

examines the Midwives' register, and ascertains whether she is carefully discharging the duties of her post."

Now that there is an annual inspection of midwives by the Medical Officers of the Board is excellent; but I should like to point out that it is scarcely possible that such an inspection can be productive of the best results. There are, as I have said, 714 districts; it would take two Medical Officers of the Board, working every day of the week, to get through them once a year. Grave cases of neglect would certainly be detected, but is it possible that such a cursory inspection could get the best work out of the midwives? I think the results would be very much better if the Local Government Board appointed qualified women inspectors, who would drop in at any time and see that the midwife did her work properly, wore proper uniform, and kept a correct record of the progress of her case. It would be good for the midwife; she would not become careless and slack in the discharge of her duties, and would make more use of the training she got in hospital.

In conclusion, I may venture to add, firstly, I would advocate strongly inspection of both private and public midwives; secondly, better salaries for district midwives; lastly, and above all, the utter abolition of the handy woman.

### THE ROYAL MATERNITY CHARITY.

The Annual Report for 1911 of the Royal Maternity Charity of London, 31, Finsbury Square, E.C., which, since 1757, has been carrying on a most useful work amongst poor mothers in their confinements, shows that 2,102 cases have been attended during the year, and 2,150 infants born. There have been two cases of triplets and forty-four of twins. The ages of the mothers attended have varied from eighteen to forty-nine. There have been four maternal deaths during the year; one from accidental hæmorrhage, one from placenta prævia, one from the same cause and complicated by septicæmia, and one from hæmorrhage from the lungs caused by advanced tuberculosis.

As regards the training school, there has been a marked falling-off in the number of pupils, directly traceable, it is stated, to the fact that the principal general hospitals all over the United Kingdom have departed from their original line of work and have inaugurated training schools in midwifery; and also because the Central Midwives' Board is yearly adding to the list of practising midwives who are licensed to receive and train pupils.

The fees for training have been reduced in order to attract more pupils.

The committee has inquired exhaustively into the effect of the provisions of the National Insurance Act upon the Charity, and is of opinion that it in no way affects or assists the poor patients attended by the Charity's medical and nursing staff, since, to be an "assured person" under the Act, and consequently receive the 30s. maternity bonus it is necessary to contribute the 3d. per week, an absolute impossibility to the destitute women who seek the Charity's aid.

The committee report a slight decrease in the number of patients attended, attributable to reduction in income, due to depreciation in property, the ever-increasing burden of taxes and rates, and the consequent more strenuous exertions of other charitable institutions to maintain their income; also some of the Charity's premises still remain unlet. It is handicapped by reason that it has no pretentious buildings to catch the eye, and its work is done out of sight in the homes of the poor and destitute.

As we go to press the Annual Meeting of the Charity is being held. We hope to refer to it further in our next issue.

### THE NORWICH MATERNITY CHARITY.

At the annual meeting of the Norwich Maternity Charity at which Mr. C. S. Gilman (the Sheriff of Norwich) presided, it was stated that a record for cases had been established, also that they began the year with a satisfactory balance in hand and ended it with a still more satisfactory one.

Dr. Arthur Crook wrote pointing out once more the very great responsibility the committee were bringing on themselves in proposing the postponement of the provision of a few beds for intern cases after having had it so often brought to their knowledge by the staff that life was lost nearly every year for want of this necessary accommodation. He added that quite half the sub-committee appointed to arrange details and go into the expense were of opinion that the scheme should be proceeded with.

### UNION OF MIDWIVES.

By the kind permission of Mrs. Rowden, a Whist Drive, in connection with the above Society, will be held at the Pemberton Nursing Institute, 36, St. John's Park, Highgate, N., on Thursday, February 22nd, 1912, at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets, 2s., including light refreshments. Prizes will be given. The Pemberton Nursing Institute is close to the Highgate Tube Station. Trams and buses from Camden Town, Tottenham Court Road, Oxford Street, Charing Cross and Victoria, pass the corner of St. John's Park.

For tickets and further particulars apply to The Secretary, Union of Midwives, 33, Strand, W.C.; or Mrs. Rowden, Pemberton Nursing Institute, 36, St. John's Park, Highgate, N.

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