

# The Midwife.

## AN INTRODUCTION TO MIDWIFERY.

A *Handbook for Medical Students and Midwives*, by ARCHIBALD DONALD, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. (Lond.).

A handy and concise text-book, entitled "An Introduction to Midwifery," by Dr. Archibald Donald, M.D., F.R.C.P., Consulting Gynæcological Surgeon to the Manchester Royal Infirmary, has just been published by Messrs. Charles Griffin & Co., Ltd., Exeter Street, Strand, W.C., price six shillings. The author, in his preface, says that it has been his endeavour to treat the subject in a manner that would not be too elementary for the medical student, and at the same time not too advanced for the more intelligent class of midwives. He adds that a woman who has gone through a training in general nursing is more likely to make a good midwife than one who starts without such training.

"Any training that a midwife receives should not encourage her to undertake cases which are out of her sphere, but should rather impress upon her the importance of sending for medical help when any unnatural condition exists or is threatening."

The volume is profusely illustrated, the diagrams numbering 71. They are nearly all new, from original drawings by Mons. G. M. Dupuy. The pupil will find these excellent illustrations of great value to her in her preparation for examination, and the qualified midwife in the further study of her profession. The diagrams—(Fig. 12) The Uterus and its Appendages, (Fig. 13) The Pelvic Organs from above, (Fig. 14) Section through Abdomen and Pelvis from back to front—strike us as particularly good and of immense teaching value, as is also the diagram on page 29, showing clearly as it does the gradual development of the embryo in the cavity of the uterus in early pregnancy.

Those on page 66, showing two ways in which the placenta is expelled, are also to be noted.

The book is divided into seven parts:—(1) Anatomical and Physiological; (2) Pregnancy and its Regular Course; (3) Natural Labour; (4) The Lying-in Period and its Management; (5) Irregular Pregnancy; (6) Irregular Labour; (7) Irregularities during the Lying-in Period.

It is well indexed, and extracts from the Rules of the Central Midwives Board are given as an appendix.

The text is thorough and practical in detail.

On page 53, for instance, an easy method of calculation is given for the probable date of delivery, and we quote it as an example of the author's lucid style:

"Ascertain the day on which the menstrual discharge was last seen, that is, the last day of the menstrual period; to this add five days, and then count forwards nine months, or backwards three months. The result obtained is to be taken as

the middle of the week in which the patient will probably be confined. For example, suppose January 10th to be the day on which menstruation ceased; add five days, January 15th, and count back three months; this will give October 15th as the middle of the week in which the confinement may be expected."

After the opinions expressed in the *British Medical Journal*, by Dr. Campbell Stark, concerning puerperal sepsis, it is interesting to note that Dr. Archibald Donald, on page 173, says: "The important thing for a midwife to remember is that direct implantation of the poison by hands, clothes, instruments, etc., is the main if not the only cause of puerperal fever."

He gives some practical details for the disinfection of the midwife after she has been exposed to infection, and recommends the following dramatic method of dealing with the hands:—

After a preliminary washing, "soak them in a strong solution of permanganate of potash (two tablespoonfuls of the crystals to a pint of hot water) until they are stained a deep brown colour. The brown staining is removed by soaking the hands in a strong solution of oxalic acid (four tablespoonfuls to a pint of hot water). Then the perchloride solution may be used."

This book, which so thoroughly covers the whole ground, will be a valuable one for the midwife to possess, and its moderate price places it within the reach of all.

## THE ORGANISATION OF GENERAL AND MATERNITY NURSING.

The Northumberland County Nursing Association, King's Avenue, Morpeth, is appealing in the public press for the sum of £2,000 for the establishment of a training centre for "nurse-midwives," including the purchase, removal, re-erection, completion and furnishing of a block of army huts suitable for a nurses' hostel, from which it is proposed to carry out the training of pupils in general and maternity nursing under fully qualified supervision.

We hope that the promoters of the appeal will ascertain that their scheme of nurse training will fulfil the requirements of the General Nursing Council, otherwise candidates for training should be informed that they will not be able to qualify as registered nurses, but will presumably gain their status as certified midwives, and no doubt will do useful work in this connection. Why not drop the word "nurse" and appeal for funds for the training of midwives? The necessity for well-trained midwives is widely recognised, and there should be good support for an appeal made on such lines. It cannot be too clearly emphasised that certified midwives, who may have received some insight into nursing in the course of their training, are not thereby qualified as professional nurses.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)