

small degree to the enthusiasm of their popular Secretary. He believes in them so thoroughly that they cannot fail to believe in themselves. The Royal Maternity Charity Nurses are, he says, a sterling body of thirty-three women, highly trained, kind hearted, who work in the slums of all parts of London, responding to the call of duty just as promptly as the soldier answers to the bugle call, or the sailor to the bosun's whistle. The fee they receive for their services is very small, and if a patient in distress has not a maternity letter there is hardly a midwife on the staff who will not attend her without any fee at all. The members of the staff are to be found from Harlesden to Tottenham, and from Putney Bridge to Bow, all working loyally and in unison. The Training School is a comparatively new branch, but it is a charming element. Pupils have been received not only from England, but India and South Africa. They live with the midwives of the staff, and get their cases under their supervision, and out of the fifty candidates sent up for the examination of the Central Midwives' Board only two have failed.

Mrs. Eustace Miles said how delighted she and her husband were to see all the Maternity Charity Nurses there. Both she and they were engaged in the same work, looking after the bodies of people.

Dr. Sutherland, Medical Officer to the Charity, then moved a cordial vote of thanks to Major and Mrs. Killick for their hospitality, and said how much everybody connected with it appreciated Major Killick's work on its behalf. He did all in his power to further its interests.

Major Killick, in reply, said it was impossible to do too much for such an institution, and for its staff who backed him up so loyally and so well. It was the staff who had made the Charity.

The work of the Royal Maternity Charity is worthy of all support. Lying-in charities are not, as a rule, as well supported as they deserve to be, and while hospitals receive large bequests the claims of maternity charities are unaccountably overlooked. We do not grudge the hospitals their windfalls, they need them, but we do think that Societies which look after maternity cases should not go ill-dowered, for they are doing work of national importance, the value of which indeed it is difficult to estimate. Is it because much of the work of maternity charities lies in the homes of the poor while in the case of hospitals visible results are demonstrated in imposing buildings, that the latter command a sympathy frequently denied to more modest but equally important institutions?

Association for Promoting Training and Supply of Midwives.

ANNUAL GATHERING.

A very pleasant afternoon was spent by the midwives connected with the above Association at 75, Barkston Gardens, South Kensington, where the gathering was held by the kind permission of Miss Lorent Grant, who most hospitably entertained the members who were present, in indoor uniform, to tea. Miss Lucy Robinson, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, was in the chair, and in her opening remarks said how grateful the Committee were to the midwives for the good work they were doing in helping on the cause which all had at heart of supplying competent help to lying-in mothers. One of the midwives present had attended no less than 500 cases. Miss Robinson, with the knowledge begotten of experience, spoke of the loneliness of the midwife's life, and said that the burden of the work often pressed heavily, and that it tried both nerves and physical endurance. She knew the difficulties of the midwives, and she wished them God-speed. Might their work grow and prosper until there was not a mother in England who was badly cared for.

The Secretary, Miss Gill, then read appreciative letters from those under whom midwives of the Association were working, after which the ceremony of the afternoon took place and the Badge of the Association was awarded to those who had earned it. It is in the form of a silver Greek cross, and bears the words "Mercy, Pity, Truth, and Love." Unfortunately only one midwife was able to be present to receive it in person. The following are the midwives to whom it was awarded:—

Miss Frances Ann Barnes, working in Somersetshire; Miss Elke Goodall, working in Manchester; Mrs. Mary Ann Greir, working in Sydenham; Miss Helen Jean Hobbs, working in Little Brinton, Northamptonshire; Miss Emily Lloyd, working in Hanley, Staffordshire; Miss Annie Parsons, working in Barkway, Hertfordshire; Miss Annie Perrett, working on Eaton Estate, Cheshire; Miss Elizabeth Truelove, working in East Molesey.

Lady Balfour of Burleigh expressed her pleasure at being present, and asked Miss Gill to convey congratulations from the meeting to those to whom the Badge would be sent. She told a story of her own experiences with a maternity nurse who was described by Sir James Simpson as the "Queen of Nurses," a somewhat autocratic lady who insisted on warming nail scissors before use.

A vote of thanks to Lady Balfour of Burleigh, proposed by Lady Schwann, was heartily carried by acclamation. Lady Schwann spoke of the value of a sense of humour, as well as of a hopeful temperament in those who took up midwifery. A sense of humour carries its possessor over many difficulties. The present midwives were the pioneers, but in years to come, when they have proved their value, the public will wonder how they ever got on without them. They owed a great debt to Lady Balfour of Burleigh, who helped so greatly in securing the passage of the Midwives' Act.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)