowledge of any kind could not be received unless it was first taught and then learnt.

Bailie Anderson, speaking on behalf of the lay element, asserted that nothing else but an attempt to grapple with the wastage of infant life had brought them to that and to the first Conference. He, therefore, repudiated the suggestion that they wanted to patronise anybody. Two years ago he had written to seventy-two leading cities in the world, and in regard to this matter he had found that universally there was a terrible state of affairs. It was some satisfaction to know that while it was bad in Britain it was not so bad as in some other capitals of the world. But in England the infant death rate was 25 per cent. worse than it was in Scotland, and if in England the death rate among babies was as low as it was in Scotland they would be saving 32,000 lives annually. It was a fact that there were over 100,000 children done to death annually by vice and ignorance. A prolific source of infantile mortality, his experience on the Glasgow Health Committee had convinced him, was drink. It was not poverty, as was proved by the fact that in the siege of Paris while the adult death rate went up the infant death rate went down. The same thing occurred here during strikes. Let them eschew politics altogether in this question. The Children's Bill was going through because all parties were agreed on the matter. The first thing they must do must be to make it a penal offence for a mother to go into a public-house with a baby in her arms. Nothing could take the place of parental care and affection, but they must take away from the mother that which destroyed her maternal instincts, and sometimes even unsexed her. While they endeavoured to succour the infants let them remember there was a still better way, and that was to begin at the beginning by dealing with the drink problem. Dr Hope's experience was the experience of every man

who went into the question; but some people tried to make their problem square with their convictions, but if the subject were looked at all round they could not avoid coming to the same conclusion as Dr Hope. The position of the Jew and the alien in this respect was eloquent proof of how drink entered into the problem. He did not believe an empire's greatness consisted in the number of acres lying beneath a flag, but entirely upon the happiness and contentment of the people. He could listen to those who could speak for themselves, but babies could only cry, and that cry was often misunderstood. They now had a Parliamentary party composed of men of all opinions in politics, and in order to strengthen the hands of that Parliamentary party they had asked the Conference to express its opinion and views on the problems laid before it.

Miss SHICKLE (Bath) said there had been so much said about the alcohol question that she was surprised there had been nothing mentioned about drug-taking, which was rather on the increase among all classes. Though they frequently deplored the bad habits of the mother they made little effort to help her to adopt good habits. With regard to the skilled factory girl, the shop girl and the public school girl they were very anxious that they should become punctual, clean, and skilled in their work; also that they should be able to adapt themselves to their circumstances and apply their knowledge as much as possible to their work; and then when they changed their environment altogether and married they did nothing to help them to bring those habits into their new life. If they did more to help them at the right time they would not have so much to deplore. Many of the mothers gained their experience and became skilled in their homes, but it was at tremendous cost, frequently either of a nervous breakdown or the loss of the first-born. After she had addressed a meeting of mothers on the management of infants, a mother who had had her second child said, "Why didn't she come and tell us that when I had number one or before and saved me many hours of worry and heartache?" It was for this reason that it was proposed to start a school of training in home and infant management for women workers and young mothers, so as to enable women workers, those employed in professions and shops and also in workrooms and factories, who are engaged to be married, to receive a few weeks' training before taking up the responsibilities of the home. The candidates would be taken on the following conditions: A subscriber's ticket of one guinea would entitle them to three weeks' training and board and lodging at a cost of 2s. 6d. a week; without a subscriber's ticket 10s. 6d. a week; a mother and baby with a subscriber's ticket of one guinea for two weeks and payment of 2s. 6d. a week. Parlour boarders would also be taken at 15s. and a guinea a week. The difficulty was, the shop girls and the factory girls would not amalgamate, so that the proposal was that the home should take Class I., professions and shop girls, and Class II., the workroom and factory workers, at different periods in the year—dif-

ferent months—and if Class I. wished to come during the months when the home was open to Class II. they could do so by paying as parlour boarders. A lady doctor had kindly undertaken to act as honorary medical adviser, and if any one could give her (the speaker) suggestions on the subject she would be glad to have them. She was very anxious they should meet what she regarded as a great want, because there was so much spent in the way of training, but it went either too soon in the schools or too late to the mothers.

Miss YATES (Hon. Secretary of the Bread and Food Reform League) thought that doctors at those Conferences emphasised the importance of drawing attention to causes instead of simply dealing with results. The Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration emphasised the fact that improper and insufficient food was one of the main factors in producing the tendency towards alcoholic stimulants. Dr Hope in his most valuable paper directed their attention to the fact that among the Jewish aliens the wives and mothers directed special attention to the family cooking, with the result that inebriety was almost unknown among them. The Salvation Army had been carrying out a most wonderful experiment during the past six years. They had treated by means of food reform the inebriate men in their Homes with most astonishing results, results so satisfactory that the matron informed her that she wished the dietary could be made compulsory for all Homes for inebriates. She herself had seen most wonderful results from those various foods. There was a lady who was a most terrible drunkard, who was taken up four times in a month in the London streets, drunk and incapable. A doctor assured her (the speaker) that it would be a miracle if she recovered. She was induced to take the finely-ground wheat and fruit and vegetables. In three months' time, without being placed in a Home, simply by a change of diet, the woman said she had lost her craving for alcoholic stimulants and could walk past a public-house without a desire to enter. Thus by these methods they could help to diminish the alcoholic craving, which caused such terrible infantile mortality. The Bread and Food Reform League did not advocate the exclusive use of those foods, but by using more of them it helped a better state of health, it was economical and it diminished the craving which arose in many cases from insufficient and innutritious food. She hoped they would study the question and help to diminish the ignorance which caused such terrible infantile mortality.

Dr SCURFIELD drew attention to two points in Dr Atkinson's paper. One sentence was that a little resolute and drastic action in the case of a few hundred notoriously drunken and neglectful persons would raise the local social ideal as to the management of infants. He felt that very strongly. He felt they did not do enough in the way of prosecution of neglectful and drunken parents. The other part of Dr Atkinson's paper was what he said about the Children's Act of 1904. Dr Atkinson said it might be put into

force by the Guardians. It might be put into force by any person. He thought that was not sufficiently realised. Any person who proved to the magistrate that he was acting in the interests of the child could put into operation the clauses of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1904. He saw no reason why the provisions of that most important Act for the prevention of cruelty to children should be left to a voluntary society which was more or less always struggling for subscriptions to carry it along. He felt, speaking at any rate for a big town like Sheffield, that they got clusters of the population living outside any public opinion, and to deal with those areas and those families they required more drastic action. In his opinion the Boards of Guardians through their relief officers came across what information was necessary to put the Act into operation. The magistrates would require no convincing that the relieving officer was acting in the interests of the child. The Guardians had power not only to co-operate with the National Society, but they could do the whole thing themselves, and there was plenty of room for competition between the different bodies in putting the different Acts into force. He thought the education committees through their attendance officers should put these Acts in force, and the health committees through their medical officers of health, also the police. His point was that these matters should not be left to a voluntary society. They were among the most important provisions of the statute book and it was an absolute anomaly to leave them to a voluntary society. That society was not too well supported. One of the speakers had said they wanted forty more inspectors. They had got all the inspectors and officials they wanted. It was simply a question of allowing a number of their bodies to co-operate with the National Society, and in a few years if those more drastic measures were adopted they would have an infinitely higher standard for the treatment of children and they would stamp out a great part of that neglect which went on at present.

