

## The Midwife.

### The 1910 Union of Midwives.

#### POPULAR REPRESENTATION AND POPULAR CONTROL.

The 1910 Union of Midwives, which has published a manifesto declaring its policy in the current issue of the *Midwives' Record*, is to be commended for the aims which it sets before its members, and the clearness with which it gives expression to them.

#### THE PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE INTERESTS OF MIDWIVES.

The Union holds that the interests of midwives can only be adequately looked after by midwives, and it is further convinced that the conditions of midwifery, and the feeling of midwives throughout the country renders such a movement inevitable. It desires to work in cordial co-operation with all existing organisations that by united efforts, exerted on a national scale, they may, by every means at their command, erect and maintain a bulwark for the protection of their individual and corporate interests.

#### DIRECT REPRESENTATION.

Next the Union holds that sweeping changes in the constitution of the Central Midwives' Board are essential if it is to be a fair and adequate governing body for midwives, and that direct representation upon it of certified midwives chosen by popular election is at once essential and inevitable. It declares that though this feeling is deep-seated and widespread no adequate and organic expression has been given to it hitherto.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Further, it proclaims as an essential principle, the non-interference of any outside elements, however distinguished they may be socially, or however influential their medical or legal qualifications may be.

It points out that the principle of self-government has been successfully applied to the organisation of workers both in the industrial and professional world, as in medicine, the law and the church, and that the same principle should be applied to midwives. Doctors and lawyers alike would regard it as an impertinence for laymen, or laywomen, to intrude on the administration of their respective professions, and the trade unionist who should propose that members of the employing class, however philanthropic their professions may be should be invited to serve on the governing bodies of their trade societies would be greeted with well merited derision.

The Union believes that the same spirit and principles must and will actuate working midwives now and in the future. Laywomen truly interested in the well being of midwives can find an outlet for their activities in other societies, but this one is to be governed by its rank and file, elected by the suffrages of their sisters.

Such a logical and straightforward programme must widely commend itself. There is every prospect of a successful future for a Union of Midwives founded by and governed by midwives, and all the officers and temporary Executive Committee have the one essential qualification that they are certified midwives.

All midwives in favour of the objects of the Union are asked to sign a form which runs: "I am in favour of the objects of the 1910 Union of Midwives as explained in the subjoined manifesto, and will attend the first meeting, if possible." The name and address of the applicant should be attached, and the application forwarded with a half-penny stamp to the Hon. Secretary, 8, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London.

There is every prospect of a large gathering.

### The L.C.C. and the Midwives' Act.

The Report of the Public Health Committee of the London County Council, submitting the Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the County for the year 1908, contains the following reference to the Midwives Act:—

The number of midwives giving addresses in London, whose names have been placed on the Roll, was 3,020, made up as follows:—

(a) 1,824 in virtue of a certificate obtained by examination prior to the Midwives Act, 1902.

(b) 1,011 in virtue of a certificate from the Central Midwives' Board.

(c) 185 in virtue of having been in practice for a year prior to the passing of the Act.

After correcting for removals and deaths, where such had been reported, the number of certified midwives residing in London in 1908 was reduced to 2,690. Of these, 518 gave notice of their intention to practise during the year, including 32 midwives acting on specific occasions, but not practising regularly in London. The London midwives are classified as follows:—

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