

The Midwife.

A MATERNITY NURSING HOME.

The Maternity Nursing Home at 13 and 14, Prince's Gate, S.W., is being organized through the Maternity Assistance Committee of the Professional Classes War Relief Council, the Chairman being Mrs. Scharlieb, M.D. The Committee includes Sir Francis Champneys, Muriel Lady Helmsley, Dr. H. Simson, Dr. Samuel West, Mrs. Florence Willey, M.D., Mrs. Theodore Chambers (Secretary of the Eugenics Maternity Committee), Miss Greaves (Matron of the City Road Lying-in Hospital), and others. The Council, realising how hardly the professional classes are hit by the War, while the Prince of Wales' Fund only makes grants to the Local Distress Committees, and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, are endeavouring to give certain centralized forms of assistance, and one of the most important is to help those about to become mothers during the trying and costly period of confinement and convalescence, by opening Nursing Homes in London and the provinces, officered by voluntary medical and nursing staffs, with a competent paid Matron in charge. It is also hoped to supply voluntary monthly nurses to those needing such services, in their own homes.

So far as we know the attempt has never been made in London to provide a Maternity Home for patients of the professional and educated classes, although in these days when so many people live in small flats, unsuited for maternity cases, the need is apparent, and it may be that the present emergency will open the way for the establishment of a permanent home.

The Committee are most fortunate in having had placed at their disposal, by the generosity of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, his beautiful house at 13 and 14, Prince's Gate, S.W., rate and rent free, for the period of the War. It will be open both to individuals recommended by the various professional societies and institutions, and to those who apply direct to the Council. A charge of £2 2s. per week is made which covers board, lodging, washing, medical and nursing attendance, everything in fact but the washing of personal linen.

If this cannot be met then the Central Council, hopes to make grants in those cases recommended by the Maternity Committee.

The house, from the moment one enters it, gives one the impression of restfulness from its spaciousness, beauty, and harmonious decoration, and the courteous and kindly reception given by Mrs. Chambers to the representative of this JOURNAL at a time when the Committee were meeting, a working party in progress in the house, and every one extremely busy, impressed one with the fact that a warmth of welcome, and every care, offered

in the most delicate manner possible, would be extended to any patients who seek its sheltering care.

Although the Home is by no means yet equipped, and many gifts are needed, still the Committee are prepared to receive patients immediately. The Matron, at the time of our visit, had not been appointed, and the nursing staff are to be selected on her advice from a list of volunteers at the disposal of the Committee. Mrs. Altentrop, trained in general nursing at Leeds, and also a certified midwife, is appointed Sister-in-Charge, and it is very satisfactory to be assured that all the nursing staff will have both general and maternity training, and that there will be one nurse to every two mothers and babies, exclusive of the night staff, so the nursing should be well done, and the names of the medical staff command confidence.

The wards providing for seventeen patients in all, for the most part two in a ward, though it is proposed to have some single ones, are delightful rooms in which to convalesce—airy and spacious—and one of the joys of maternity work is that one expects all the patients to make good recoveries. The wards are on two of the upper floors, and those in the front of the house have a delightful view over the Park, while those at the back look on to Prince's Gardens. On each floor are two bathrooms, while a third has been adapted for a labour ward. Let us hope that the Home will be well supported and that everyone who can will make some contribution, either in cash or in kind, to help to alleviate in a most acceptable form the distress of a section of those classes upon whom the War presses so hardly, and whom it is most difficult to help.

DIET POINT FOR MIDWIVES.

It is generally recognised that the fine physique of the Scottish people is partly due to the daily use of oatmeal in their diet, and for this reason expectant mothers are taught to eat largely of oatmeal porridge, often not liking the dish, nor digesting it easily. The Scotch habit of eating oat cake is overlooked. Yet this is so easily made, digestible and palatable, that it should be eaten every day by those who are creating a new life, especially by those who feel discomfort after food containing much fluid.

Scotch not English oatmeal should be used as the latter has a slightly bitter flavour which all do not care for. The finest oatmeal is most suitable for delicate digestions, or the medium quality.

The method of making is so simple that oatcake may be made in any cottage, or where there is only an oil stove. To half a pound of oatmeal in a basin add half a teaspoonful of salt and a good pinch of bi-carbonate of soda. Mix well. Put a

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