Mrs GREENWOOD, as a practical worker among the poor for the last eight years, referred to the two classes of mothers mentioned by Dr Hope. Of course they all came across those exceptional women who on very small means kept their children and their homes clean and tidy, but they were exceptional, and they were certainly most exceptional geniuses. On the other hand those mothers who so continually neglected their children and who were so intemperate and so difficult to deal with, she thought they must feel that many of those mothers were the result of drunkenness on the part of the parents, underfeeding and neglecting themselves. There were the fathers of those children whom the prison chaplain told them of that morning. They who had to deal with them felt how difficult it was to awaken in them any ideal at all and to get them out of their bad ways. With these mothers, each successive child, if it did not die, survived in a miserable and rickety condition. With

these people it was extremely difficult to deal and health visitors and Acts of Parliament had very little effect upon them. It was much more important they should turn their attention to the young mothers with the first and second children and try and raise in them an ideal of healthy childhood. She thought the best way of dealing with the question was to see that the rising generation had that knowledge which would enable them to understand the dangers of alcohol and the value of the different foods and the duties which they would have to perform in after life. It was a side she thought they hadn't sufficiently discussed. Then they did not lay sufficient emphasis on the drunkenness of fathers and their duties. So many of the children were suffering from the habits of the fathers. With regard to child insurance, which was universal, she did not think that had much to do with the infant death rate. Supposing the infant death rate was 150 per thousand, probably the 750 of those which lived were insured. Her experience was that it was the thrifty, careful mother who insured her child in order to give it a decent burial. It was the thriftless, drunken, improvident mother who would not take the trouble to pay the penny a week to do that and who would depend upon taking up a collection among her neighbours for the burial. Turning to Dr Atkinson's paper, she thought neglect of wife and children should be made a criminal offence. That would bring home to the fathers their responsibilities. Many fathers thought when they had given 15s. or £1 a week to their wife they had wiped their hands of all responsibility to wife and children. Another thing Dr Atkinson said was that reasonable and attractive amusements must be provided for hard working mothers. It was said on the previous day that mothers must remain at home. But all mothers needed a reasonable amount of recreation and change and they would be better wives and mothers if they had those opportunities. Many women had told her their health and the health of their children had been benefited by them joining, say, a political association, either a women's Liberal or a Conservative association. It was something to look forward to and to get their work done for. They should not forget how dull the homes of working men were. The attractions mentioned would help the day away without drinking and other things. Poor people could get most suitable cradles by buying a penny banana crate, which could stand on two chairs opposite the fire, and answered all the purposes of a cradle.

Councillor SHELMERDINE (Liverpool) supposed he was called upon to speak as the Chairman of the Infantile Protection Society of Liverpool. His experience went to show that undoubtedly the main cause of this mortality was drink. Drink was not only looked upon as a pleasure but as a necessity, most mistakenly. It might be a pleasure, but it certainly was not a necessity. In Liverpool they found that women drank before the birth of a child and after the birth also. Now he understood the effect of drink on an unborn child was of a

deleterious description. If that was so surely it was equally true that the effect of drink on a child whose mother was suckling it was also deleterious. As a man in the street he knew that if a doctor wished to give medicine to a newly-born infant, he did not give it to the child but to the mother, whose milk affected the child in the way that was desired. As a magistrate he sat at the Liverpool Police Court from time to time, and they had 180 or 200 cases on Monday mornings. It seemed almost hopeless to get anything like the sobriety they desired. He had a case the other day of a woman who on being released from gaol after a sentence for drunkenness was met by a friend who had a bottle of whisky with her. The result was by three o'clock in the afternoon they were both locked up. He thought the woman who had just been released was more sinned against than sinning, and he sent the woman who had brought the whisky to gaol, and set the other free. He went round the public-houses in Liverpool as a member of the Liverpool Licensing Bench, and they found no fewer than six women drinking at half-past three in the afternoon, and two of them had babies in their arms. Some had whisky before them and some pints of ale. The result of that was that the public-house had been referred for compensation. In Liverpool they had the services of lady sanitary inspectors, and a great many associations of various kinds which were doing good work in the way of reducing the cursed drink evil. They did not call them health visitors but lady sanitary inspectors. They were paid by the Corporation about 35s. a week, some £2, and they were provided with a uniform of a respectable kind. It was absolutely necessary they should be well-dressed in going from house to house, because they got a standing among the poor people, which they would not get if they were dressed in any other but official uniform. He had recently been round with one of these visitors, and in one house they found a most pitiable sight. The husband, after going out to work, came home and with an axe smashed up the furniture. The poor wife was sitting by the fire with two neighbours, and her remark was, "What can I do?" They all knew how helpless a woman was who had a husband of that sort. They might ask what was the remedy? His feeling was that education was the remedy. Large sums were being spent in this country on education, and he believed that was the main panacea for those woes. They had another. In Liverpool they were reducing licenses very considerably. They had referred some 107 public-houses for compensation during the last three years. They had spent about £100,000 in compensation, and there would be about thirty houses referred for compensation this year. He believed the question of the reduction of the temptation to drink was one of the benefits which would necessarily accrue. There were people from all parts of the country at that meeting, and they would be doing a good thing for the nation and for their own town or city if they endeavoured to get their own municipality to form a sub-

committee to deal with the question of the infant life preservation when they got home.

Mrs HASLAM (Bolton Board of Guardians) said she came forward because two or three speakers said they would like to know if any Board of Guardians was in communication with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The Union to which she belonged made great use of the officer for that purpose. They gave a grant of money to them and asked them to look into cases which they found were really wanting attention with regard to the children. Another thing they were now doing since the Notification of Births Act had been adopted by their Corporation was to have a lady inspector of midwives, and they would shortly have two sanitary inspectors, and with these they must have a large number of voluntary health visitors. Her own feeling was that until they got that voluntary help to go into the houses of the poor their legislation would be practically little good. The question of the employment of women in factories touched them very much in the North. She belonged to the cotton, coal, and ironworks district. She felt very much the possible interference with the women's work in the factories, not that she could approve of their working in factories, but she felt it was a thing in which they should be guided by the feeling amongst the community, by the feeling among the men. One poor woman said, "It is only the women with idle husbands who are allowed to work in factories." They wanted to increase the status of the women at home. They could not say no women shall work in factories. What about widows with children, the wives of delicate husbands and of men who had got their limbs injured in the coal mines or the factories, and the mothers of illegitimate children? If they passed a law that married women were to be debarred from working what were they to do to help other women? That was too strong a measure, and it was an interference with legitimate sources of employment upon which they ought to be guided by the feeling in the community. It was through education in the schools that they had to do something in this matter, and if in London they could get the Board of Education to suddenly put a stop to all the half-time system they would then have a chance of keeping the children at school until they were at least fourteen—she would like to see it fifteen. In that case scholars might easily be induced to go to evening schools once or twice a week, where they might get the personal touch of the teacher. Until they got something of that sort they would hardly touch the problem. Another thing about the half-time system was that as soon as little children of twelve, if they were clever enough, passed their standard, they got into the mills and worked half-time. They immediately became a different kind of child from what they were at school. They got among other people and heard things, and the effect on the moral life of the children was a long-standing evil. They were told they should consider the quality of the women who were producing children. She thought

they should get hold of the fathers and make them realise their responsibilities. It was not enough the woman's life of sobriety, but the man's life of sobriety and his interest in the whole question. She thought they did more by voluntary help than by any definite step in legislation.

Alderman Dr LAVER, J.P. (Colchester) alluded to a squabble between the London County Council and the Government as to who was to pay exactly the number of shillings per week for chronic inebriate women committed to the reformatories by magistrates. The London County Council had closed its contract with all the reformatories, except that at Farmfield, which was equivalent to reducing the accommodation enough for 600 to enough for 100. The remainder with their terms unexpired would be turned out to the streets to revert to the general cockpit, and there would be no further accommodation for inebriates who might be committed by magistrates sufficiently intelligent to do so. As regards infant mortality, of the 365 women committed to reformatories last year an investigation into their history showed that they had between them 2,200 children. At least two-thirds of these women were feeble from birth, congenitally unfit. They had very poor memories, and if they said 2,200 it might be supposed there were more of whom they could not remember. Of those 2,200, who should not have been born in an enlightened state, 1,000 were dead when the women made the statement. Of that figure an enormous number would contribute to the infantile mortality. So were they governed that now, owing to a squabble as to shillings, which in any case would have to be paid, that accommodation had been cut down to one-sixth what it was before, and a much smaller fraction than what it ought to be, and those women would be discharged upon the streets to go through the awful and terrible tragedy. If that did not arouse any one who could think he did not know what could. That was the sort of thing they were governed by in London.

Dr ARMSTRONG (Medical Officer of Health, Newcastle) thought the great deal of valuable information brought before that Conference would be in danger of being lost for want of co-ordination. His object in speaking was to say that there was already before the country a movement to co-ordinate the action of sanitary authorities, the establishment of a body for the national union of public health authorities, and one of the main objects of that union was to carry on the war against infant mortality and to co-ordinate the differences of view held by different authorities, rural and urban, and so on, which was much at variance. A good deal of the evidence before that Conference was evidence of individuals, and given from their point of view, which, valuable as it was, was not appreciated by others from different localities and cities. He hoped there would be a common action between that Conference and the new National Union of Sanitary Authorities in the future.

