

The Midwife.

Our Schools of Midwifery.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

Amongst schools of midwifery for nurses, Queen Charlotte's Hospital, Marylebone Road, W., ranks high, both because of its long standing reputation, and also because of the actual results attained by candidates sent up from it for the examination of the Central Midwives' Board since its inauguration.

The pupils are trained in the lying-in and labour wards of the Hospital, and for the last month in the districts connected with the Hospital, so that they get a very good experience.

The course extends over five months, and the pupils work first for three months in the lying-in wards, where they learn the necessary routine, and nurse the mothers and infants after delivery under the supervision of the Matron and Sisters, thus learning practical monthly nursing duties. Each pupil has two patients assigned to her. During the fourth month they learn to conduct cases of labour in the labour wards, under the Resident Medical Officers and Sister Midwives. The arrangement of these wards must be described. On two floors a set of rooms is assigned for this purpose, consisting of bath-room, waiting room (in which are a few beds), where the patients after their baths wait until the time comes for them to be taken to the labour room. This is arranged much as an ordinary operating room, with every appliance and instrument likely to be wanted at hand. There are two beds, which are screened off from one another, and here the patients are delivered. Delivery safely over, the patient is conveyed on a stretcher on wheels to one of the lying-in wards.

When the labour ward on one floor has been used for a month, the one on the other floor is taken into use, and the disused one thoroughly turned out, and the whole suite washed down. In the course of their month's work in the labour wards, the pupils get excellent experience, but the constant change must be very trying to the Sister Midwives. What would a Ward Sister say if her whole staff changed every month? It must mean much enthusiasm for the work, as well as the gift of teaching, to carry it on successfully.

The form provided for the record of

cases is very complete. There is space provided for the previous history of the patient, details as to her admission and discharge, a chart for recording the temperature, which is taken three times a day as a routine practice, or under special circumstances at 8, 12, and 4 day and night. The labour ward Sister fills in all the details connected with the labour, and the chart goes with the patient on her admission to the lying-in ward, so that the whole record of the case is easily available. The report is continued in the lying-in ward.

The five months' course of training for midwives (including both midwifery and monthly nursing) costs £35, but a reduction both in the period of training, and in the fee, is made to nurses who hold a certificate of three years' training from a recognised school. Such nurses may enter for a four months' course in midwifery and monthly nursing, the fee being then £28.

Another point worthy of note by trained nurses is that a certain number are given a free training on condition that they agree to work subsequently for 18 months as staff nurses. For these posts the Committee like to secure, if possible, those who have had some experience of sisters' work. They are paid a salary of £25 a year. Such vacancies should be eagerly sought after, for there is first the attraction of a free training, and it is not every nurse, however much she desires to add a knowledge of midwifery to her qualifications, who can afford to spend £35 in acquiring that knowledge, and then the further experience after training is invaluable. Most pupils regret leaving their training schools immediately they have gained their certificates, and would greatly appreciate the privilege of staying on longer. The course for monthly nurses is one of sixteen weeks, for which a fee of £24 is charged. As in the case of pupil midwives, this covers board and lodging, but not washing. The nurses live in the Home, which is opposite to the Hospital.

The pupil midwives receive lectures and bedside instruction from the Physicians, the Resident Medical Officers, the Matron, Miss Bröchner, and the Superintendent of the Out-patient Department, the pupil monthly nurses also receive instruction from the Physicians and the Matron.

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