

The Midwife.

The Training and Supply of Midwives.

The annual gathering of the midwives of the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives was held in the gardens of 37, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, by kind permission of Mrs. H. S. Ashbee, and was a very pleasant function. Mrs. Wallace Bruce, Chairman of the Executive Committee, presided, and said that amongst the midwives working for the Association two had belonged to it for four and a-half years, six for nearly four years, six for three and a-half years, eight for nearly three years, and three for over two years. Thirty-three nurses had received the badge of the Association, and eighteen were entitled to it this year.

The badges were then presented by Lady Beaumont, the names being read by the Secretary, Miss Gill. The majority of the midwives were present to receive the badge.

The recipients were:—

Matron.—Miss Alma Murphy (Q.V.J.I. Superintendent), Midwife Matron at the East Ham Home maintained by the Association.

Trained at the East Ham Home.—Miss Mary Emma Firth, Arlesford; Miss Bertha Emily Gutkraess, Hinbury, near Macclesfield; Mrs. Ellen Rhodes Paver, Huddersfield; Mrs. Florence Peppell, Northamptonshire; Miss Esther Stafford, Northamptonshire; Mrs. Mary Shaw, Bitterne, near Southampton; Miss Mary Sturgess, Ilkeston, Derbyshire; Miss Lucy Tait, Eastry; Mrs. Alice Louisa Welsh, Mountain Ash, Glamorganshire.

Trained at the East End Mothers' Home.—Mrs. Mary Louisa Macgregor, Huntingdonshire; Miss Harriett Ann Mills, Munsden, near Ware; Mrs. Menea Moloney, Portsmouth and Southsea; Miss Sarah Maria Round, Castleton, near Cardiff; Mrs. Annie Simmons, Marylebone.

Trained at the General Lying-In Hospital, York Road, Lambeth.—Miss Selina Eleanor Rebecca Shipman, Kimpton, Hertfordshire; Miss Constance Evelyn Whitehouse, Thatcham, Berkshire.

Trained at the Clapham Maternity Hospital.—Mrs. Emma Lister, Borough Green, Kent.

Lady Beaumont spoke of the value of the work of the midwives and her personal knowledge of the work of one. The way the husbands testified to her value was very remarkable. One said that his wife had had a large family, and had never been so well nursed before. Another said: "It was that poultice nurse put on, and no other, that saved the baby," and again: "We should never have saved the baby if it had not been for nurse." Trained midwives were doing very responsible and national work in starting the lives of the babies well and in saving the mothers. It was work for which no money could pay, although nurses ought to be well paid.

Mrs. Robinson, a member of the Executive Com-

mittee, spoke a few words from the midwives' point of view, and Lady Balfour of Burleigh, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mrs. Ashbee, Lady Beaumont, and Miss Robinson, amused the audience by telling of three sets of twins—the first were two little girls, then came two boys called Peter and Repeater, and then two more boys, Max and Climax. Other names which had been suggested in the event of a succession of twins were Ann and Another, and Hugh and Cry.

The Royal Maternity Charity.

By the kindness of the Secretary, Major Lionel Killick, the midwives and others on the staff of the Royal Maternity Charity of London were entertained last Thursday at the Eustace Miles Restaurant, when some forty were present.

Few probably realise that for the past hundred and fifty years, founded in the days when nurses had no existence, there has been working in the poorest districts of London a little band of midwives, organised and controlled from their headquarters.

Bow and Bromley, Tottenham, Chelsea, Whitechapel, Kilburn, St. Pancras, Spitalfields, the Minorities, Fulham, Notting Hill, practically every district of the town, has a midwife of the Royal Maternity Charity established in its midst.

The foundation in 1757 was due to the benevolence of City merchants; and that the necessity for help was fully recognised is proved by the fact that whereas in that year 35 poor women were attended, within ten years the annual number had swelled to over 2,000. The average at present is approximately 3,000 cases annually, making a total of between 550,000 and 560,000 in 150 years.

The management is wise in including in its working staff not merely the twenty-eight midwives to whom falls the lion's share of the work, but also eighty doctors and twenty-six druggists, whose fees are assured. Short of unavoidable accidents, there is therefore no possibility of a midwife sending for help in moments of danger and being refused.

"Marriage and necessity" are the qualifications required of the mothers seeking help; but a Governor's "letter" must be presented with the application, a survival which at no distant date we hope to see swept away from our medical charities. Careful inquiries are made into all the cases. The midwives employed receive small salaries, but are permitted and encouraged to take private cases; they also receive and train pupils, and a training school has been established, the fees from which are of material assistance to the Society's work.

Out of the 2,383 cases attended in 1908, medical help was sent for in 143; one mother and 30 infants died. It is interesting to note the preponderance of male births—7 per cent. over females.

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