

THE ROYAL MATERNITY CHARITY OF LONDON.

The Annual Meeting of the Royal Maternity Charity was held at the House of the Charity, 31, Finsbury Square, E.C., on Wednesday, February 12th, Mr. Thomas Whittington presiding. The minutes having been taken as read, the Reports for 1912 were presented by the Secretary, Major Killick.

THE STATISTICAL REPORT of the Secretary was as follows:—

Cases attended	2156	Stillbirths	..	68
Infants born	2193	Medical cases	..	233
Males	Deaths: Mothers		3
Females	..	" Infants		43
Triplets: cases	1	Ages of Mothers	17-47	
Twin cases			35

THE REPORT OF THE MEDICAL COMMITTEE stated that they are satisfied that the patients of the Charity and their new born infants have received every care and attention, and that in this connection the high standard to which the Charity has always aspired has been fully maintained.

The causes of the three maternal deaths were (1) ante partum and post partum hæmorrhage; (2) placenta prævia; (3) double pneumonia. The Committee further expressed the opinion that the work of the medical and nursing staff deserves the highest credit for the satisfactory results shown in the Report.

THE REPORT OF THE TRAINING SCHOOL also presented by the Secretary, showed that nine pupils joined in 1912 and completed their training, and that four passed the examination of the Central Midwives Board and four the examination in midwifery of the Charity; five pupils completed their training in maternity nursing, and three passed the Charity's examination in 1912.

The report attributes the marked falling off in the number of pupils in the last three years to the inauguration of training schools for midwives in connection with general hospitals, and to the increasing list of practising midwives licensed to train pupils by the Central Midwives Board. It states further that the number of those who have passed the C.M.B. is only approximate, as pupils often do not present themselves for examination for months after their training is completed, and they are most remiss in reporting the result of the examination.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE to the Governors contained the following clause: "At the present time the majority of the poor women whom the Charity is wont to help are under the impression that they will receive the 3s. maternity benefit under the Act, but this is not the case. Either the husband's or the wife's insurance card must have the full number of 26 stamps on it before the benefit can be obtained, and as the Charity's patients are mostly drawn from the class known as casual labour, and such as live in a chronic state of unemployment,

the erroneous impression has slightly diminished the demand for letters."

THE FINANCIAL ACCOUNT showed an adverse balance of £4,617 18s. 5d. owing to the Bankers, and the Secretary drew attention to the fact that while each patient costs the Charity 18s. 2d., every subscriber of a guinea is entitled to four letters, so it was small wonder they were in debt.

Captain R. Inigo Tasker, Chairman of the General Committee—who did not preside as he had to leave early—said that subscribers were apt to imagine that everyone was relieved by the Insurance Act, but that was not the case. The work of the Charity was conducted in an atmosphere of poverty, destitution, and hopelessness. In this greatest city of the greatest empire of the world 2,000 women about to give birth to children were in want of food and almost of raiment and shelter. These were the people the Charity existed to help and in spite of their debt of over £4,000, common humanity impelled them to continue their help. The reason why the Charity should appeal to all was that it sent out its nurses, and, if necessary, its doctors, to take a ray of hope and sunshine into the hovels of these patients.

The adoption of the Report was seconded by Mrs. Probyn (Deputy Chairman), who said that many friends to whom she appealed had withdrawn their guineas, as a protest against the Insurance Act. She thought it a mean advantage of those who were comfortably off to shelter behind the Insurance Act.

The Chairman, referring to Captain Tasker's remarks, said that the Charity did not limit its operations to the poorest; many of their patients were of the respectable artisan class. It was important that subscribers should not receive an erroneous impression, through reports in the press, as some objected to assisting destitute cases, considering that relief should be obtained elsewhere.

The adoption of the Report was carried unanimously.

Where experts differ, who shall decide? But we may point out that the Report, put from the chair and unanimously adopted, bears out Captain Tasker's statement, as reference to the quotation we have given from it above will prove.

THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

Eighteen members of the General Committee were then re-elected, and the names of Miss Whittington and Colonel H. H. Tasker suggested for the other two places. To create vacancies for them the Secretary stated that Mr. Jack Marshall and Dr. St. Aubyn Farrer were willing to retire. This was agreed.

RESOLUTION.

Mrs. Lee, who is both a Governor and a midwife of the Charity, then moved—

"That the Royal Maternity Charity 'letters' may be used for assured persons who are the wives of casual labourers, or are themselves casually employed, and in needy circumstances, either as

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