

A STRONG APPEAL FOR CHILD WELFARE AND MOTHERHOOD

In her address entitled, "The Canadian Mother," delivered before the local Women's Canadian Club last night, Dr. Helen McMurchy, chief of the child welfare department of the dominion public health service, Ottawa, appealed to her audience to support the efforts of the provincial health department on behalf

of mothers and children. The kind of support needed, she said, was not so much financial but rather the strength of a motive impelling to a greater return to the love of home and the love of motherhood. Mrs. Leonard Tilley, president of the club, was chairman of the meeting which was held in the German street Baptist Institute and was attended by nearly two hundred ladies.

There were three departments, she said, in which the needs of the mother must be supplied, namely, home comfort, medical care and nursing, and general care and health within the home.

The most sensitive index of the public health, she said, was the infant mortality rate. This rate, she said, was the number of babies less than a year old who died out of every thousand children born.

The most important single thing about the subject, Dr. McMurchy said, was that if the baby was nursed by the mother the chances were in favor of the

baby's continuing to live and that if the baby was fed in any other way the chances were against the baby. The problem of saving the lives of infants, she said, was one of great moment to the nation. Most doctors and nurses had not understood how to teach the mother to nurse her own child. She mentioned the fact that France had realized during the war the vital importance of proper care of maternity cases. A maternity hospital had been set up in Paris, she said, and, of the 7,000 babies born there, every one of them was nursed by the mother. She introduced a quotation to the effect that artificial feeding of infants was one of the greatest errors of the nineteenth century and then humorously appealed to any members of the W. C. T. U. who might be in the audience since they had already banded one bottle to start in to banish the other.

Dr. McMurchy quoted statistics to show that infant mortality varied inversely with the father's income and with other factors as well. War had been defined, she said, as education by violence, and the late war had brought home to the nations in a very forcible manner the importance of the baby.

The problem of infant mortality was related to other problems, Dr. McMurchy said. It was affected by the housing situation, which she described as one of the most urgent municipal and national problems confronting the nation today.

Infant mortality was likewise affected, she said, by food, clothing, work, education and other considerations.

The infant mortality rate in St. John was higher than it should be, Doctor McMurchy said. She did not think that this condition was right.

The speaker then dealt with the second portion of her address which was concerned with the mortality among mothers at child-birth. "Women should not die in child-birth," said Dr. McMurchy.

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Dr. McMurchy concluded her address with an appeal to her audience to support the health department in its efforts on behalf of mothers and children. The support needed, she said, was not so much financial as sympathetic. It involved a return to a greater love for the home and for motherhood.

Mrs. R. J. Hooper moved a vote of thanks to Dr. McMurchy which Mrs. John Thomson seconded and Mrs. Tilley preferred to the speaker. After the address refreshments were served by a committee including Mrs. Tilley, Mrs. J. H. Doody, Mrs. W. Bonnell and Mrs. F. C. Beatty.

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chy. "It is not a disease," she continued, "and we should be able to make it safe." She then quoted statistics from several countries and institutions showing that four mothers out of a thousand died at child-birth in certain parts of Great Britain and seven out of a thousand in certain states of the United States. The rate in Canada had not been ascertained, she said, because no complete statistics had been heretofore available. She emphasized the importance of co-operation with the health departments so that they might as rapidly as possible be put in possession of this statistical information.

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