

## The Union of Midwives.

This Society evidently does not intend to be "slothful in business." The office accommodation has already proved to be inadequate for the growing demands of the Union, and a whole floor of the premises at 33, Strand, has now been taken for its use.

Dr. Helen Greene, President of the Derby Branch of the Union, has been appointed on the Health Committee of the County Council of Derbyshire as a representative of the Union.

The Union, through its solicitors, have just offered a reward of £5 for the name and address of some person or persons who have been making slanderous statements in connection with one of their members.

The Union has also had the great satisfaction of recovering certain moneys due to several of their members.

The "coaching" class held on Friday afternoon is proving very popular.

The class for students preparing for the C.M.B. examination is held each Friday from 5 to 6 p.m.

Miss Gertrude Marks, a member of the Committee, and the authoress of "Maternity Nurses' Guide," and the "Pupil Midwives' Register of Cases," is to represent the Union at the Nursing and Midwifery Conference.

The Union is inaugurating an entertainment, particulars of which will be published shortly.

### MIDWIVES OFF DUTY.

The Portsmouth Branch of the Union of Midwives held its first annual meeting last month.

Dr. Marie Grigsby was elected President, and Mrs. Guyther was re-elected as Hon. Secretary.

After the meeting a Social Gathering was held, which the members thoroughly appreciated, specially perhaps the dancing and singing.

### TRAINED MATERNITY NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

By the courtesy of the Committee of the Union of Midwives the inaugural meeting of the above Association will be held at the offices of the Union of Midwives, 33, Strand, on Wednesday, April 5th, at 2 o'clock precisely.

Maternity Nurses who wish to become members of the Association or to speak at the meeting, or join in the discussion, should send their names immediately to the Editor, *Midwives' Record and Maternity Nurse*, 8, Henrietta Street, W.C.

### ACCOMMODATION DURING EXHIBITION WEEK.

Midwives and Maternity Nurses wishing for accommodation at moderate charges during Exhibition week please apply, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, to the Secretary, Union of Midwives, 33, Strand, W.C.

## Babies and Mothering.

All babies need mothering, and the *Manchester Guardian*, referring to the infant mortality at the Withington Workhouse, says:—"One thing the babies suffer from is the lack of "mothering." They are placed altogether in a nursery, while their mothers are busy cleaning in the workhouse,

and though they get oversight they do not get "mothering." A fatherly guardian may, now and then, on a bright summer day, insist on their going on the lawn for a breath of fresh air, but they are never taken out for walks. Their mothers cannot leave the house without formally taking their discharge, and so the babies are kept prisoners too. It has been observed that babies which are strong and healthy on leaving the maternity wards pine away in the nursery.

## The Working of the Midwives' Act.

The following criticisms of Dr. J. T. Hartill, Medical Officer of Health to the Short Heath District Council, in his annual report to the Council with regard to the Midwives' Act, are of interest.

"With regard to the Midwives' Act, 1902, and the section which came into effect on April 1st, 1910, by which no woman may habitually attend women in child-birth, except under the direction of a doctor, unless certified under that Act, the result of my inquiries is as follows: (1) There is no trained certified midwife in the district; (2) there is no evidence that doctors, apart from the district medical officer appointed by the Guardians, are attending more women in child-birth than they formerly did; (3) the district medical officer is engaged to attend more cases, but receives no extra fees for attending them; (4) all medical men consider it an injustice that certified midwives should be required by Statute to send for a doctor, whilst no provision is made by Statute for the payment of the doctor; (5) though they have the power, the Guardians refuse to pay the doctors; (6) the doctors, if they choose, may refuse to go to the midwife's help. When they go, very frequently they only get part of their fee, sometimes no fee. Under these circumstances who can reasonably blame them, let the consequences to the woman be what they may, if application is made to them by the midwife at an inconvenient hour, and they refuse to go? (7) If an order be first got from the Relieving Officer, the District Medical Officer must go to the midwife's help—but in that case the woman becomes a pauper, and doubtless often resents it, and who wants to make paupers of those who are not destitute? (8) The leaders of women resent the injustice of a woman who is not destitute being made a pauper. If Parliament will not immediately alter the Statute law and make payment to the doctors compulsory, by Councils or the Guardians of the Poor, Dr. Hartill asks his Council to consider the matter and get the consent of the Local Government Board to provide medical assistance in such cases, as Liverpool and Manchester have already done under the authority of Section 133 of the Public Health Act, 1875. He concludes, "the Council will infer from these remarks that in my opinion the Act has rather caused inconvenience to the poor locally than been a benefit to them, whilst one case of real hardship to the lying-in has come to my knowledge."

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