

The Midwife.

At Home for Mothers and Babies and Training School for District Midwives.

The Annual Meeting of the Council for the Promotion of the Higher Training of Midwives was held in the beautiful Mayor's Parlour in the Woolwich Town Hall on Thursday, 18th July, and it is a very good sign of the times that everything to do with babies and midwives commands the interest of women—married or spinster—and that meetings to discuss them are generally well attended. We like this about the modern women, she realises that other people's babies have points. The dear domestic paragon of other days—like a barn-door fowl—clucked only to her own chicks.

The chair was taken by the Mayor, who introduced the speakers. Canon Scott Holland drove home the hopelessness of reforming confirmed physical degenerates, but to touch the springs of infant life there, he said, was hope. Dr. Cullingworth, a consistent friend of many years standing of the poor lying-in mother, gave a short *resumé* of the effects of recent midwifery legislation, and Miss Gregory, the initiator and Hon. Secretary of the Home for Mothers and Babies at Woolwich, pleaded sympathetically for the interest and help of educated women to provide personal service and means to supply a higher type of midwife for poor women in their hour of need. She also spoke of the objects of the Council, which are (1) To enable women to be attended in their confinements either in a Hospital or in their own Homes, by gentlewomen, all of whom have received previous training in General Nursing; (2) To promote the training of gentlewomen as district midwives, and (3) To lengthen the customary period for training district midwives.

After the usual votes of thanks, proposed by Lady Maurice, seconded by Mr. George Bishop, J.P., and carried by acclamation when put to the meeting by Archdeacon Escreet, the guests were entertained to tea by the Mayor.

At the end of the meeting the Lady Superintendent, Mrs. Parnell, and Miss Gregory received in the kindest way a large number of interested guests at the Home in Wood Street, where they had an opportunity of inspecting the practical arrangements. Here two charm-

ing old houses have been made one, and in the pretty sunny rooms twelve beds are available for lying-in women. The rooms are light, spacious, and airy, and simply furnished; the little swing cots (or hammocks as the nurses call them) being attached at the foot of each bed. They are basket shaped, composed of bars of iron lined with white calico, a wee mattress stuffed with fibre and covered with mackintosh, wee sheets, blankets, and a dimity cover. These cots are cheap and cleanly, as they are easily washed and disinfected, and as the bedding is cheap, it can be replaced whenever necessary. The labour ward was all pure white, and fitted with every aseptic and surgical convenience. The little dispensary was very complete.

The midwifery pupils admitted for training must have previously received at least a year's training in a hospital approved by the Committee, and they are not taken for less than a six months' course, for which they pay £20 and provide their own washing and uniform. The course includes lectures on sanitation, infant feeding, and cottage cookery, besides training in monthly nursing and midwifery. All pupils are expected to pass the examination of the Central Midwives' Board, and so far no pupil has failed.

The average stay of the pupils is eight months, and it is hoped that this may be extended in the future. Incidentally, we learned that the majority of pupils in the Home were nurses with three years' hospital training, but the distinct aim of the Home is to train gentlewomen as district midwives, and not for private nursing amongst the rich.

When we realise that the Midwives Act will come into force in its entirety in 1910, and that it is predicted that the shortage of midwives will be very severely felt, the special humanitarian work which this Maternity Hospital is doing deserves the highest commendation, and entitles it to financial support.

E. G. F.

The Central Midwives' Board.

PENAL CASES.

Two special meetings of the Central Midwives' Board, under the provisions of Rule D 5, were held on the 18th and 19th July, in the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster.

On Thursday, the 18th inst., 17 cases were

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