

free cases, or for the 'letter' to be used as part payment."

Mrs. Lee told a most heartrending story of a case booked with her, in which the husband, a casual labourer (a painter), had been out of work twelve weeks. If she had not lent him money to buy the stamps for his insurance card he would have lost the right to the maternity benefit for his wife. They had no food, and had sold their bedstead to buy it. When she went to the case, they had had no food that day, or the day before. However, they were able to borrow money on the strength of the Maternity Benefit and being people most desirous of keeping out of debt, they paid their rent, their debts, and her, when they only had a few shillings left. The man became ill from privation, and being thus entitled to insurance benefit himself, was able to obtain nourishment, and was much better for having food, and for the doctor's advice. "If I hadn't helped them," concluded Mrs. Lee, "that woman would have lain there and starved."

Miss Paget seconded the Resolution, and mentioned that people who were insured were unable to obtain poor law relief. She would view with distress any curtailment of the work of the Charity. She warmly commended the way in which its statistics were kept. Nowhere else were such accurate statistics obtainable.

The Chairman, who said he was in a somewhat judicial position, invited expressions of opinion for and against the resolution—especially against.

Mrs. Owens, a Governor and midwife of the Charity, warmly supported Mrs. Lee. She could (she said) endorse every word of what Mrs. Lee had said, from her own experience.

The Rector of a City parish said that he knew the poverty in his own parish only too well, but he did not think Mrs. Lee's proposal could be carried out in connection with the Royal Maternity Charity.

The Chairman then expressed very strongly his objections to the proposal, and said that he did not think it possible, after what he had said, that he should have to refuse to put the resolution to the meeting as he believed no one would wish him to do so.

Mrs. Lee said she must insist on this being done.

The Chairman said that in spite of Mrs. Lee's somewhat strong remark the resolution must first be discussed by a general meeting. He did not object to have it mentioned and discussed, but the annual meeting was not the proper body to consider it, it must also be discussed by the committee.

Miss Paget then rose and asked to be allowed to say a few words, but the chairman declined to permit her to do so. Everyone wanted to get away, he said; he did himself.

On sitting down Miss Paget remarked that she only wished to endorse the Chairman's suggestion. The Chairman then permitted her to speak, curtly desiring her to be as brief as possible and to keep closely to the point.

Miss Paget then expressed her willingness for the consideration of the resolution to be deferred till that day week, and Mrs. Lee having consented, this was agreed.

Notice has since been received that the Annual General Meeting will reassemble as a Special General Meeting to consider Mrs. Lee's motion. The meeting will therefore be held as we go to press.

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### REPORT OF THE MIDWIVES ACT COMMITTEE OF THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

The Midwives Act Committee have reported to the London County Council that Section 8 (5) of the Midwives Act, 1902, requires the Council, as the local supervising authority for the administrative county of London, to supply to the Central Midwives Board, during the month of January in each year, the names and addresses of all certified midwives who, during the preceding year, notified their intention to practise within the county. 528 certified midwives gave such notice during the year 1912, and a list of their names and addresses has been forwarded to the Board. In addition, nine notices were received during the year from persons who had acted as midwives on specific occasions and eighteen notices from certified midwives who intended to practise within the county during periods shorter than a year.

The Committee have passed cordial votes of thanks to the chairman, the Hon. Gilbert Johnstone, and to the vice-chairman, Miss Alice S. Gregory, for their services during the past year.

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### MATERNITY BENEFIT AND DISPENSARY TICKETS.

A Deputation from the Conjoint Committee of the Irish Medical Association and the British Medical Association, recently waited on the Local Government Board to discuss the position of dispensary medical officers in regard to the treatment of patients receiving Maternity Benefit, and other points. One question on which the deputation sought advice was whether the guardians were justified in giving a red ticket for attendance (for the purpose of confinement only) to persons receiving the Maternity Benefit under the National Insurance Act—that is, a sum of money for the special purpose of paying doctor and nurse in a case of confinement. Sir Henry Robinson replied that the question must be decided according to the special circumstances of each individual case. He also said that in view of many applications for advice from Boards of Guardians throughout the country the Local Government Board had prepared a circular which had been held over pending the interview. He then read the circular and asked the opinion of the deputation, the majority of whom considered that it met the case fairly and reasonably.

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