THE MEMPHIS CALL

Dr. Frank A. Jones, Chairman of the Memphis Committee on Membership and Publicity, and one of the Ex-Presidents of the Southern Medical Association, writes a letter which he requests us to bring to your attention:

To the Members of, and To Those Who Are Eligible to Membership in, the Southern Medical Association:

Perhaps you have been so satiated and over-fed on war news by pacifists and hysterical alarmists that you have lost sight of the meeting which will convene in Memphis November 12 to 15.

While "grim-visaged war" is still frowning, physical, geographic, military, and civilian conditions point distinctively to the smoothing out of some of the wrinkles. Crop prospects were never brighter. There was never a time in the history of the Nation when there was more evidence of universal prosperity. We are not going to starve to death, and the Kaiser is not going to put us to flight, just yet. Let's all forget, for the present, the "if's," "and's," and "but's" pertaining to the war, and get together in November and thresh out things in general.

Of course, it will be apropos to have considerable "war talk" mingled with the scientific program. I would suggest that every loyal member of the Southern Medical Association use his best efforts to secure new members, and induce them to come and be with us.

The South today is being held up to a mirror, its image reflecting all of its great achievements and its resources. Surely, one of its great assets is the Southern Medical Association and its doctors.

We are not going to write any grand stand eulogy on Memphis and its people. We are not going to make an effort to convince you how great and grand Memphis is. We are not going to have Memphis talked to you at breakfast, dinner, supper, and between meals. But we are going to do the very best we can, under present conditions throughout the country, to take the very best care of you. A hearty welcome awaits you at Memphis.

Very respectfully,

FRANK A. JONES.

Chairman on Membership and Publicity.
Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 17, 1917.

SAFE OBSTETRICS

The role of the child *in utero* is fraught with much danger, though its part in the material realms of life is a most passive one. The lay press, as well as medical literature, has contributed very handsomely to the campaign for "better babies," and in furthering this phase of the evolution of the human species those bril-

liant and rasping editorials have succeeded in routing the members of the profession from a state of lethargy.

The writers have not altogether ignored the counter argument of this momentous question, and it is with deep gratification and appreciation that articles have been noted in recent periodicals wherein the fundamentals of the entire subject have been rehearsed, namely, the essentials of prenatal work.

The laws of conservation and compensation were violated until the upheaval in pediatrics securely and wholesomely riveted the attention of the profession on this aspect of humanitarianism; and until our energies and influences are directed to the conservation of the child *in utero*, there will be a wanton, needless, reckless sacrifice of human lives. The hour is ripe to eliminate all but intensive and logical obstetrical work; for to countenance its opposite is to embrace the viciousness of crude midwifery or to smile upon the pitiful and culpable ignorance regarding the science of obstetrics.

There can be no middle ground as compensation for the untrained, treacherous technique of the midwife, nor can we offer a compromise to the unprepared, bold, ignorant physician who, in doing obstetrics, so far transcends the importance of the lives held in the balance as to barter the personal equation for the more vulgar mercenary one. Indeed, in both of these instances, the fallacy of the argument that obstetrics is not a science is clearly demonstrable and the sooner the midwives are eliminated from the ranks, the higher will be the standards required of the obstetricians and a more salutary legacy will be bequeathed to the pediatrician.

The science of obstetrics does not merely consist in the performance of the mechanical art of a delivery, for at times Nature can perform single-handed. It demands of its disciples a thorough, practical and