

## CLAPHAM MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

### ANNUAL MEETING.

The Clapham Maternity Hospital held its 31st annual meeting on June 8th at the Hospital, Jeffreys Road, S.W. The patroness, the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, presided.

Dr. Annie McCall on inviting the Marchioness to occupy the chair, said that it was the first time that they had had the pleasure of her presence in that capacity. The Marchioness said that when she first received the invitation she had no doubt as to what her answer ought to be, and she felt that they must now take an active part instead of being a passive patroness. The reason that she was here for the first time in all these years was that she had been living in Ireland, but now she had come to reside in England.

She congratulated the Committee on their report, which was so admirably edited. She considered the contributory system the right one, as there were thousands unable to pay the expenses of a nursing home, and yet felt they ought not to avail themselves of free beds. This class of people were quite as worthy of help as any others. Miss Marion Ritchie, Treasurer, said that in reckoning the total of patients it must be remembered that with the exception of food the babies cost the hospital as much as the mothers, in many cases more.

The total expenses for the year amounted to £5,469 6s. 5d., and the total income amounted to £1,313. In spite of this they did not owe a brass farthing to anyone. The patients contributed according to their means; the nurses gave their work and the price of their food.

When, a short time since, they had to answer a Government enquiry as to the amount of their debts they were able to answer proudly that they only owed the tradesmen for food for the current week.

Mrs. Scharlieb spoke from the point of view of the birthrate and infant mortality. Owing to conditions due to the war, the babies for some years would be few and poor in quality. It would be a disaster for England if there were "more coffins than cradles." She emphasised strongly the need for mothers to nurse their infants, and said that in Whitechapel the infant mortality was lowest with the Jews, next to them the Irish, while it was highest among the children of the English, the reason being that the latter had largely given up nursing their babies.

Miss Alice Gregory said that her sympathies had always been chiefly with the mothers and that the preventible mortality among them had always seemed to her too terrible a thing to contemplate calmly. Every day eight or nine mothers die from the consequences of childbirth and many of these deaths need not have happened.

She spoke of the enormous strides surgery had made in the past seventy years. Why had not the care of the mother improved at the same rate? The deaths from puerperal sepsis were the same in

1916 as in 1860. The mothers of the nation had been ignored.

The work for some reason did not appeal largely to the educated classes. They took their C.M.B., as they would a certificate in music or drawing merely as an asset. Women would not undertake work that interfered with their week-end or with their nights in bed. She put this down partly to an extraordinary lack of imagination.

Dr. Annie McCall spoke of the good influence that was felt by the mothers during their fourteen days in the hospital; and how that she always impressed on the nurses and students that it was for them to see that every mother was better because she had been in the hospital. She deplored that the tendency of the age was for everyone to do only what he or she felt inclined to do. She lamented that the 50 beds at their disposal went no way towards their requirements, and she spoke of a possibility of having to turn the nurses out of their quarters in the adjoining house, and once more to convert them into wards.

At the conclusion of the meeting tea was served on the roof, and a goodly company of visitors and nurses did justice to the good things provided, while admiring the extensive view and enjoying the sunshine. But the grown-ups were not the only outdoor guests for infants in various stages of "newness" were getting sun baths in every available spot, and if they could have spoken they would no doubt have said: "Out of the everywhere into here! Well it might have been a great deal worse." H. H.

### THE QUEEN AND THE BABIES.

On May 31st Her Majesty the Queen visited the City of London Maternity Hospital, City Road, E.C. and, after watching the weighing of the babies with much interest, gave great pleasure by herself placing one of the babies in the scale. On June 1st, Her Majesty also visited Queen Mary's Maternity Home, Cedar Lawn, Hampstead.

### QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

Princess Arthur of Connaught attended the Special Appeal Meeting at the Marylebone Town Hall, on Tuesday last, when Major Sir Samuel Scott, Chairman of the Hospital, made a strong plea for financial support. Midwives and maternity nurses who are indebted to it for their excellent training, and the prestige which the name of Queen Charlotte's Hospital carries, can help greatly in furthering this appeal. We hope they will begin to do so forthwith.

### THE MARGARET CLUB.

The National Birth-Rate Commission, of which the Bishop of Birmingham is President, has recently advocated the establishment of hostels for unmarried mothers, and the Margaret Club and Day Nursery, 44, Amptmill Square, N.W., which has already done excellent work for unmarried mothers and their children is appealing for £1,000 to start such a Club.

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