

The Midwife.

THE MIDWIVES ACT IN MANCHESTER.

The report of the operations carried on in Manchester during 1911 under the Midwives Act, 1902, presented by the Midwives Supervising Committee to the city council is interestingly summarized in the *Lancet*, which states that the statement of the supervising officer, Dr. Barbara Martin Cunningham, shows that during the year 166 midwives gave notice of their intention to practise in the city, and that they attended 10,937 labours. Among these patients there were 72 cases of puerperal fever with 7 deaths. The percentage of the occurrence of puerperal fever among all the cases attended was 0.66, while that among cases attended by midwives having puerperal fever cases in their practice was 1.14. During the year 135 cases of puerperal fever in all were notified among 18,583 births registered in the city of Manchester, which has a population of 716,734. Of these 135 cases, 26 died, or a case mortality of 19.2 per cent. In 44 of these cases midwives alone were present at the confinements. Thirty-eight of the cases, were treated at home, and of these 28, or 73.6 per cent., recovered, 16 with good health and 12 with poor health subsequently. Eighty-five were treated at the Monsall Hospital, and of these 73, or 85.8 per cent., recovered, 59 with good health and 14 with poor health. In 10 of the cases which recovered in the hospital, the women when seen between six and eight months after the attack were again pregnant, an interesting proof of the completeness of their recovery. Dr. Cunningham concludes from these figures that hospital treatment of cases of puerperal fever leads to a greater number of recoveries, and that the recoveries are more complete. No doubt the adequate nursing obtained in the hospital, and the longer and more rigorous confinement to bed is the explanation of these better results. In 67 cases during the year it was found necessary to suspend midwives. Sixty of the cases were in connexion with puerperal fever, and the women were only off work for a few hours while personal disinfection was carried out. During the year the notification of 643 stillbirths was obtained through the returns from the cemeteries, or a percentage of 3.4; of these 314 were notified by midwives, and the stillbirth-rate of the population in midwives' practice was calculated as 0.44 per 1,000. As Dr. Cunningham points out, the large number of cases of stillbirths in breech presentations with perfect full-term children—namely, 37—indicates that if medical assistance had been forthcoming in all these cases a large number of the children might have been saved. The midwives Supervising Committee, in considering the reports submitted to them, decided that *prima facie* cases of negligence or misconduct had been established

against three midwives, and reports respecting these were forwarded to the Central Midwives Board. In addition to these, 15 midwives were dealt with by the Supervising Committee themselves for various breaches of the regulations of the Board. In one case legal proceedings were taken against a woman for practising habitually and for gain as a midwife although not certified under the Act, and a conviction was obtained; a fine of £5 and costs being imposed. During the year, four special nurses were provided by the committee, two of whom dealt exclusively with cases of ophthalmia neonatorum with most satisfactory results. The others were employed in cases where the midwife could not attend for the time being or in septic cases. The report shows that the work has been very completely carried out during the year, and the results obtained are greatly to the credit of the supervising officer, and to the committee, whose help and support have undoubtedly been of the utmost value.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The next examination of the Central Midwives Board will be held on October 22nd, in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester and Newcastle-on-Tyne. The oral examination follows a few days later.

A RECOGNISED SCHOOL FOR MIDWIVES.

The Maternity Nursing Association, 63, Myddelton Square, E.C., is now recognised as a Training School for Midwives by the Central Midwives Board. The pupils work in the poor districts of Clerkenwell, Islington, etc., and under the supervision of Miss M. L. Muriel, the matron, and the district midwives, the school is doing excellent work amongst the patients, and the experience which it is able to offer affords excellent training in the work of district midwifery.

TRAINED NATIVE NURSES FOR CHINA.

DEAR EDITOR,—This photo may interest your readers, and help to impress upon them the value and importance of giving attention to the training of native women for maternity work, that they may by such education reach their own people.

Hangchow is the capital of the Chekiang Province of China, and has a population of half to three-quarters of a million.

The only hospital is that of the Church Missionary Society, which now has men's and women's wards, a maternity hospital, a home for untainted children of lepers and orphans, a leper hospital, and convalescent homes. There are in all about three hundred beds, and only one English nurse.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)