

The Midwife.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

DEPUTATION TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH.

Sir Hilton Young (the Minister of Health) received a deputation on Tuesday, December 11th, from the Maternal Mortality Committee.

The deputation introduced by Mrs. H. J. Tennant, C.H., was supported by representatives of a large number of women's organisations, and represented all three political parties.

Mrs. Tennant said that the deputation represented over 3,000,000 women and was the outcome of a meeting on the question of maternal mortality held on November 6th, and their object was to urge a wider provision of first-rate medical and midwifery services and the fuller maintenance and development of the Maternity and Child Welfare services.

Mrs. Barton said that malnutrition, though not a primary cause of maternal mortality, was a contributory factor. She feared that the block grant system of Exchequer grants was less effective in stimulating local authorities than the former percentage grants.

Mrs. Anderson referred to the recent inquiry into the death of Mrs. Taylor, in Manchester. She feared that the facts brought to light by this inquiry had shaken public confidence.

Miss Gregory dealt with the training of midwives and said that midwives should receive a two or three years' course in a first-class hospital. She emphasised the dangers of employing handy women.

The Minister said that the problem of maternal mortality was a problem which was giving him, as it had given his predecessors, grave concern. The Government were at present engaged, in co-operation with the local authorities, in a strenuous and continuous effort to improve the Maternity and Child Welfare services throughout the country. Particular attention was being directed to—

- (1) Improving the ante-natal service;
- (2) ensuring that the services of a trained midwife are available for all confinements;
- (3) securing the provision of maternity beds for complicated cases and for patients with unsuitable home conditions, such beds to be associated where practicable with general hospitals, preferably in small units readily supervised, and for which prompt specialist services for serious cases may be made available;
- (4) providing facilities for the adequate isolation and separate nursing of cases of puerperal sepsis; and
- (5) obtaining the services of a consultant for doctors needing assistance in difficult or complicated cases.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER AT THE LUCY BALDWIN MATERNITY HOME.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, opening an extension of the Lucy Baldwin Maternity Home at Stourport on January 2nd, said it seemed a disheartening and baffling thing that we did not seem to get any progress that we could regard with satisfaction.

"Maternity," he said, "is not a disease; it is a physiological function of a perfectly natural character. But it does seem a terrible thing that civilisation should have to pay this price.

"It is the price of an unnatural character; many homes are broken up and husband's lives are shattered. More than all, one thinks of the child or children left without a mother, because, however conscientiously a child is looked after by a relative, no one can supply the place of a mother.

The child left motherless at birth is likely to suffer for it for the rest of its life."

During the five years that the hospital had been in existence, there had been 828 cases, and only one death. That meant that the death-rate there was about a quarter of what it was in the country as a whole.

STATE SERVICE OF MIDWIVES PROPOSED.

Dr. Marjorie Back, of the Royal Free Hospital, addressing the winter school for health visitors and school nurses at Bedford College, Regent's Park, suggested a State service of midwives.

"We should," she said, "if necessary, provide a State service which would ensure that midwives were properly paid and that they obtained good holidays."

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

At the November Examination of the Central Midwives Board 1,049 candidates were examined and 788 passed the examiners. The percentage of failures was 24.9

MIDWIFE-TEACHERS EXAMINATION, 1934.

Part 2.

The following is the list of candidates who have been successful at Part 2 of the recent Midwife-Teachers' Examination conducted by the Central Midwives Board.

Winifred Atkins, District Midwifery Sister, University College Hospital.

Agnes Baker, Sister, Maternity Ward, Liverpool Royal Infirmary.

Florence Campion, Matron, Gloucester District Nursing Society.

Mary Carpenter, Sister Tutor, Stoke-on-Trent City Maternity Hospital.

Louisa Annie Clements, Sister, Maternity Department, Derby City Hospital.

Mildred Ada Forder, Private.

Mary Agnes Gannon, Sister, Liverpool Maternity Hospital.

Annie Heavisides, Maternity Sister, St. James's Hospital, Balham.

Florence Augusta Johnson, Midwifery Sister, East End Maternity Hospital.

Doris Ellen Killick, Staff Nurse, 77, Southampton Street.

Edna Lancefield, Assistant Maternity Sister, Dudley Road Hospital, Birmingham.

Martha McKee, Assistant District Sister, City of London Maternity Hospital.

Ethel May Marlow, Sister, Maternity Department, Woolwich War Memorial Hospital.

Katharine Annie Newman, Private.

Marjorie Georgina Perry, Sister, Maternity Department, Kingston and District Hospital.

Eva May Peters, Matron, St. Helens Corporation Maternity Hospital.

Lucy Stella Rayner, Sister, Maternity Ward, Paddington Hospital.

Bessie Renfrey, Sister, Sharoe Green Hospital.

Frances Rose Sinden, Labour Ward Sister, St. Giles's Hospital, Camberwell.

Alice Maud Sleight, Staff Midwife, University College Hospital.

Margaret Helen Spokes, Matron, Widnes Queen's Nurses' Home.

Gertrude Tunstall, Sister, Maternity Department, Walton Hospital, Liverpool.

Ellen Grace Welbrock, Sister, Maternity Ward, St. Alfege's Hospital.

Iris Annie White, Maternity Nurse, Guy's Hospital.

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