Dr HOPE, in reply, said he had heard no dissentient from the suggestion that the personal factor was a very important one in con-

nection with infant life. The difficulty was to influence that factor and on that there was room for quiet discussion. Then, again, it was obvious that the factor itself differed. The mother, perhaps, lacked intelligence, or the man or the woman or both had fallen into bad habits. With regard to the latter, it was said that it really was so small and so insignificant that they might neglect it. It was said that it was really a libel on the poor people to say that they had such things. That was what they heard continually, that it was an exaggeration. It appeared to him that, inasmuch as speakers had put it down at, say, 50 per cent. being due to it, 30 or 10 per cent. It was a matter of no consequence at all what the percentage was. The question was, was it worth getting rid of? People might say typhoid fever did not kill off more than 10 per cent. Would that be a sufficient reason for shutting up their health department? He did not think it would. Therefore, admitting that drink did not cause more than 10 per cent., it made no difference at all. They must still proceed and persevere until that 10 per cent. had been wiped out. He was not to be taken for a moment as saying that no more than 10 per cent. of the infant mortality was caused by drink. They all knew better. The question of education was touched upon. Several speakers referred to the enormously good work which had been done as health visitors by the school teachers and by the school nurses. They would all assent to the work they did in the interests of the public health and in saving infant life. He should like to correct a wrong impression which, he thought, Dr Milward and other speakers made, that it was only one or two cases of the poor who reared all their children. It was very large numbers indeed, only one was limited in making illustrations. The observations of Miss Boyce interested him. They knew that deaths of illegitimate infants were very much greater than those born in wedlock, and for obvious reasons. Yet one would hardly have expected in a rural district such a lamentable state of affairs as Miss Boyce alluded to. Dr Malet touched upon a point to which too much importance could not be attached, and that was the actual waste of money in alcoholic beverages. It was simply throwing money away. He had been reminded of the motto of a noble lord during the last two or three days. It was "*Basis virtutum constantia*," "Steadiness is the foundation of all good." He should like to see that motto put up in a conspicuous place in every house where the refreshing beverages with which that noble peer was associated were sold. He should also like to see it—and he made the suggestion in no offensive manner—on every bottle.

The CHAIRMAN said Dr Atkinson had been unable to stay and make his reply. Dr Atkinson wished him to read the following:—"Nurses, district nurses, and certified midwives are already known, and are well known by the poor. They need no introduction, as would strangers. Such workers as these should be encouraged to instruct the mothers as to the feeding and also as to abstinence from

drink." Ladies, in Dr Atkinson's opinion, would do well to give "At Homes" to all these workers, district nurses and certified midwives, and press upon them the possibility of exerting their influence in this country.

THE REGULATION AND CONTROL OF THE MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF FOODS AND DRUGS FOR INFANTS.

By ERIC PRITCHARD, M.A., M.D. (Oxon).

Among the many factors that are responsible for the high mortality obtaining among infants in this country, there can be no doubt in the minds of those who have inquired into this matter that the unrestricted use of so-called proprietary foods among the middle and upper classes, and that of soothing syrups and teething powders among the poor, is one of those that must be reckoned with. These factors have no claim to rank on equal terms with ignorance and indifference on the part of the parent, with hereditary and constitutional disabilities latent in the infant, with unsatisfactory hygienic or economic conditions, or with debasement of the moral environment, but all the same they are factors, and important factors, well deserving of the attention of this Conference, which proposes to probe to its source and origin every possible cause of infant mortality. Some of those who have ventured to question the wisdom of our traditional national policy with respect to the general liberty of the subject, venture to question in particular the expediency of this liberty in respect of the unrestricted sale and manufacture of proprietary foods and drugs for infants. The shibboleth of "free play of natural forces" is all very well when the conditions are natural, but in this country natural forces are not allowed free play, and so-called public opinion is often fashioned by a financially-interested press. Is there any reason for thinking that the public in this country

have better means of protecting themselves against the wiles of the secret-remedy and patent-food manufacturer than they have in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, America, or Australia? If not, let us at once follow in their footsteps and set our house in order. Although I have only been commissioned to deal in this paper with the control of the sale of food and drugs for infants it is clearly impossible to forget, in its relationship to infant mortality, that the unrestricted sale of these commodities, and especially of drugs, to the public influences the death rate among infants in other than direct ways. The expectant mother who relieves the symptoms incidental to her condition by resorting to such drugs as veronal or antikamnia, or keeps up her strength by proprietary medicines, of which the most important constituent may be alcohol, contributes her quota to the general sum of causes which influence infant mortality.

As the more important of the two I shall deal with the question of drugs first and then proceed to that of so-called patent or proprietary infants' foods. The reasons for the popularity of secret remedies is probably explained partly on the ground of the resourcefulness of those who exploit them, partly on the attitude taken up by the public, partly on that assumed by our Government, and partly on that assumed by the medical profession. Dealing with the first of these causes, I would remind you that into the ignoble service of so-called secret remedies are pressed some of the most resourceful and brilliant brains of commercialism. Why this should be so is quite clear, for of all trades it is the most remunerative. The man Fulford, who exploited the British public with his Bile Bean bubble, accumulated a huge fortune in a few years, and showed his gratitude to a credulous public by leaving at his death one-fifth of his shares in the Bile Beans Company for the endowment of the Barnardo Homes. The Barnardo Homes, however, did not accept the legacy in the

terms of Fulford's will, but compromised matters by settling for a lump sum of cash unconditionally handed over. The effrontery of the statements of some of those who devote their energies to this sort of business is almost beyond belief, and they mount on the stepping-stones of audacity to ever greater heights of commercial prosperity. How is the panacea of education to protect speechless infants and ignorant womanhood from the mendacious exaggeration of these unscrupulous individuals? Can education make pharmaceutical chemists or analysts of those on whom the incidence of this roguery falls, and, if not analysts and chemists, how are they or others to arrive at a knowledge of the compositions of the nostrums that are dangled before their eyes? When one reads of the cures effected by secret remedies, and the highly imaginative results of patent food feeding, one is reminded of the old story of Bion, who, when he was shown the votive offerings hung in a great temple by those who had been saved from shipwreck through the efficacy of prayer, remarked, "But where are the names of those who have been drowned?" The numbers of shipwrecked infants are written in the mortality statistics issued by the Registrar General from Somerset House.

By reason of huge advertising contracts part of the press in this country is virtually in the manacles of this debased form of commercialism. In the *British Medical Journal* of 17th November 1906 Mr Henry Sewill stated in a letter on the subject of "The Antipodes and Patent Medicines," that "no help in the movement (against the infamy of quackery) will be given by the lay press; from the *Times* downward they are all taking a share of the enormous sum, certainly more than one million sterling, which is being spent annually by advertisements of quacks."

In America, where the "hydra-headed" monster of secret remedies is possibly even more rapacious and exacting than in this country, its forces are well organised

under the ægis of the Proprietary Association of America—a society whose objects are in some respects similar to those of a British organisation called "The Proprietary Articles Trade Association." This latter organisation consists of manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers, and its chief object is to prevent "price cutting" in what are popularly called "patent" medicines.

In the Report of the Royal Commission, drawn up by Mr Beale for the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, page after page is devoted to an exposure of the methods of these organisations.

A few quotations from this Report will suffice to explain the double advantages of the advertisement. The following are samples of the regulations and printed forms used by certain firms for their advertisement contracts with thousands of newspapers throughout the United States :—

"We hereby agree for the sum of dollars per year to insert in the , published at , the advertisements of the Company."

Then follow conditions as to the amount of space to be used in each issue, the page the advertisement is to appear on, and the position it is to occupy. Then come these two remarkable conditions of the contract :—

"First it is agreed in case any law or laws are enacted, either State or National, harmful to the interests of the . . . Company that this contract may be cancelled by them from date of such enactment and the insertions made paid for *pro rata* with the contract price."

This clause is remarkable enough, but the second clause is still more remarkable and runs as follows :—

"It is agreed that the Company may cancel this contract *pro rata* in case advertisements are published in this paper in which other products are offered, with a view to substitution or other harmful motives,

also in case any matter otherwise detrimental to the Company's interest is permitted to appear in the reading columns or elsewhere in the paper."

