

The Midwife.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

The public who look to Queen Charlotte's Hospital, Marylebone Road, N.W., one of the foremost maternity hospitals, and which has a record of many years' work behind it, to give a lead in matters concerning both the training of midwives, and the organisation of means to meet the special needs of the class of patients received there, will learn with satisfaction that in both these respects their confidence is well placed.

The hospital is the only maternity hospital in the country which at present maintains a Preliminary Training School, yet how desirable it is that pupils who have had no previous training should obtain an elementary knowledge of ward work and of the special duties which they will have to perform in the care of maternity patients, is apparent. Both from the point of view of the Sister responsible for the care of the patients, in a busy ward, who has otherwise to rely upon a raw pupil to perform duties of which she is almost ignorant, or from the point of view of the patient who has to submit to these ministrations, the inauguration of preliminary training marks a distinct step forward in midwifery training.

Last year, apart from the general trained nurses, 80 per cent of the pupils entering for training elected to take the additional preliminary month, and the influence of this training is apparent in the great success of the pupils of the school in the examination of the Central Midwives Board. Of the 121 candidates sent up for the examination, 119 were successful in gaining the Boards' certificate. The percentage of failures was thus 1.7 only, compared with a percentage of 16.7 over the whole country.

In view of this extraordinarily good result we can only hope that the month's preliminary training will soon be not optional but obligatory.

The public policy of the Committee is also to be commended. On the outbreak of war it offered, as on former similar occasions, to receive into the hospital for their confinement, or attend at their own homes, wives of soldiers and sailors, without the usual letter of recommendation from a subscriber, and free of cost. Their Majesties the Queen and Queen Alexandra, Patrons of the hospital, have expressed their thanks to the Committee for their action.

From the beginning of August to the end of the year 160 wives of soldiers and sailors were registered for admission to the hospital and 218 for attendance by the hospital midwives in their own homes.

ANTE-NATAL TREATMENT.

Now that the importance of ante-natal treatment is becoming increasingly recognised the value of the work done in the out-patient department of

Queen Charlotte's Hospital for nearly twenty years is evident.

Its annual report states that the systematic examination and treatment of patients before labour is of the greatest possible value, and it is no exaggeration to say that many lives are saved thereby every year. The department has grown to such an extent that during the past year no fewer than 1,777 patients were examined, the total number of examinations made being 3,003. The great value of this ante-natal treatment is, moreover, not confined to the mothers alone, it is of equal value to the children for by means of it many lives of infants are saved.

An important change in connection with the out-patient department during the past year has been in connection with the district midwives. Until recently these midwives have provided board and lodging for themselves and the pupils sent them by Queen Charlotte's Hospital and have been permitted to engage in private practice. Henceforth the hospital will provide accommodation and board for the midwives and their assistants, and the practice of the midwives will be restricted to the hospital work only. This arrangement must be in the interest of the hospital and its pupils, as the midwives will now have no divided interests.

THE LADIES' ASSOCIATION.

The Ladies' Association, which has now been in existence for over three years, has given most valuable help to the hospital. During the year its Executive Committee has made grants of linen to the hospital amounting to £201, and has presented eight new special Labour Bedsteads, which were much needed, and have been found to be of great service. The subscription of £50 for the "Ladies' Association Bed" has been continued, and a donation of £64 has been made to the General Fund of the hospital which is greatly in need of additional support.

In addition 2,891 articles of linen for ward and household use have been provided by the Association and the cost of renewing and remaking bedding (£26 5s. 4d.) has also been borne by it. This is certainly a very good record of work for the year.

THE EAST END MOTHERS' HOME.

The Annual Meeting of the East End Mothers' Lying-in Home will be held at the Home, 394, 398, Commercial Road, E., on Wednesday, May 12th, at 4.30. The Home, which is doing a good work amongst a very poor and hard working section of the community, is in need of all the help its friends can give it. Miss Margaret Anderson, the Lady Superintendent, writes: "There have been so many serious cases, and so many premature infants, that each individual has cost more, mentally, physically and financially."

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