

taken care of in hospital. Four beds only could be managed for these mothers in the beginning, but as the demand grew, our beds gradually increased to sixty. The ante-natal care was begun here in 1889 and printed instructions given to the patients.

Our Committee has always possessed three great qualities: Personality, Sympathy and, above all, Idealism, hence our progress through the ages.

One sister has left to be married, bless her, and the County Council Municipal Service has attracted three more of our senior Sisters. May they prosper. The new Sisters are framing well, so we go on comfortably and know that the woman about to become a mother, or with her new-born infant upon her bosom, is the object of tender care and sympathy. God forbid that any member of the profession to whom she trusts her life, doubly precious at this eventful period, should hazard it negligently, unadvisedly, or selfishly.

We are busy weavers of life and the web begins in the Ante-natal department, where the shuttle goes backwards and forwards, each talk leaving one new thread in the web of the mothers' lives. The work has increased so much, that two doctors' clinics are now held weekly, as the doctors see every expectant mother.

11,684 visits were paid to the clinics. Abnormalities are corrected and weary or sick mothers come in for a rest or treatment before the baby arrives. The expectant mothers are taught that all will be well if simple rules of hygiene are observed, and the least ache or pain reported at once. Abnormalities of mind or body are treated and on these lines we obtain satisfactory results. The Centre also gives the budding midwives training for future work. It teaches them the booking of patients, social work, visiting the patients' homes, notifications and how to get food and clothing in distressful cases.

The total number of mothers delivered in 1937 was 1,735. Of these 1,492 were delivered in the Hospital, which kept our beds well filled, yet allowed intervals for disinfecting and cleaning. Our new Waiting Ward is a great success, and the patients are as happy and comfortable as it is possible for them to be during that trying period.

The Honorary Medical Officer's Report gives the work in detail. No patient returns to her own home and many duties until she is able to undertake her work, and that often means a longer period with us than the usual twelve days which the mother thinks is all that is necessary.

Though ante-natal work is of immense importance, yet the importance of the intra-natal period and the necessity of a high standard of midwifery are outstanding. Ante-natal methods are the strategy of the work, intra-natal methods the tactics.

With all the care given to the pregnant mother, we still have many cases in which death hovers, for no amount of care can mend a worn-out heart or body, or cure malformations, so we still have very serious cases to deal with.

The Post-natal Clinics were well attended and show that the initial work was well done, as very few complications occur.

The out-patients number 263. This is again lower than the previous year. Every mother would like to come into Hospital, but circumstances do not permit of this, as they cannot leave their large families. Their homes leave much to be desired, but every one made a good recovery and to ensure this, 7,996 visits were paid by the nursing staff and 76 by the medical officers.

The endurance of the mothers is amazing, they are cheerful in adverse circumstances and always welcome the new arrival, and we are able to help them with extra nourishment and also with clothes for the infants.

Owing to this continued decrease, which is general throughout London, we feel somewhat downhearted about

this department, and the statistical cost per patient is heavy, but an efficient staff must always be maintained, whether we are busy or not.

The Training School had another busy and successful year. Fifty-one midwives were trained and only one failed in the Central Midwives Board examination. We hope she will pass when she tries again in February and so give us a clean sheet. The teaching is a very interesting part of our being. The nurses have plenty of experience and skill to do comes by doing. We strive to give them such knowledge as may enable them to start their new work with a good comprehension and right judgment about matters of the highest importance to them, the offspring of watchful observation and experience, serious study, marking, comparing and weighing the nature of events, their tendencies and consequences. Thus, with trained observation and perfect knowledge of the Rules under which they will serve we trust they will carry on their work efficiently and humanely and be an asset to the nation and a friend to the mothers.

The patrons who have brought us to the present and have cared for us in the past continue to support and help us. The "Twin Bounty" is a Godsend. The ladies who keep our babies clothed in the softest flannel and supply the beautiful knitted blankets to keep them cosy, still continue their beneficent work and many long hours must they work for the love of the infants. To the Needlework Guilds, Work Societies and Leagues who help us so splendidly and to the many friends who quietly and regularly send us help, we are deeply indebted and most grateful, for no baby, thanks to such kind help, ever goes out dressed in washed out flannelette and the District infants share in all your goodness. The handsome gift of blankets and linen provided by kind patrons all add to this growing debt of gratitude. Our thankfulness is infinite and the work could not be carried on efficiently without you.

Earthly arithmetic says, "Give and want"; Heavenly arithmetic says, "Give and get rich," and you are all just heavenly.

Miss Anderson expresses warm thanks to the numerous generous friends of the Hospital and we are pleased to note that although it takes £7,992 7s. 8d. to cover expenses, there is a balance of £693 8s. 2d. over total expenditure for the year; the vitally necessary repairs and improvements being undertaken to the Nurses' Home will more than absorb the balance.

The Committee of Management express the opinion that the Midwives Act, 1936, and the new regulations of the Midwives Board will both have the effect of greatly increasing their work and expenditure, and decreasing their income.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The rules requiring midwives to attend from time to time a course of instruction approved by the Board, approved by the Minister of Health, is now obtainable in pamphlet form, printed by Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., Ltd., New Street Square, London, E.C.4, and it would appear absolutely necessary that every practising midwife should procure a copy to realise what is incumbent upon her.

Examination for Pupil Midwives.

Under the new training and examination rules the first examination will be to all intents and purposes the same as the examination under the existing rules and should be conducted by doctors as at present, but that having regard to the nature and object of the second examination under the new rules, such examination should be conducted jointly by doctors and certified midwives.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)