One can only hope that things are not quite as bad as this in this country, but the eloquent silence of the lay press on the subject of the great Bile Beans Case, tried in the Court of Session in Scotland in February 1905, is at least highly suggestive that information of this kind which is damaging to trade interests can be effectually suppressed in those cases in which advertisements are sufficiently large. I do not believe that there is one person in ten thousand who has ever heard of the Bile Beans Case or the ruthless exposure of the tricks by which it was exploited on the public, and the fact that Bile Beans still enjoy a considerable sale in this country is a striking commentary on the power of the big advertisement.

In the *Pharmaceutical Journal* of 11th August 1906, there appeared the following paragraph :—

"In last Saturday's *John Bull*, under the heading of 'Shams,' there was about a page article dealing with the above ('the Bile Beans judgment'). This is the only instance I can find of the press in England touching the matter. Great is the power of the big advertisement!" — H. Jennings, Nottingham, 7th August 1906.

In striking contrast to the suppression of the reports of this case is the publicity recently afforded to the case of Tucker *v.* Wakley and another. In this instance the plaintiffs, unlike the Bile Beans Company, was a small firm which did not advertise. I could quote numerous examples of the same kind, but space is limited and "*ex uno disce omnes.*"

But if the onus of blame for the popularity of secret remedies rests principally with the vendors of these often worthless shams, the body politic as represented by the Government can hardly be released from all responsibility, for are they not co-partners in the pro-

ceeds of this traffic in human life and human health? If participation in the profits to the extent of 12 per cent. of the retail price (stamp duty) does not constitute partnership—one might almost say dominant partnership—what in the name of justice does it constitute? Further, when our legislators are asked to give us relief from the bonds of quackery, faithful to the traditions of our antiquated policy they glibly put us off with the old shibboleths, "the freedom of the subject," "the free play of natural forces," "morality by Act of Parliament," "Am I my brother's keeper?" and so on. Recently, when our Home Secretary was asked in Parliament whether his attention had been directed to the frauds perpetrated upon the public by the advertising and sale of quack remedies, he replied, "I don't doubt but that the advertising and sale of quack medicines is often the cause of serious mischief, but it is an evil which must be met rather by the spread of education than by legislation or prosecution."

Public opinion in this country on the subject of food and drugs is made generally by advertising and by the press which is under the thraldom of the advertisement. Truly, as it has been said, "We must begin the campaign against quackery by educating our legislators rather than the public."

I am quite ready to admit that we as medical men —I mean we, the practising members of the profession —do not enter this fray with entirely clean hands. I should be very sorry to discover the mote which is in my neighbour's eye without admitting the beam which is in my own. We have been exploited just as much as the public have been exploited; we have been the catspaw and fool of the fraternity of the secret remedy. To satisfy the craving of our patients for new and sensational remedies we lend ourselves to the specious machinations of the drug manufacturer and we swallow wholesale the statements that are printed in their circulars and prospectuses. Let me quote you what

Mr Bok, the editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal* in America and a mighty champion of the cause of anti-quackery, said to a large gathering of members of our own profession :—

"I was given an opportunity to examine one hundred prescriptions; of these, forty-two prescribed a proprietary drug or article in part or whole. I selected thirty of these and called on each of the physicians who had written these prescriptions. Now, gentlemen, these physicians were men of excellent standing, some very high in their profession, and how many of these thirty physicians would you say gave me an accurate, or anything approaching an accurate, analysis of the ingredients of the nostrum which they had prescribed? How many? Two, gentlemen—two out of the thirty! The rest either did not know, or, what is even more dangerous, thought they knew when they didn't."

Again :—"We are preaching to the public to stop the nefarious habit of self-doctoring, but possibly by such methods as these we are driving people to doctor themselves, driving them to the quacks and the charlatans."

Are we better in that respect in this country than are the physicians of America? Are we any less inclined to prescribe secret or proprietary remedies of which we don't know the composition? I had the curiosity to have 2,653 prescriptions carefully analysed, as dispensed by a highly respected chemist in one of the most fashionable quarters in London, and this is what I found. Out of the total number of these prescriptions 573 contained proprietary compounds or proprietary drugs. Some of them even contained two or three proprietary preparations. How many of the physicians who prescribed these secret preparations knew what they were prescribing?

Proprietary medicines and so-called "ethical" preparations follow in the wake of the consulting physician

and spread with astonishing rapidity through the rank and file of the profession. Then they become the property of the public who proceed to doctor themselves. By so doing, not only do we cut our own throats, but we put into the hands of the public a double-edged weapon with which they can perform the same suicidal act for themselves.

This is what Mr Rufus Fleming, United States Consul in Edinburgh, explained to his Government in reporting on the trade in proprietary articles in Scotland: —" In the matter of a new pharmaceutical preparation Edinburgh may follow London opinion, but Scotland follows only Edinburgh. About six months after trade has become active in this city and vicinity (Edinburgh) the traffic from the cities and towns in Scotland attain a considerable volume. This wave-like movement is the common thing, and its origin and direction are invariable."

Next, let me explain how and in what way the unrestricted sale of secret remedies has a prejudicial effect on the mortality and morbidity of our infant population. As far as statistics can explain its relationship I must admit that there is very little direct proof that a large number of deaths among infants are immediately due to the administration of secret or proprietary remedies. Only a comparatively small number of cases come under the notice of our coroners.

In the Report of the Royal Commission already referred to, Mr Beale adduces authority (Dr W. Murrell) for the statement that 15,000 infants are killed annually by those means. This may or may not be an accurate estimate, but in view of the highly dangerous character of the drugs contained in many of the secret remedies, which our law permits to be sold without restrictions, and, in view of the enormous traffic that is conducted in them, the only wonder is, not that the deaths or computed deaths are so great, but that they are not infinitely more numerous. It

surely is a reflection on our common-sense as a nation that "Mrs Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Teething Infants," of which one of the active therapeutic agents is morphia, is still allowed to enjoy so wide a popularity in this country.

The official stamp, which proclaims the 12 per cent. share which our Government enjoys in the sale of proprietary remedies, is regarded by many an ignorant purchaser as a guarantee of merit and good faith, especially when, by an ingenious trick in the folding of the stamp, the "not" in the sentence, "This stamp does not imply any Government guarantee," is concealed from view.

Among the forty-eight million bottles or boxes of proprietary or secret remedies which bear the official stamp and are sold in this country, there are dozens of soothing syrups and powders which anybody can purchase from an apothecary, and which contain such dangerous drugs as morphia, acetanilide, and mercury. But in addition to this particular form of traffic in poisons any person is at liberty to enter a chemist's shop and ask for a pennyworth of soothing syrup for baby, and to receive a dose of Nurse's Drops, or some other dangerous compound containing opium or other scheduled poison, provided that the word "Poison" is printed on the label. An enormous sale is transacted in these soothers sold in pennyworths. They are popular because they are exempt from the stamp duty and can be purchased in smaller quantities than is usual in the case of proprietary remedies. There appears, however, to be a growing tendency among the better class chemists to discourage the sale of baby mixtures containing poisons.

Although to my mind the principle is wrong which allows a chemist to prescribe dangerous drugs for administration to infants, nevertheless, in that they are dispensed by chemists who have received an adequate pharmaceutical training and are conscious of their

responsibilities, they are doubtless less productive of evil than such proprietary preparations as "Mrs Winslow's Soothing Syrup," which contains morphia, or "Atkinson's Royal Infant's Preservative," containing chloroform and morphia, "Godfrey's Cordial," which contains opium, Chlorodyne which contains morphia, "Steedman's Powders," which contain calomel and starch, and a host of other proprietary soothing syrups and powders, which are sold by the hundred gross, and which contain morphia, chloroform, alcohol, and acetanilide, some of which are, and some of which should be, scheduled poisons.

It appears from Mr Beale's Report that there is no constancy about the formulæ of many proprietary medicines. Indeed, as long as the law allows manufacturers any protection in a registered trade name or in an official stamp, and to add or subtract any drug they please, without conforming to any definite standard or without indicating any such change on the label, we may be perfectly certain that the more unscrupulous among them will continue to enjoy and make use of this privilege as long as it suits their purpose. Mr Beale states that :—

"We see by analysis that while the constituents and preparation (of these proprietary medicines) vary, the name of the nostrum and testimonials of its efficacy remain the same. A cough cure or a bronchitis cure is prepared with or without morphia or chloroform to suit the laws of one State or another, thus with the same appearance a tablespoonful may be innocuous from one bottle and deadly from another. The morphia in a particular soothing syrup has been shown to vary greatly, and the chloroform also varies widely. Teething powders containing subchloride of mercury are marked, 'Containing no poison.' The quantities vary because of unchecked mixing, and may salivate the babes."

