

The Midwife.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

The Committee of Management, in their Report presented to the Governors at a meeting held at the hospital on July 13th, and adopted by them, stated that not only has the work of the hospital been well maintained during the present year, but that there has been a very considerable increase in the number of patients admitted to the wards and in the number attended and nursed in their own homes. This increase is in great measure due to the decision of the Committee to extend the benefits of the hospital to the wives of our soldiers and sailors.

These arrangements were communicated to and met with the cordial approval and appreciation of Their Majesties the Queen and Queen Alexandra.

The Committee also received expressions of gratitude for the valuable help thus offered from the various branches of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association and others.

The number of patients admitted to the wards during the six months ending June 30th was 983 as compared with 880 in the corresponding period of 1914, an increase of 103; and 1,174 women were attended and nursed in their own homes, as compared with 969 in the six months of 1914, an increase of 205.

From the outbreak of war in August last until the end of June, orders of admission have been issued to 340 wives of soldiers and sailors and to 20 Belgian and other Refugees; and orders for attendance by the hospital midwives and nurses in their own homes have been issued to 580 other wives of soldiers and sailors.

Out of this large number there was only one death.

The work has been much helped by two kind friends who fitted up houses as convalescent homes for the wives of soldiers and sailors at Woodford and Gerrard's Cross.

While this pressure has entailed much extra work on the medical, nursing and other staff of the hospital, which has been somewhat depleted in consequence of the War, it has been cheerfully borne by all concerned; and the Committee state they cannot speak too highly of the readiness shown by all in the service of the hospital to meet the exceptional circumstances.

The only difficulty has been that of ways and means, and this is considerable. The continued rise in prices of food, drugs and disinfectants, dressings, and, in fact, of nearly every article needed for hospital use has added largely to the cost of maintenance; and the total expenditure for the year will probably be quite £2,000 in excess of last year. Many articles of food, such as meat and milk, are 50 per cent. dearer than they were a year ago, and the Committee feel considerable anxiety as to the future. They

earnestly trust that increased support will be forthcoming to enable them to meet the increased expenditure.

In the Annual Report reference was made to the decision as to the reorganization of the Out-Patient Districts, under which the work of the District Midwives would be limited to the hospital work alone. This involved the provision by the hospital of District Homes for the accommodation of the midwives and pupils. One of these was opened at Kilburn in August last, and another has just been opened in North Kensington. The third and last is the one in Harcourt Street, which is now in course of preparation; and to which, when ready, the work of the Marylebone and Paddington Districts will be transferred. Two houses belonging to and adjoining the hospital are being adapted for the purposes of this District Home, and they will shortly be ready for occupation. The scheme will then be complete, and the work of this Department will be placed on a much more satisfactory basis, and the accommodation for the District Pupils will be considerably improved.

These improvements, which the Committee of Management considered necessary for the proper working of the districts, and which they felt should not be delayed, have involved a certain amount of capital expenditure for alterations and furnishing, and it is hoped that funds may be specially subscribed to meet the expenditure.

The difficulty of providing for the maintenance of the hospital will, it is feared, increase rather than decrease during the coming months. Every effort has been made to ensure economy in all departments, and expenditure has been kept down as much as possible. Nevertheless a considerable increase is bound to occur, and the Committee earnestly appeal for additional support to enable them to continue the benefits of the hospital to the large number of patients who will assuredly need its help.

We feel sure that, even in war time, the wealthy districts of Marylebone and Paddington can find the additional funds necessary for the maintenance of this most important charity, more especially as it is doing such good work for the wives of our sailors and soldiers, and for the Belgian Refugees.

THE CLAPHAM MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

The Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting of the Clapham Maternity Hospital, Jeffreys Road, S.W., and the opening of the new building takes place on Friday, July 23rd, at 3.30 p.m. Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Vendôme has graciously consented to preside, and the speakers will include Mrs. Garrett Fawcett, LL.D., Dr. Isabella Macdonald, Lady White, Dr. Caroline Sturge, and Dr. Annie McCall.

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