

increase in urban districts being from 89 to 97, and in rural districts from 49 to 57."

A record is also kept of non-registered midwives, *i.e.*; those who *formerly* practised midwifery. This is necessary, as in certain districts such unregistered midwives are found to be practising. When evidence is forthcoming, which is sufficient to prove an infringement of the Act, proceedings are taken in a court of summary jurisdiction.

Twelve cases were reported to the Central Midwives Board, with the following results: Eight women had their certificates cancelled; one was severely censured; one was censured; one cautioned; and, in one instance, judgment was suspended for three months.

"Four unregistered women were prosecuted for practising midwifery habitually, and for gain; fines were inflicted in three instances; and in the fourth the woman was bound over for six months to appear for judgment if called upon. One woman, who refused to notify the local Supervising Authority of her intention to practise as a midwife, although repeatedly advised to do so was summoned before a court of summary jurisdiction and fined."

LECTURES TO MIDWIVES.

"In order to assist the untrained midwives in improving their knowledge of midwifery, each inspector arranged to deliver a series of three lectures at various convenient centres throughout the county. They were well attended, and considerable interest was taken in the matters dealt with. After each lecture, discussion and questions were invited. It was considered desirable that the first series should be limited to an explanation of the rules of the Central Midwives Board; this limitation gave ample opportunity for emphasizing the most important fundamental rules, which should be observed in midwifery practice, and it afforded an opportunity for the inspector to explain the reason of many of the Board's requirements, which, in the absence of adequate knowledge, appear to be either inquisitorial or unnecessary."

The lectures by the inspectors included the subject of cleanliness of the midwife in her person, outfit and practical work, and also that of disinfection. The duties of the midwife, from the time of engagement to the end of the lying-in period, her duties, when in daily attendance on the patient, as regards both mother and child, the precautions against ophthalmia and thrush, the rules guiding the midwife in sending for medical help, and, lastly, the clerical work in connection with notifications and the register.

The births of 21,604 children were registered in the administrative county of Kent in the year 1910. Of these 8,544 were attended by midwives alone.

The number of cases attended by individual midwives is instructive. Three attended 175 cases and upwards; two, 150 to 175; six, 125 to 150; eight, 100 to 125; nineteen, 75 to 100; twenty-three, 50 to 75; fifty-nine, 25 to 50; two hundred

and nine, 25 cases or less. It will be observed that, assuming a fee of 10s. is earned in each case—a rather large assumption—not more than thirty-eight of the midwives in the county can hope to support themselves by their work; and in the case of these thirty-eight a large proportion would earn less than £50 a year.

The report states that where the population is sufficiently numerous, the Kent County Nursing Association undertakes the work, but in other localities "neither the present scholarship scheme, nor the County Association, meet the requirements. It seems probable that the County Council will be given more direct powers to provide midwives by the new Bill which it is proposed to introduce into Parliament in the near future, and this may enable something to be done." It seems quite certain that either through the National Insurance Bill or by special legislation, it is necessary to make adequate provision for skilled aid to lying-in women, both at the time of delivery, and during the lying-in period, if the standard of national health is to be raised. Further, only by their employment, under the State, can midwives be secured a living wage.

THE ROYAL MATERNITY CHARITY.

Mr. R. Inigo Tasker, Chairman of the Royal Maternity Charity, 31, Finsbury Square, E.C., acting for the General Committee, draws the attention of the Governors of the Charity, and the public in general, to the fact that the National Insurance Bill makes no provision for helping the destitute and penniless married women such as the Royal Maternity Charity attends in their hour of trial. The very fact of their poverty prevents them becoming "assured persons" under the Act, and consequently keeps them outside its benefits. Therefore the need for this and similar lying-in Charities to assist deserving poor married women whom the State will not help, has become accentuated rather than discounted.

The Committee earnestly hopes that not only will the present Subscribers continue their support of this, the doyen of all lying-in Charities, but endeavour to induce others to become Donors or Subscribers, so that the Charity may be in a better position to rally to the help of those whom the Act of Parliament does not assist.

THE NEWCASTLE MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

At a meeting of the committee of management of the Newcastle Maternity Hospital, at which Mr. N. H. Martin presided, it was resolved to place on the agenda paper of the next meeting of the committee the advisability of issuing an immediate appeal for £10,000 to provide a new hospital, so as to cope with the increasing work of the institution. A delegate was also appointed to attend a meeting at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in connection with the National Insurance Bill.

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