Further, Mr Beale adds :—

"The right claimed to name the nostrum at the will of the concocter is also inadmissible, because the name chosen may be of a misleading or intentionally deceptive character. Such as 'Bromo-Seltzer,' to hide acetanilide; 'Irish Moss,' to hide two narcotic poisons; 'Herbal,' to hide mineral poisons; 'Sulphur Bitters, containing no alcohol,' which do contain alcohol, but do not contain sulphur; 'Cherry Pectoral,' which contains nothing from cherries; 'Essence of Linseed,' which contains chlorodyne and morphia; and 'Syrup of Figs,' the active constituent of which is senna. The principal claim issued is that he (the drug packer) be left undisturbed in the cloak of secrecy and the public be left at his mercy."

My own experience has been that the habit of giving a certain proprietary teething powder containing mercury and starch to infants is more common among the poor of the West End of London than is the case with any other secret remedy. In infants these powders act as a most powerful purgative. They contain starch, which is not exactly the best form of food for young and delicate infants, and subchloride of mercury, which in all cases should be given with circumspection, and which is decidedly a dangerous drug to use indiscriminately. I remember as a student being told by the late Sir William Broadbent that subchloride of mercury was one of the most effective forms of soporific for certain cases of heart disease. Poor mothers soon learn the same lesson in regard to these powders; nothing gives the baby or its mother a better night's rest, and this knowledge very soon leads to serious abuses. I have known of several cases in which these powders were given regularly to infants to an extent that produced the clearest symptoms of mercurial poisoning.

Among better class patients one often has an uncomfortable suspicion that infants are being dosed unbeknown to the mother or oneself by unscrupulous

nurses, who sometimes have little difficulty in procuring soothing syrups containing morphia from the nearest chemist. The great objection, however, to the unrestricted sale of soothing syrups and teething powders containing dangerous ingredients is not so much that they are immediately responsible for deaths which come under the notice of the coroner, or even that they contribute indirectly to the mortality rate, as that they permanently injure the health of the vast number of infants who survive.

The sale of drugs of all kinds is regulated by the "Sale of Food and Drugs Acts," which makes no distinction as to whether the drugs are intended for administration to infants or adults. In the first of these Acts (Section VI.), it is set forth :—"No person shall sell to the prejudice of the purchaser any article of food or any drug which is not of the nature, substance, and quality demanded by such purchaser under a penalty not exceeding £20 for the first offence." But it is expressly provided that "an offence shall not be deemed to be committed in those cases where the drug or food is a proprietary preparation." Section VII. says: "No person shall sell any compound article of food or compounded drug which is not composed of the ingredients in accordance with the demands of the purchaser under a penalty not exceeding £20." Seeing that the manufacturer of a secret remedy is absolutely free to alter and vary the ingredients from time to time there is no protection whatsoever to the buyer that he is buying what the vendor professes, or has at any time professed, to sell. The sale of what are considered to be poisonous or dangerous drugs is governed by the Pharmacy Act of 1868. The provisions of this Act make it an offence for any person otherwise than a properly qualified chemist to sell certain substances mentioned in the following Schedule of Poisons :—

Poisons within the Meaning of the Pharmacy Act, 1868. Part I.

Not to be sold unless the purchaser is known to, or is introduced by some person known to the seller; also entry to be made in poison-book of—

1. Date of sale.
2. Name and address of purchaser.
3. Name and quantity of article.
4. Purpose for which it is wanted.

Attested by signature, and must be labelled with

1. Name of article.
2. The word "Poison."
3. Name and address of seller.

Arsenic, and its preparations. (For special regulations see page 61.)
Aconite, and its preparations.
Alkaloids.—All poisonous vegetable alkaloids and their salts.
Atropine, preparations of.
Cantharides.
Cocaine, and its salts.
Corrosive Sublimate.
Cyanides of Potassium, and all metallic cyanides and the preparation of such articles.
Emetic Tartar.
Ergot of Rye, and its preparations.
Picrotoxin.
Prussic Acid, and its preparations.
Savin, and its oil.
Strychnine, and its preparations.

Part II. also contains a number of potent poisons, the sale of which is confined to chemists and druggists, but, provide that the packages containing such substances are labelled with the word "Poison" and the name and address of the seller, they may be sold to any one without further restriction.

It follows that these Schedules are utterly inadequate to meet the requirements of the case, especially in regard to the sale of poisons administered to infants. Acetanilide, for instance, is certainly a poison which should be added to the number of those already scheduled, and veronal is another which might be added with advantage. But the inefficacy of a Poison Schedule of this kind to meet the requirements of the case is quite apparent when we remember the resourcefulness of the synthetic drug manufacturer, for as soon as one drug is added to the list we may be perfectly certain that new ones equally dangerous will be sub-

stituted for it. It follows from these enactments that any person is entitled to purchase from a qualified chemist for administration to infants proprietary medicines containing scheduled poisons, or proprietary medicines containing unscheduled poisons, and soothing syrups and medicines of all kinds dispensed at the discretion of the chemist, the only restriction being that in the case of scheduled poisons, belonging to Part I. and Part II. a label bearing the word "Poison," together with the name and address of the seller, must be applied to the bottle, while the name and address of the purchaser and the purpose for which they are required must be entered in the book kept for that purpose when poisons belonging to Part I. are purchased. I have been told of one case in which two drams of paregoric (containing half a grain of morphia) were purchased daily, and, in spite of the "poisons" label, administered to an infant, who at this early age must clearly have acquired the morphia habit.

Apart from the general inadequacy of these provisions for protecting a perfectly helpless class of individual, the particular weakness lies in the want of proper control over the sale of proprietary medicines which, as I have already stated, may be misleading in description, and which have no standard of composition or strength.

In no European country besides our own is the principle of leaving each individual to work out his own salvation in respect of taking such dangerous drugs recognised or encouraged by the State. In every other country the public are protected against the specious and insidious appeals to valetudinarianism which are the strongholds of quacks. For instance, the public sale of secret remedies is forbidden throughout Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, and many Swiss cantons, either completely or almost completely. In

Austria no recommendation of any proprietary medicine as a cure for any disease is allowed, and all advertisements in the press and elsewhere are under the direct and strict supervision of the police, while a maximum retail price is fixed for all proprietary medicines. In fixing these prices the Board of Health bases its calculations on the wholesale price of ingredients, and allows nothing for the incidental expenses, such as advertising, which in this country forms the greater part of the expenses of a proprietary medicine manufacturer. In France only qualified chemists are allowed to make and sell proprietary medicines. Associations which are of the nature of limited companies may not sell them, and it is strictly against the law to sell any patent medicines of which the formula has not been published, has not been favourably reported upon by the professional staff at the School of Pharmacy, and approved by the Minister of Commerce. It is significant that some "patent medicines" in Great Britain are forbidden entry into the French ports on the ground that the School of Pharmacy has reported that they constitute a danger to public health. If such articles are occasionally sold in France it is because they are smuggled into the country.

Australia and the United States of America, both of which countries were, until quite recently, the homes of quackery, have lately put in force strong regulations for the protection of the public. It is required that proprietary medicines which contain certain drugs shall have the names of those drugs declared on the labels. These regulations are preliminary to others of a far more stringent character which are now being drawn up.

One of the results of these enactments in America is that certain proprietary medicines which are so largely advertised both in this country and in America have been withdrawn from the American market, but are still sold here, while in other cases the chief ingredient

has been omitted from the stock packed for America, while the supplies imported to this country still contain it. In America, also, the jungle of quackery has been cleared, or, rather, is in process of being cleared, not only by legislation, but by force of public opinion, which has been stirred to support the law by the tireless energy and single-hearted efforts of Mr Edward Bok, editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal*. This highly respected journal is carrying on a relentless campaign against quackery of all sorts, and the results achieved are one of the triumphs of modern journalism. In America, also, a national anti-quackery society has been inaugurated with considerable enthusiasm, hundreds of independent associations joining in the movement, which is designed to carry on a persistent campaign against quacks and quackery. In the same country, the Bureau of Chemistry, an accessory of the Department of Agriculture, is also doing excellent work in the same direction, by conducting analyses of secret remedies, and by allowing the results to be published from time to time in the medical journals.

