

The Midwife.

THE EAST END MOTHERS' LYING-IN HOME.

At the Annual Meeting of the East End Mothers' Lying-in Home, 394-398, Commercial Road, E., on April 18th, a resolution will be moved affirming "That the East End Mothers' Lying-in Home is engaged in excellent work and deserves wider financial support, in order that it may be able to maintain its efficiency and enlarge the sphere of its activity."

No one who reads the Annual Report which is to be submitted to the same meeting can fail to endorse the Resolution, and, we hope many will help to provide or to procure the financial support of which the Home is in need, if its good work is to be maintained.

The report of the Lady Superintendent, Miss Margaret Anderson, for 1916, incorporated in the general one, will move the stoniest heart, if any such there be when all of us are realizing, as never before, how precious to the nation are the lives of mothers and babies. Miss Anderson writes, in part:—

It is interesting to note that during the past year we have delivered 1,770 patients. This meant an increase of 130 In-Patients, which is very satisfactory, as more can be done for the mother in the Home than in her own home. The present is a trying time for motherhood: so can one wonder when a mother, whose husband is in the trenches and whose home has been twice wrecked by Zeppelin bombs, is delivered of a dead child? Rather one wonders that the mother herself lives. The deep, unspeakable, hopeless agony with which a widowed mother brings a fatherless baby into the world leaves an impression on the beholders for all time. God keep our fatherless babes. Owing to nervous strain from various causes, many, many babies came prematurely, but with the exception of nine all did well. There were fourteen sets of twins, and, in spite of all the hardships, the bulk of the babies have been godlings according to their mothers, excelling in beauty Eros, in wisdom Confucius. Such is the power of that wonderful thing called a mother's love!

In the Out-Patient Department, 1,091 cases were attended, among which were 15 sets of twins, and out of this great number of babies only 13 died. 22,650 visits were paid by day and dark, black night, and these visits included many long-time sittings. All know how dark it is in the main thoroughfares and residential parts of this city, so just picture the darkness of the slums. The return to the dark ages is an additional nerve-strain to our District Nurses, and sprained ankles and muddy cloaks have been of frequent occurrence, and a jarred spine is not unknown. When minor catastrophes happen, the poor "culprit" is

usually greeted with the truly sympathetic remark, "However did you manage this, Nurse? you *must* have been careless." Poor dears, they never really blessed the moon before. District Nursing requires extreme self-sacrifice, and our Midwives were always willing and ready—in fact they were kept busy enough to keep the devil out. Coming into such close touch with the patients, they have voluntarily brought to the notice of the Home cases of distress and hardship among wounded soldiers—men who, at the first call of the Empire, answered with "Behold, here am I," are now returning broken and wounded. Many of them say they do not understand "papers and things," and sit down to endure unnecessary hardships, when a little efficient assistance from Miss Page puts things right for them, or our influential friends help them to get work or the assistance most needed.

Sixty pupil nurses have been trained during the year. The practical work has been so heavy that pupils and teachers have often been more fit for bed than receiving or imparting knowledge, but we all persevered, with the result that only one Nurse failed to obtain the C.M.B. Certificate. She has been so fully occupied with monthly nursing since that she has been unable to make a second attempt.

Much difficulty has been experienced in getting a sufficient number of pupils. It has been essential, therefore, to get the work done efficiently, to train pupils free of charge. The preference has been given to soldiers' and sailors' wives and widows.

We have had several changes in the Nursing Staff. Three Sisters left early in the year, for bigger pay, lighter work and more glory. We thanked them for their work, wished them success and filled their places. Our latest deserter is Sister Davies. She, also, has left to better herself, and has accepted the post of Assistant Matron at a London Hospital of 700 beds. She was District Sister for two years, and her place will be difficult to fill. She was loyal to the interests of the Home, and liked by all. Personally, I shall miss her bright face and hearty laugh.

So many Sisters leaving, makes us appreciate the devotion of those of the Staff who remain with us year after year, turning deaf ears to the offer of finer posts, contenting themselves with the humble, hard, non-glorious work of looking after mothers and infants.

On Christmas Day our Committee and other kind friends as usual gave us—to quote the cook—a "heavenly time." The 140 children were most happy—enjoyed their tea, enjoyed their tree and toys, and, above all, enjoyed their gift of clothing. At the distribution of clothing one little lad asked how we knew he wanted a shirt. They nearly split the roof with cheers when Father Christmas (Dr. Arthur Stabb) appeared, and during the

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