

The Midwife.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE TRAINING AND SUPPLY OF MIDWIVES.

The seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Association took place at the "New House," Airlie Gardens, Campden Hill, by the kind permission of Mrs. George Booth, at 3 p.m., March 17th.

The Chairman was Lieut.-Col. F. E. Fremantle, M.P., L.C.C. (Consulting C.M.O. for Hertfordshire).

In his opening remarks he said that the whole question of Midwifery lies at the root of our Reconstruction. From the point of view of the M.O.H. he thoroughly realised the immense importance of it; from the Parliamentary point of view, he saw the great difficulties that confront M.P.s—"the appalling difficulty of finance"—and in pressing this point the Chairman urged that the only way to obtain money so greatly needed by the Association was to appeal to people who had high ideals of work for the good of the community.

The Chairman spoke in reverent and sympathetic terms of the passing of Miss Lucy Robinson, and the good work done by her in this connection.

H.R.H. Princess Christian, and His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury were re-elected as Presidents; other re-elections were the hon. officers and the members of the Executive and Finance Committees.

Mrs. Ebdon, C.B.E., Chairman of the Executive Committee, gave a brief account of the work done during the year. The Association's scheme for State-aided Midwifery is much to the fore and has been brought up to date. Questions have been asked in the House of Commons, but the proposals of the Ministry of Health are not fully known, and until such time no further action will be taken. Mrs. Ebdon also referred to the fact that the Committee have taken an active part with other Societies in obtaining Representation of the Professional classes on the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment, dealing with the National Relief Fund, as it was known that they have suffered greatly during the war. The principle of such representation has been conceded, and three professional women have been invited to serve on that Committee. Twenty pupils entered for training under the auspices of the Association during the year. Lady Mabelle Egerton also spoke. Miss Grant moved the adoption of the Balance Sheet. At the conclusion of the business portion of the meeting, Sir Malcolm Mortis, K.C.V.O., F.R.C.S. Ed., gave a most interesting and inspiring address on the character of midwifery work and its great value to the community. He struck a high note when he owned to his audience that all through his long experience in midwifery he had never attended a confinement without a certain sensation of fear

lest he should make any mistake. Such sensitiveness is surely a sign of a strong conscientiousness, which all engaged in nursing the sick need not be ashamed to possess.

A cordial vote of thanks was passed to the Chairman, the speaker, and especially to Mrs. Booth, the hostess, for lending her house for the purpose, and for her generous hospitality. A delicious tea was provided for the numerous guests after the meeting. B. K.

THE ROYAL MATERNITY CHARITY OF LONDON.

The Annual Report of the Royal Maternity Charity of London for 1920, just issued, is a very encouraging record, and incidentally proves the wisdom of the Council in moving its offices from Finsbury Square to 38, John Street, W.C. 1.

There has been no maternal death for three years, and the percentage of deaths of infants is less than last year (5 deaths as compared with 9), although there is an increase in the number of patients attended, attributable to the great amount of unemployment.

The midwives are now receiving 9s. more per case than they received two years ago; but, in spite of this, the cost per patient has continued to decrease, which shows that great economy has been practised by all concerned.

The receipts from donations and subscriptions amount to £955, as against £610 in the previous year, and, as a result of the year's working, after meeting all expenses the Committee has been able to reduce the Bank overdraft by £587.

The Committee hope for increased annual subscriptions to meet current expenditure, and donations towards the crippling overdraft and loan amounting to £4,077 and entailing over £150 for interest.

We congratulate the Secretary, Mrs. Elliott, on the report of the year's working.

The Ninth Annual Post-Graduate Week for Midwives will be held at the General Lying-in Hospital, York Road, Lambeth, from May 23rd to 27th inclusive. Full particulars and programme will be published later.

Dr. Roger S. Dennett, in his book on "Simplified Infant Feeding," expresses the view that the routine practice of giving water to infants is very much overdone. Many begin the practice at birth, before the milk comes into the mother's breasts, by giving the infant sweetened water. This is actually harmful, as it prevents the taking of the breast after the milk has come.

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