In Australia the movement against quackery is being ably assisted by the *Lone Hand*, a journal with an extensive circulation, which refuses to accept advertisements of quack remedies; while the labour section of the Commonwealth Parliament regards quackery as a form of imposition against which the poor must be protected.

What remedies have I to propose for the present deplorable condition of affairs, which allows our infant population to be drugged with dangerous soothing syrups and objectionable teething powders, while there is nothing to prevent the mothers of our race from dosing themselves with proprietary medicines containing alcohol, acetanilide, sulphonal, veronal, or a hundred and one other undesirable remedies of which they know not the dangers nor the quantities they are taking?

We have in this country a very excellent Act which compels, under a heavy penalty, all persons who sell any compounded food or drug, to supply an invoice or warranty of the materials from which either has been manufactured. Should it contain any deleterious or worthless ingredient, the seller is liable to summary conviction. This Act, which protects the purchaser very completely, has no application whatsoever to infants or human beings, but it is solely intended for the protection of cattle and certain agricultural interests. I imagine that most of us who take an interest in infant mortality would be quite satisfied if the application of this Act were extended to the case of infants. We could not ask for more stringent or effective regulations for the control of the manufacture and sale of foods and drugs. Surely the spirit of commercialism which prompted the framing of the "Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act" for the protection of our greatest industry ought to consider the important industry of infant rearing. As Mr J. Compton Rickett, M.P., said, "Babies are getting scarcer and, according to the inevitable law of supply and demand, are rising in value." The administration of this Act rests with the Department of Agriculture, and, seeing that the latter already possesses the machinery for dealing with the control of the sale and manufacture of food stuffs for cattle and fertilisers for the soil, it might be convenient that the control of foods and drugs intended for infant consumption should be vested in the same department. The extension of this Act so as to include babies would be far more effective than any amplification of the Pharmacy Act, for, even if all known dangerous drugs were included in the Schedule of Poisons, as already stated, new unscheduled drugs would immediately fill their places owing to the resourcefulness of the synthetic chemist. I take it, however, that before such extension of the Fertilisers and Food Stuffs Act could

receive the sanction of Parliament, public opinion would have to be awakened in some such way as it has been awakened in Australia and America. There is no reason to suppose that measures which have operated to this end in these two countries would be less effective in England. Why cannot we induce some reputable and influential journal in this country to throw off the thraldom of the big advertisement, and initiate the same sort of campaign as that undertaken by the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Collier's Weekly* in America? And further, why should we not have some sort of central organisation, such as that which is known in America as the National Anti-Quackery Society?

It may be of interest to the members of this Conference to hear that the well-known authoress, Mrs Baillie Saunders, is now writing a novel of which the leading motive is the subject dealt with in this paper.

Control of the Sale and Manufacture of Infants' Foods.

Let me now return to the important subject of proprietary foods for infants. *Mutatis mutandis*, much that has already been said with regard to the exploitation of proprietary drugs applies equally to that of infants' foods. An admirable paper on the chemistry of these proprietary foods was presented by Mr James Knight to the 1906 meeting of this Conference. In his paper he stated the case against these foods in a most adequate and temperate manner, purely on the grounds of their chemical constitution, and from this point of view I have very little further to add. Some eight years ago, in the first edition of my little work on the "Physiological Feeding of Infants," I made the following statements:—

"The vendors of patent foods have much to be responsible for in the false education of the public in

matters of infant feeding. By literature, pictorial and otherwise, spread broadcast throughout the land, they have become the chief medium for formulating the ideas of our young mothers as to their duties towards their infants in regard to feeding."

To give an example of the mischievous instructions which they give for preparing an infant's daily food, I quote verbatim the directions as supplied with what is, perhaps, the best known of all patent foods. It certainly has an enormous sale, and has doubtless played no inconsiderable part in lowering the physical condition of many of the present generation in this country. The following are the instructions :—

"For children about the age of three months, dissolve a tablespoonful of the food in four tablespoonfuls of hot water, and add sufficient warm cow's milk to make half a pint." And, further, "The quantities mentioned in the directions will be found sufficient to fill a feeding-bottle, and enough for a meal for an infant of three or four months. The food should be put in a feeding-bottle, and the child allowed to suck until its contents are exhausted."

It is not stated how many bottles should be given during the twenty-four hours, but presumably not less than eight for a child of three months. A simple calculation shows that if these directions are followed out, the infant will receive in the twenty-four hours 64 ounces of milk and eight tablespoonfuls of the patent food. Sixty-four ounces of milk contain—

Fat	2.240 oz.
Proteid	2.56 ,,
Sugar	2.78 ,,

And eight tablespoonfuls (4 oz.) of the patent food (calculated according to the analysis supplied with the food) contain—

Fat	.007 oz.
Proteid	.4028 ,,
Sugar	2.72 ,,

The milk and patent food combined giving a total of—

Fat	2.247	oz.
Proteid	2.962	„
Sugar	5.50	„

An infant's physiological requirements of the above constituents, according to Rotch, who is an accepted authority on this subject, are as follows :—

Fat	1.26	oz.
Proteid	.63	„
Sugar	2.205	„

Comparing the quantities as required by physiological needs, and those recommended by the proprietors of the patent food, it will be noticed that, as regards gross bulk, the food is considerably more than two and a half times that of the normal standard. The fat is twice the required amount, the sugar, or carbohydrate, two-and-a-half times, and the proteid more than four times too much.

Subsequent to the publication of this criticism, the directions on the particular food in question were altered in conformity with the suggestions I made, but a considerable number of other proprietary foods of the same kind still give directions for preparation on the same sort of scale as that to which I took objection.

I cannot attempt to explain in this paper the whole case against the use of so-called patent foods on physiological and economic grounds, but I append here a short summary of some of the reasons which can be urged against them :—

1. There is no guarantee, except the good faith of the manufacturer, that the food is of uniform standard.

2. There is no guarantee as to the date of the manufacture of the food.

3. There is no means of ascertaining, apart from chemical analyses, whether the food contains

starch or other constituent undesirable for infants consumption.

4. The cost is usually utterly out of proportion to the intrinsic value.

5. The great majority of cases of infantile scurvy have been in the case of infants fed on patent foods.

6. When prepared according to the directions given, most of these foods do not conform to the physiological standard required in the following respects :—

(*a*) The fat percentage is too low.

(*b*) The sugar or carbohydrate percentage is far too high.

(*c*) The nitrogenous elements are not presented in a form conducive to good nutrition.

(*d*) The food being of a soluble or pre-digested condition does not develop the digestive functions.

My own personal experience has been that babies, fed on most patent foods, display pronounced or at any rate mild symptoms of rickets, and, further, the great majority of them show, in a greater or less degree, feeble powers of resistance to disease. They are generally fat and give a superficial appearance of health, which is most deceptive to inexperienced persons. This, combined with the absence of symptoms referable to indigestion—a fact which is explained by the soluble or pre-digested condition of the food—is largely responsible for the popularity of these proprietary preparations. In the *Lancet* of 22nd July 1905, Dr W. J. Haworth gives statistics which showed that, while the mortality rate among infants fed on cow's milk was 177 per thousand, that of infants fed on patent foods was 202 per thousand. Too much reliance, however, must not be placed on these statistics, for the number of cases under observation was not sufficiently large. Personally, I should not have expected to find so

great a difference in the mortality rate. My own experience has been that it is not so much the death rate that is unfavourable, as that the morbidity rate in later childhood is excessive. Patent-food babies seem to suffer severely from bronchitis and convulsions, which are often wrongly attributed to the influence of dentition.

A high standard of purity has to be maintained by milk dealers, and the Government proposes to impose still more stringent restrictions on the production and distribution of milk. What applies to milk should surely apply also to milk substitutes. If we have a standard for the one, why should we not have one for the others also? At present if a milk dealer sells milk from which the fat has been abstracted, he commits an offence under the "Sale of Foods and Drugs Acts." On the other hand, a man may water his milk, and call it "Blank's Extra Nourishing Food," and make a fortune, because when sold under such a title it is constituted a proprietary food for which there is no standard. And for this Extra Nourishing Food he may make a charge of five or six times as high as that which he would be able to charge for pure milk. Therefore, while we are watching the back door for the fraudulent milkman the fraudulent seller of infants' food comes in at the front. A man who sells a bad infants' food is surely a worse offender than a man who sells watered milk, because he picks pockets on a larger scale.

