

# The Midwife.

## LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

The Finance Committee, Public Health Committee and Midwives Act Committee have concurred in recommending to the London County Council "that the whole of the expenditure incurred by the Central Midwives Board and by the Council under the Midwives Acts, 1902 and 1918, should be allowed to come within the scope of the grant from the Local Government Board of one-half of the expenditure incurred in respect of maternity and child-welfare, and that representations be made to the Local Government Board accordingly."

The recommendation is in consequence of the increased expenditure which will fall upon the Council as a result of the basis of apportionment under Section 2 of the Midwives Act among the various local authorities on the basis of population instead of according to the number of midwives who have given notice of their intention to practise, and of the further expenditure imposed on the local authorities by the Act of 1918.

## THE MIDWIFE AND HER FEES.

The national conscience is at last aroused concerning the welfare of mothers and infants, mainly, it must be owned, as a matter of self preservation; still, from whatever cause arising, there is a prospect that the State will concern itself with the welfare of the mother—expectant, parturient, and convalescent—as never before, and that her baby will also come in for a share of attention.

Thus it comes to pass that the midwife and her work are receiving more consideration than hitherto. The day may even come when a midwife may command a fee upon which she can live without being grossly overworked. At present it has only dawned, but there are signs that the average fee which she can command will be from 21s. to 25s. a case if she undertakes ante-natal work, and visits her patient periodically before confinement.

Even that fee cannot be considered princely. Let us, for the moment, leave out the consideration of the ante-natal period, and restrict ourselves to what a writer in this JOURNAL recently described as the "sacred ten days." Supposing that she gets the sum of £1 1s. per case. For this she has to hold herself in readiness to attend the patient whenever she may require her, whatever the hour of the night or day and whatever the weather. The element of uncertainty as to when she will be needed may keep her near home for a month or more in readiness to respond to the call when it comes. When it does come every mental and physical power she possesses may be taxed to render the necessary assistance. For the critical ten days following delivery she must treat both mother and child when a doctor is not in attend-

ance, and that is in 95 per cent. of her cases. The midwife cannot be said to be overpaid by a fee of £1 1s., which works out at 2s. per daily visit, of an hour's duration or over for the most part, with an extra shilling for the confinement.

If midwifery cannot afford a better outlook than this, even under a revised scale of fees, can we wonder that there is a dearth of midwives?

## A MATERNITY HOME FOR PLYMOUTH.

At the twelfth annual meeting of the Three Towns Nursing Association, held in the Lockyer Hall, Plymouth, on January 15th, the Executive Committee reported that in consequence of reports received from time to time of the conditions of the overcrowding in Plymouth, conditions almost impossible for expectant mothers, this committee resolved to purchase a house for a Maternity Home. The chairman (Dr. Clay) issued a personal appeal and there was a splendid response. The committee confidently appealed to the public to support this important work, which not only included nursing the sick poor, but it also trained nurses to be sent into outlying districts far removed from medical or other skilled help.

We commend the report as to overcrowding to the attention of local authorities in Plymouth.

## TREATMENT OF PREMATURE INFANTS.

In an account of the treatment of premature babies at the University of Minnesota Hospital, it is stated, says *The Canadian Nurse*, that incubators were not used. Instead, the babies, clad in flannel hoods and capes, were kept in blanket-lined clothes-baskets containing hot-water bottles. The temperature of the beds were charted and kept between 85 degs. and 90 degs. F. Only three out of fifteen babies required hot-water bags longer than a month. One needed artificial heat until 72 days old.

## THE ROYAL SANITARY INSTITUTE.

A Course of Lectures and Demonstrations for Maternity and Child Welfare Workers, will commence at the R.S.I., 90, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W. 1, on February 24th, at 6 p.m.

The Course consists of Lectures on the Hygiene of the Home; Ante-natal and After Care; Hygiene of Infancy and Childhood; Duties of Infant Welfare Workers; Organization and Management of Centres; and the Acts and Regulations relating to Infant Care and Midwives. It is open to women students only.

The fee for the course will be £1 11s. 6d.

The course is supplementary to that for Health Visitors, commencing on February 21st. Students wishing to take the two courses can do so at an inclusive fee of £2 12s. 6d., and can have 10s. 6d. carried towards their fee for examination.

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