

"Until some very radical change takes place in the instruction given to girls of 11 years old and upwards, there will very little hope of improving the general habits of the people, or of decreasing the present deplorable wastage of infant life."

The Lancet says: "The amazing ignorance among the poor, which is one of the chief causes of our high death-rate among the infants, after the long years in which compulsory education has had a free play, is of itself eloquent proof of the non-practical character of the teaching which has gone by the name of education."

REGISTRATION.

To reduce Infant Mortality, we must first have an accurate, complete and satisfactory registration of births. Prompt and complete registration is of manifest importance. How can this be accomplished? The best legislation on the subject is comprised in the Notification of Births Act, 1907, in Great Britain, and the "Model Law," approved of by the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, and by the United States Census Office. Another Act of great importance is the Children's Act, 1908, on Infant Life Protection.

NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS ACT.

The most important provisions are as follows:—

1. The provisions of this section shall have effect in the area of any local authority in which this Act is adopted, by that authority, in accordance with the provisions of this Act,

(1). In the case of every child born in an area in which this Act is adopted, it shall be the duty of the father of the child, if he is actually residing in the house where the birth takes place at the time of its occurrence, and of any person in attendance on the mother at the time of, or within six hours after, the birth, to give notice in writing of the birth to the medical officer of health, of the district in which his child is born, in manner provided by this section.

(2). Notice under this section shall be given by posting a prepaid letter or postcard, addressed to the medical officer of health at his office or residence, giving the necessary information of the birth within thirty-six hours after the birth, or by delivering a written notice of the birth at the office or residence of the medical officer within the same time; and the local authority shall supply without charge, addressed and stamped post cards containing the form of notice to any medical practitioner or midwife residing or practising in their area, who apply for the same.

(3). Any person who fails to give notice of a birth in accordance with this section shall be liable on summary conviction to a penalty, not exceeding twenty shillings: Provided that a person shall not be liable to a penalty under this provision if he satisfies the Court that he had reasonable grounds to believe that notice had been duly given by some other person.

(4). The notification required to be made under this Act shall be in addition to and not in substitution for the requirements of any Act relating to the registration of births; and any registrar of births and deaths whose sub-district or any part thereof is situate within any area in which this Act is adopted, shall at all reasonable times have access to notices of births received by the medical officer of health, under this Act, or to any book in which those notices may be recorded, for the purpose of obtaining information concerning births which may have occurred in his sub-district.