Under the belief that these foods are all that is claimed for them, many a poor woman deprives herself of the necessities of life in order that she may provide her infant with what she considers to be essential for it. Granted that a substitute for cow's milk may at times be necessary, and that foods of the kind that are sold under proprietary titles can fulfil this requirement, it is a pity that there is not some means of providing these foods at a reasonable price. As a matter of fact,

very few of these foods have any advantage over ordinary bread jelly, which can be made quite inexpensively at home, while sugar, white of egg, and cream can be easily combined, and in such a form as to suit the requirements of most sick children who cannot digest ordinary cow's milk. The claims that are made for these proprietary foods are quite unwarranted. There can be no doubt in my mind that the control and sale of all these proprietary foods should be vested in the hands of a Government Department, and not only should there be a general standard for these foods below which none should be allowed to sink, but every tin or parcel containing them should bear a clearly printed statement of their chemical constitution. If this were done the public might in time recognise the true economic value of the preparations they buy. If such a statement were printed on the label each preparation would have its own standard, and if this standard were departed from the buyer would have grounds for action. A mere extension of the "Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act" so as to include infants, as well as cattle and poultry, would, as I have already stated in reference to the question of drugs, be amply sufficient. In Australia the Victoria Foods Standards Committee adopted the following standards under the provisions of the "Victorian Pure Food Act":—

"Infants' foods shall contain no woody fibre, no preservative substance, and no chemical substance insoluble in water, and, unless described or sold specially as food suitable *only* for infants over the age of seven months, shall, when prepared as directed by the accompanying label, contain no starch and shall contain the essential ingredients and conform approximately in its composition to normal mother's milk."

The first prosecutions under this Act have just taken place in Richmond, Victoria, and a grocer has been fined for selling three separate brands of infants'

foods which did not comply with the regulations. Seeing that America and Australia have recently passed Pure Food Acts which control the sale and manufacture of infants' food; seeing, also, that nearly all European countries protect their infant population by the same means, and, seeing that we in this country protect our cattle and agriculture by most effective Acts, it does not seem altogether unreasonable to claim similar indulgence for our own infants.

DISCUSSION.

Dr SPOTTISWOODE CAMERON (Medical Officer of Health, Leeds) hoped they would pass a resolution that afternoon similar to what they passed two years ago. One point in Dr Pritchard's paper which struck him was that sometimes the druggist who sold the thing under the wrong name might be prosecuted, but he did it from benevolent motives. For instance, as Dr Pritchard told them, paregoric, according to the British Pharmacopœia, contained a grain of opium in every half ounce. The mother said she wanted a little paregoric for her children, and it contained all the ingredients except the opium. He did not know whether they oughtn't to have some arrangement that any medicine, whatever its name, should be sold for the use of the baby with a written medical prescription. On the previous night he met a gentleman in the lobby of the House of Commons who said if a certain drug in which he was interested was put in the Pharmacy Act it would mean the loss of many thousands of pounds to him. He (the speaker) hoped that gentleman would lose his money.

Bailie ANDERSON said two years ago he was asked by the Royal Sanitary Institute to give what was called the popular address in Bristol, and he asked the Corporation chemist to give him an analysis of those extensive patent foods which were sold for babies. Of the thirteen analysed the first four contained over 75 per cent. of starch, the next four contained over 50 per cent. So that from one to eight contained over 50 per cent. of starch, and from one to eight contained less than 1 per cent. of fat. Now, in fact, if it hadn't been for the milk with which these foods were cooked the babies would have died from starvation if not from convulsions—child murder. He was only a common business man. The Government had given them the Hares and Rabbits Bill, the Fresh Water Trout Bill, the Wild Birds' Protection Act, and, two years ago, the Fertilising and Feeding Stuffs Bill to protect the horses and cows. Now, a Commission was sitting discussing what was whisky. He

suggested that Dr Cameron might move the resolution of two years ago, so that the Government might be constrained to ask what was infants' food, and they should seek to prevent anything being put upon the market as patent food for infants or invalids in regard to which there was not some guarantee that it was not a poison and swindle as most of them were.

Mrs Hawksley (Portsmouth Board of Guardians) wanted to say something because there were so many men present. She was the wife of a vicar, and a little while ago she went to see a baby who was very ill from bronchitis and was in a high fever. The mother was told by her doctor to give the child a drop of brandy in milk. She (the speaker) found the mother administering the mixture —not milk with a few drops of brandy, but literally brandy in which the milk was hardly visible. She had pawned her watch and ring to get the brandy, so they could not doubt the mother was in earnest. The medical man in that case had not given sufficient directions to the mother as to the amount of drug to be used. Dr Pritchard said if the women were told the meaning of the drugs which they bought and the effects of them it was probable that that might have a good effect. She thought Dr Pritchard could have no idea of the dismal ignorance of the women in the manufacturing towns. In the slums of Portsmouth women were absolutely ignorant of many of the simplest rules of life. If they found a drug which made the child sleep they would ask for that drug, and if one tried to enlighten them they would say it was necessary the child should sleep. In that matter she did not think it was any good instructing mothers, unless there were stringent regulations which prevented the drugs being obtained. They had a great deal of talk about legislation for the children. They talked about the rights of the child, about the State feeding of women who required nourishment. She asked them whether those were not matters which concerned women, whether it was not the women who took the greatest interest in the children, and whether any further regulation should be made in this matter until women had the right to make their voices heard?

Miss Blanche Gardiner, as one of the delegates of the Women Sanitary Inspectors' Association, endorsed what Dr Pritchard had said about the mischief done by misleading labels found on different patent foods which were sold for infants by chemists. They were misleading, first, because they claimed to be a perfect substitute for mothers' milk, which they were not, and, secondly, because they claimed to be malted, when in many instances they found by applying the iodine test there was unconverted starch present. Recently she bought sample tins and bottles of different infants' foods. One was described as a "perfect food," another "the best substitute for mothers' milk"; a third was "most nutritious and less costly" for babies, and a fourth was "the best and cheapest substitute for mothers' milk." One thing was certain, they could not all, being by different makers, be the best, and even though they

might be of varying degrees of badness, they could scarcely expect the unskilled mother to be able to discriminate between them. A poor mother went to the chemist's and read on the tin such and such is a perfect infants' food or substitute for mothers' milk. It could not be wondered at if in her desire to do the best she could for her infant she was led away. What was the most dangerous thing, in her (the speaker's) mind, was that what the woman read at the chemist's was just as likely to be true as what she was told by the doctor or what she read in the "Advice to Mothers" sent by the Public Health Department or handed to the mother by health visitors. As regards the absence or presence of starch, she found foods were described as milk and so contained starch, others were partly malted and others completely malted; where some of the makers of food seemed wary was, though some of the foods on being tested were found to contain starch to a certain amount, none of them put "with the starch" or "completely malted," but only said "malted." So, in a way, it was true what they said. But it had not been completely malted. It always seemed a pity that barley water was so widely advocated as it was by the doctors in the hospitals, not only because it contained a certain amount of starch, small or great, according to the way in which it was made, but also because the mothers, when they were told to give milk and barley water diluted, often looked upon the barley water as the more important food of the two, and so, as long as they gave a sufficient quantity of barley water, they did not mind at all if they omitted the milk. The danger often was that babies were perfectly happy when they were suckled on barley water.

