

ALFRED A. KNOPF ANNOUNCE THE PUBLICATION OF

# *Save the Mothers*

*A Plea for Measures to Prevent the Annual loss of about 3000 Child-bearing Mothers and 20,000 Infant Lives in England and Wales and a Similar Grievous Wastage in other Countries*

by

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST

6s.

This book is an urgent plea for a universal, free Maternity Service, and an earnest effort to make plain the great need of mothers and the grievous hardships, risks and sufferings encountered by them in pregnancy and child-birth.

Miss Pankhurst is known as an heroic social worker and a member of a family whose activities have dignified the status of women in England. During the war she opened five maternity clinics in the East End which became famous. Her innovation was followed by other volunteers, until pressure of public opinion moved the Ministry of Health to take over these clinics. But they are spreading all too slowly, hampered by ignorance, inertia and 'economy.'

Increasing knowledge of the still deplorable conditions will undoubtedly hasten this most necessary work, and no one is better qualified than this author to present the facts or to outline a new policy worthy of a civilized community.

The book takes into account and criticises the recently issued Government report on maternal mortality and contains much information on the ways in which other countries are dealing with this vital problem.

EXTRACTS FROM SOME OF THE LETTERS TO THE  
AUTHOR INCLUDED IN CHAPTER XV

'... As Katherine Mayo made such a sensation with the obstetric parts of her book on India, it seems possible that a book by you exposing obstetric savagery and superstition in the British Isles might attract some attention. The Indians, at least, would appreciate it.'

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

'This is one of the most important questions of the day, and is surrounded by a certain amount of obscurity. The Government are giving every possible assistance to those whose labours will, we hope, be completely successful in putting an end to this preventable suffering and grief which make a peculiar appeal to the whole of our people.'

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD

'I have looked with much interest through the proposals you are putting forward dealing with Maternal Welfare. . . . A complete scheme must ensure for the mother fully qualified medical and nursing care. She must also be relieved of any household worry, both by provision of help in the home and by some financial help such as that of the maternity benefit given under National Health Insurance. . . . We welcome all help in rousing public opinion on these general lines.'

ARTHUR HENDERSON

'Your suggestions are admirable. The homes are in many cases quite unfit for the events of birth, and there it is difficult to make adequate proposals.'

'Maternity Homes are for many the only solution.'

MARGARET MCMILLAN

'... While voluntary effort has done a great deal towards rousing the authorities to a sense of their responsibility, nothing short of making it compulsory for every Health Authority to prepare a complete scheme for maternity work can tackle the appalling problem we have to consider.'

ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LABOUR 95

where, even in normal cases, there is pain and suffering to an acute degree, where grave and immediate danger to life is always an imminent possibility, where, as Dr. Janet Campbell has it, "delay or a mistaken judgment may cause irreparable damage and there may be no second chance," the community provides no service, nor any aid except for those cases of excessive poverty officially termed "necessitous." For such cases, some Local Authorities provide the fee for a midwife. If the midwife is compelled to call for medical aid, the Local Authority will pay the doctor's fee; but will recover it from the patient or her husband, unless the family is in grossly indigent circumstances. The Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918 gave power to Local Authorities to make arrangements whereby a doctor may summon a specialist to his assistance in a confinement, at the cost of the Local Authority. Advantage has only been taken of this power in a few areas. In any case the mother and her husband will be made to reimburse the Local Authority unless they are of the submerged tenth.

*It is only a few far-seeing people who to-day are demanding a National Midwifery Service, locally administered, and free to all mothers. This is of far greater importance than the Health Visitor, and even than the Welfare Centre. Concentration upon this urgent need by even a few ardent people would soon arouse a wide public movement in its support. There should be a voluntary maternity council to work for it in every district.*

Many proposals for improving the treatment of maternity are now under discussion; but almost all of them are vitiated by the fear of spending enough money to do the adequate thing. Adequate medical attention for all mothers during labour would certainly be costly. Therefore a large proportion of writers and propagandists have persuaded themselves that it is unneces-

Prime  
Minister

Secretary  
for Foreign  
affairs

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