

The Midwife.

CLAPHAM MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

ANNUAL MEETING.

In the brick shell of what, but for the builders' strike, would have been a new ward, the committee and friends of the work carried on under Dr. Annie McCall at 37-43, Jeffreys Road, Clapham, S.W., met on the afternoon of June 16th for the annual meeting, preceded by a social gathering. Gaps and rafters within the structure and piles of bricks without has been the state of affairs since the men ceased work on January 25th.

Nevertheless, Dr. McCall, the Founder and Director of the Hospital, while lamenting the delay, cheerfully declared that it would ensure a thoroughly dry ground floor, which could be immediately occupied by the patients when the work is completed.

The chair was taken by Dr. Jane Walker, who said that, while she believed the best work was done by men and women in co-operation, the women providing the necessary "speeding up," and the men contributing the deliberative qualities needed, yet she felt the Clapham Maternity Hospital was important as a pioneer effort, and an example of what women could do unaided by the other sex. She believed it was the only hospital in London in which the entire Board of Management, as well as the medical officers, are all women. She also emphasised the gratifying character of the report for 1913, in which, although 502 patients were attended in their own homes in Battersea, and 632 admitted as patients at Clapham, only one maternal death was reported, and this in the case of a woman received into hospital two days after confinement when already suffering from sepsis.

Dr. Helen Webb expressed a fear that she was qualifying for the position of "professional beggar" for the Clapham Maternity Hospital, this being the second year she had appealed for its funds. Some had the idea that after the coming into force of the Insurance Act a Maternity hospital needed no outside assistance. This was quite a mistake. Although certain "fairy god-mothers" had made the new hospital possible with anonymous gifts totalling £3,000, and other contributions had brought the amount in hand to over £6,000, yet some £3,000 further was needed to complete the reconstruction and re-equipment of the hospital, as well as annual subscribers to contribute towards its upkeep.

In a financial statement which was clear and brief Miss Ritchie, the hon. secretary and treasurer, mentioned that a grant of £2,000 had been received from King Edward's Fund. Among other efforts, the Matron and nurses of the Hospital had organised a Sale of Work, which realised £130

for the furnishing of the new wards, of which there will be fifteen or sixteen, the present buildings being then used as nurses' quarters.

Dr. McCall described a feature, started since the last annual meeting, which is proving of practical service to working-class women. One month after leaving hospital patients may bring their babies to the "Mothers' Welcome" on Wednesday afternoons, from 3 to 4 p.m., when they may have them weighed and ask advice concerning them of the Matron, Miss Ellen Chippindale. In this connection a prize is being offered for the best baby aged twelve months; the conditions being that the mother must be a total abstainer and have suckled her baby nine months. The importance of breast-feeding is continually emphasised by Dr. McCall and her colleagues at the hospital, and in this and other particulars a valuable contribution is being made to the national well-being and development.

Miss Hughes, daughter of the author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays," spoke warmly of the bright Christian atmosphere of the hospital, and the value of its teaching; the mothers and their babies thrive best upon total abstinence principles.

Mrs. Radcliffe, contrasting the amount spent upon "Dreadnoughts" and other "furniture of war" for the destruction of life, with that spent upon the improvement of the health of the children and the consequent saving of life, appealed on several grounds for annual subscribers to the funds of this economically-conducted Maternity hospital. Not all could give the larger sums, but a number of guineas, regularly contributed, each year, gave the workers something to depend upon. She would gladly promise a guinea subscription if others present would do the same. About a dozen responded, and a successful meeting was closed with a warm vote of thanks to the speakers.

Donations and subscriptions will be thankfully received, and any further information about the Clapham Maternity Hospital given, by the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Miss Ritchie, 165, Clapham Road, London, S.W.

LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION.

On Friday, June 19th, at a meeting held at the Public Medical Health Rooms, Bond Street, Leicester, Miss Elinor Pell Smith was elected President, Mrs. Bigg Treasurer, Miss Howe Secretary of the Leicester and Leicestershire Midwives' Association. The revision of the constitution was considered. On July 29th all midwives in the town and county are invited by Mrs. Saunders to Rothley Vicarage to tea, when the objects of the Association will be fully explained.

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