Dr SAVAGE (Medical Officer of Health, Colchester) wanted to say a word not about the lower classes, but about the middle classes. He had been making inquiries among the poorer classes in Colchester, and he found that 80 per cent. of the infants were breast-fed. That was a regular proportion. His experience and that of others who inquired as to how the infants of the middle classes were fed was that not only were a large proportion of these children not breast-fed, but were not brought up on the best methods of hand-feeding. They were not brought up on cow's milk, but apparently a large proportion of them were fed upon those patent food substitutes. That, he believed, was an absolutely undeniable fact. His inquiries led him to the view that that was very largely due to the medical man in attendance. He did not want to say a word against his own profession, which was the noblest in the world, but he did think in general practice they did not go sufficiently into the preventive side of the question. They took it that it was their duty to treat the baby when it was ill, and not so much to prevent it getting ill. That being the case, the mother got her information from the nurse or from her mother, and it was often out-of-date and antiquated information. As a consequence, the feeding of the middle-class children was exceedingly imperfect. That was a

matter which was intimately related to the question of infantile mortality for two reasons. In the first place, the knowledge filtered from above downwards. He had particularly found that with regard to tuberculosis. He had been lecturing many times in his own part of the country on tuberculosis, and he always tried to get hold of the educated classes, knowing that if they made the educated classes understand the way in which tuberculosis was spread, caught, and acquired, that information would spread down to the lower classes. He believed it was the same with the subject they were discussing. They would do a great deal for the working classes if they could only make the middle and educated classes really understand the dangers of those patent foods and how to bring up their own children perfectly. That would exercise a great influence upon the strata below them. Another point was that it would help in legislation, because the information which the mothers acquired would spread to the fathers, and the fathers, as they knew, at present had the power of legislating, whatever they might have in the future. They would, therefore, be in a position to help public opinion, and so they would get power to regulate food and drugs.

Councillor Dr VINRACE (Kensington) denied that a doctor who ordered pure brandy for a patient could be regarded as a standard in the medical profession. As a rule, medical men who prescribed alcohol dealt with every case upon its merits, and always stated the dose. He did not think there was any great foundation for the suggestion that medical men did not take the trouble to advise about infants' food; in the generality of cases they always did so. He had listened to the paper with great interest, but could not agree with it if Dr Pritchard intended to convey the idea that proprietary medicines were advocated by medical men. Personally, he never would recommend them, for the reason that we possessed a valuable pharmacopœia, which contained all the most valuable drugs. If any further remedies were required it was quite easy to approach the Medical Council and get any valuable drug added.

Alderman BROADBENT explained that the Executive Committee had been specially asked to deal with this question, because the legislators were waiting for some direction as to the move they should take in regard to the sale and preparation of drugs and foods for infants. This was representative of what was in the public mind, and on this matter the public needed enlightenment. It was plainly indicated to them that in regard to drugs and foods the same regulations should be applied, or similar suitable regulations as were applied to food for cattle and to fertilisers. He believed that the Parliamentary party would be prepared to introduce legislation this session which would go upon the lines referred to in the paper. It might, therefore, be desirable to pass a resolution on the subject. It was extremely desirable to enlighten mothers as to injuries that were often heedlessly done to their children by patent preparations. At any rate, the public should know what these patent

preparations were composed of, and a simple Act of Parliament compelling vendors to clearly describe the nature of their articles sold under so many names would be a public benefit.

Dr S. G. H. MOORE pointed out that if this dishonest and immoral traffic were suppressed, nobody would gain anything except the public. The makers and chemists might be at some loss, and so would the doctors, for then they would have fewer patients to prescribe for.

Dr H. E. ARMSTRONG cordially agreed with Dr Pritchard, and said that for a long time he had been aware of the frauds perpetrated on the public by much-advertised drugs and foods. In particular certain beef juices and cocoas were particularly noticeable, stuff being sold at 1s. 6d. which was not worth 2d. a lb. The price was no guarantee of quality, though the public often thought it was. He warned the Conference against the supposed value of separated milk, which was given to children in the belief that it was a nourishing food when it was nothing of the kind. A great responsibility rested on the profession in ordering alcohol, which should be treated as a drug, and its common use should be discountenanced where infants were concerned. A good deal of mischief arose in that respect. Some law in regard to patent articles was greatly needed, and he hoped the Committee would take the matter up.

The CHAIRMAN said that there were few things which amazed him more in these days of advancing education than the ease with which the British public were gulled. They did not appear capable of seeing that the only object of the vendors was to make money for themselves, and therefore all their statements should be received with caution if not scepticism. It was high time the Legislature took steps to safeguard the ignorant and unwise public.

Dr PRITCHARD briefly replied to the discussion, and said that personally he thought it was a great mistake for women to know anything about drugs, particularly where infants were concerned. He did not intend to convey that the medical profession generally prescribed patent medicines; but in his own district, where there was a good class of practitioner, he found that more than one-third of the prescriptions given contained either one or more proprietary medicines.

RESOLUTIONS.

1. That this Conference expresses its appreciation of Parliament having passed the Notification of Births Act, 1907, and urges upon all Local Authorities the importance of adopting the Act and appointing qualified women to carry out its provisions.—Put from the Chair and carried unanimously.

2. That in order to combat the prevalent ignorance, resulting in wastage of infant life and injury to the health of many survivors, the Conference urges upon the Board of Education and upon education authorities generally, the importance of securing to all girls,

in every grade of school, a satisfactory training in domestic and personal hygiene and in the duties of womanhood.—Proposed by Miss Ravenhill, seconded by Dr Armstrong.

On Miss Zanetti's Paper.

3. That this Conference welcomes most gladly the Children's Bill introduced into the House of Commons by Mr Herbert Samuel, M.P., for the amendment of the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, and recommends the Executive Committee to ask that it be specially amended to include the cases in which one child is put out to nurse for reward.—Proposed by Bailie Anderson, seconded by Alderman Broadbent.

On Dr Atkinson's Paper.

4. That the Conference, being convinced of the injury done to infant life and health through infants being taken into public-houses, urges upon Parliament the necessity of providing such legislation as will prevent this.—Proposed by Mr F. G. Mackereth, seconded by Dr Scurfield.

On Dr Hope's Paper.

5. That the Children's Bill be amended to empower Local Authorities to charge upon the rates the cost of carrying out the existing statutory provisions for the prevention of cruelty to children. —Proposed by Councillor Shelmerdine, seconded by Dr Scurfield.

6. That this Conference is of opinion that Boards of Guardians ought to make greater use of their existing powers to adopt children of incorrigible parents.—Proposed by Councillor Dr Wainman (Leeds), seconded by Dr S. G. H. Moore, and carried with two dissentients.

On Dr Pritchard's Paper.

7. That all preparations offered or sold as foods or drugs for infants should be certified by a Government analyst as non-injurious, and that each packet should contain its analysis; and that the provisions of the Fertilisers and Food Stuffs Act should be applied to drugs and foods sold purporting to be for the use of infants. —Proposed by Alderman Broadbent, seconded by Dr Moore.

8. That the Conference shall confirm the resolution of the former Conference that the Midwives Act, 1902, be extended to Scotland and to Ireland.—Put from the Chair.

9. That this Conference shall continue as a committee to give effect to the foregoing resolutions, with power to remit to an Executive Committee to carry out the same.—Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Dr Moore.

On the motion of the Mayor of Jarrow, it was resolved to refer

to the Executive Committee to consider whether at the next Conference it would be desirable to table a resolution asking the Government when passing adoptive Acts to at the same time provide part of the means whereby they can be administered locally.

The CHAIRMAN ruled out of order the following resolution submitted by the Brighton delegates—"That the Executive Committee be recommended to urge upon Parliament that in the opinion of this Conference the chief cause of infantile mortality is the insufficiency and irregularity of the wages of the labouring classes, and that such laws may be enacted as will ensure the provision of adequate means of maintenance for every citizen."

Bailie ANDERSON moved—"That, in view of the unsatisfactory conditions under which milk is produced and distributed, this Conference, being of opinion that immediate amendment of the law is desirable, urges upon Parliament the necessity of at once taking such steps as are necessary to effect this." He explained that the Conference was not held as a simple accident, but was the outcome of meetings in London, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, and various other places. At the last two meetings the Executive Committee were asked to bring the matter forward, and they had done so. Mr Burns had promised to give his attention to the amendment of the existing law.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Executive Committee was authorised to convey the thanks of the Conference to the various members of Parliament who had assisted them in the promotion of their views.

Alderman FORD proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Liverpool for his services in the chair.

Dr J. SPOTTISWOODE CAMERON seconded, and Dr S. G. H. MOORE, as an old student of the Chairman's when professor of physiology at his university, supported the motion, which was carried with loud acclamation.

Dr R. CATON, in brief acknowledgment, intimated that he highly appreciated the spirit of forbearance which had marked the behaviour of the Conference under his rulings, and expressed the hope that the objects of the Conference would be speedily realised.

P. S. KING & SON, ORCHARD HOUSE, WESTMINSTER.