

# The Midwife.

## The York Maternity Hospital.

An influential meeting in support of the loan fund for the training of midwives at the York Maternity Home, at which Viscountess Helmsley presided, was by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Gray held at Gray's Court, York, last week.

Viscountess Helmsley, in her opening remarks, said that no agencies deserved more consideration and sympathy than these maternity homes, which would benefit the mothers of the country. In 1910 women who were not on the Midwives' Roll would be prohibited from practising as such, and for many reasons untrained women (there are many on the Midwives' Roll) were dropping out of practice. It was, therefore, most important that proper training should be available for those who wish to follow the occupation of midwife. Coming from a rural district, she welcomed more than warmly any effort for the training of midwives, and she believed she voiced the feeling of every woman present when she said that the loan training fund was deserving of their whole-hearted support.

Dr. Swanson, senior member of the honorary staff at York Dispensary, emphasised the important part played by women in the maternity charities of York. Certain charities which had lapsed were revived in 1812, and one of the principal persons interested in the revival was the great-grandmother of Mr. Edwin Gray. In 1906 Mrs. Gray raised the question of the training of women in midwifery, a question of the utmost importance, as many women with no knowledge of any kind except rule of thumb had practised and done an immense amount of harm. Last year the Dispensary had taken an unpretentious house, in Ogleforth, capable of great development, and a thoroughly useful maternity hospital had been established there. It was impossible to speak too highly of the training which midwives would receive at their home under the supervision of Dr. Louise Fraser, and the Matron, Miss Mackenzie Brown. A feature in the Home was that it kept in touch with the mother for the first year after the child was born. The Maternity Home had been taken in hand largely through the efforts of the National Union of Women Workers.

Dr. Louise Fraser showed that the training of pupils was practically self-supporting, as a fee of 15 guineas was charged. She referred

to the scheme of baby consultations established at the Hospital of Charity, Paris, by Professor Budin, and said that it was hoped to establish a similar scheme at the York Dispensary and the Maternity Home.

Mrs. Edwin Gray read a letter from the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. E. Smith, cordially approving of the loan fund, and saying that 60 per cent. of the total number of births in the city and district were attended by midwives. She said that the Committee of the hospital kept the training fees as low as they possibly could, and in granting loans they fixed the period of repayment according to the circumstances of the pupil. The Committee had already raised £30 for the loan fund, and were very desirous of increasing this to £70. Fifteen pounds was raised in the room.

## Midwives Act Committee.

The Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider the working of the Midwives Act, held its sixth meeting on Wednesday in last week at the Privy Council Office, Mr. Almeric FitzRoy presiding.

The following witnesses attended and gave evidence:—Sir George Fordham, the Treasurer of the Central Midwives' Board, and representative of the County Councils Association; Dr. A. Robinson, Medical Officer of Health for the County Borough of Rotherham; and Mrs. Heywood Johnstone, President of the Rural Midwives' Association.

## A Dressing Table for the Infant.

The easiest way to dress the baby, says Miss M. Taylor in the *Nurses' Journal of the Pacific Coast*, is on a table. Have it made as high as a working-bench. The proportions are these: 38 inches high, 32 inches long, 22 inches wide, with a shelf 12 inches below the top, boxed in on three sides and either open in front or closed in with a drop or sliding door. All the toilet articles—such as boracic acid, alcohol, vaseline, cotton—are kept on the shelf, always there and ready for use. The infant is lifted from the bath-tub to the top of the table, which is padded with a blanket and covered with the towel; there it is dried and dressed with much ease and rapidity. A new packing-box can be adapted, though many of the young fathers are skilful enough to make the table.

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