

Those that are benefited in this way could not be received into hospital at anything like the same moderate cost.

One great advantage resulting from this Charity must not be overlooked, and that is that the patients are tended chiefly under women's ministrations, and a large staff of competent and highly-trained midwives is employed, located in nearly every part of London.

The midwives of the Charity must all hold the certificate of the Central Midwives' Board, and be on the "Register" under the Midwives' Act of 1902, and in addition to these qualifications are carefully selected by the General Committee, with the help and guidance of the chief physician, their personal character and previous records being made a special subject of investigation. All the present candidates for the post of midwife are, as far as possible, selected from those who are also fully-trained hospital nurses.

If it is considered a true act of charity to "help lame dogs over stiles," how much more is it a real act of benevolence to smooth away the cares and heartrending anxieties of our poorer sisters, who with a husband out of employment, an empty purse and larder, and a young family to somehow keep fed and decently clad, finds herself face to face with what to the richest in the land cannot but be a terrible ordeal, and in such scenes of poverty and squalor as obtain in the slums absolute misery. The poor little infant on its arrival more frequently than not finds that the only "swaddling clothes" provided for it consist of halfpenny newspapers, and the sheets of the mother's bed have been known to be the same.

When one compares the rejoicings that occur at the birth of a "son and heir" to one of the great ones of the land, one cannot help but wish that some of the money that is lavished to herald the event might be diverted to throw a ray of light and comfort into these scenes of dark and hopeless desolation.

The Royal Maternity Charity can publish no photographs of its buildings or the interior of its wards, but the illustrations of the work of the Charity will be found engraven deep and clear in the hearts of its humble but grateful patients, and generations to come will bless the memory of those benevolent gentlemen who more than a century and a half ago founded the "Lying-in Charity," now gratefully looked to as a true friend in need by hundreds of mothers yearly, under its present name of the "Royal Maternity Charity of London."

#### ASSOCIATION OF INSPECTORS OF MIDWIVES.

The Annual Meeting of the above association will take place on April 24th at the Royal Horticultural Hall, S.W. Members who have not received the preliminary notice and Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors who wish to become members should communicate with the President, Miss Macrory, M.B., 6, Hurlingham Road, Fulham, as Miss Du Sautoy is unable to continue as Hon. Secretary.

#### THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The next examination of the Central Midwives Board will be held in London on April 22nd. The Oral Examination follows a few days later.

#### MATERNITY BENEFIT.

In the House of Commons, on March 25th, Mr. Watt asked whether in Scotland, and particularly in Edinburgh, maternity benefit was being paid, not to the women themselves, but to male relatives representing themselves as authorized to receive such; whether that was according to the Act, or whether the Insurance Committees had power to alter this method of payment. Mr. Masterman said that the Scottish Commissioners were not aware that maternity benefit, either in Edinburgh or elsewhere in Scotland, was being paid to persons other than the insured persons entitled to it without proper authority from the latter. Section 18 (1) of the Act provided that where the husband was insured the maternity benefit was payable in respect of his insurance and by his society, and was to be treated as his benefit, though the society had power to administer it in cash or otherwise as they thought fit. Insurance Committees administered under similar conditions the maternity benefit of deposit contributors, but they had no powers with regard to the maternity benefit of members of approved societies.

Colonel Lockwood asked whether the maternity money should not be paid directly to the doctor or the nurse. Mr. Masterman said that the present system was in conformity with the opinion of the House; and in reply to a further question Mr. Masterman said that the husband was exposed to prosecution and conviction if the wife was neglected during this period.

#### A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

The *Observer* states that at Dayton, U.S.A., a number of babies were born during the flood. A physician in attendance on one woman was trying to get her to a place of safety in a boat when she gave birth to twins. The swirling waters capsized the boat. All were rescued, only to be tipped out a second time, when the mother was swept out of reach and was drowned.

Another physician braved all the dangers of the flood and took his place with a mother while the waters crept up to the house and covered their feet. A rescue boat signalled at the window, and the mother, babe, and physician were lowered into a skiff. They made their way to a point where the street gained a sufficiently high grade almost to take them out of the water. At this point the boat overturned and all the occupants were immersed. The doctor and the man who pulled the oars recovered the mother and child and scrambled to a dry point in the road, where an automobile filled with household goods was commandeered. Its contents were dumped into the road to make room for the mother and baby, who were rushed to safety.

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