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Editorial.

NURSING IN NEW ZEALAND.

The Report on Hospitals and Charitable Aid in New Zealand of the Inspector-General of Hospitals and Charitable Institutions in the Dominion, submitted to the Governor, Lord Plunket, and subsequently presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of his Excellency, is a most interesting document, which we have received by the courtesy of Dr. T. H. A. Valintine, the present Inspector-General.

The value of a statistical report is abundantly evidenced by the practical conclusions deduced from it. Thus attention is drawn to the great difference of expenditure on rations in hospitals of similar size, and a similar comparison shows the difference under the expenditure on fuel and light. "Many Superintendents," says Dr. Valintine, "are aware there is great waste in this, and find it very difficult to check, especially the waste in gas." He puts his finger on a weak spot when he points out "very few nurses know the cost per 1,000 feet of the local gas supply, nor do they know the cost of many articles which are in daily use—such as absorbent wool, gauze, antiseptics," etc. His conclusion is as follows: "In view of the fact that nurses when they become Matrons are responsible for these articles, and in many instances have to order them, it would perhaps be as well to include a question on hospital economics in the final State examination."

We can only at present briefly allude to the interesting statistics showing that in the fifty-three hospitals of the Dominion there are 593 nurses, of whom 188—*i.e.*, 31 per cent. are certificated. Dr. Valintine points out that the proportion of trained nurses to those in training should not go below

one in three; but he shows also that if the pupils in training are mostly in their first year, a larger proportion of trained nurses will be required to supervise them than if a large number of probationers are in their third year.

Dr. Valintine incorporates in his Report that of Miss Maclean, the Assistant-Inspector of Hospitals, who presents an exceedingly interesting and able statement on the administration of (1) the Nurses' Registration Act, 1901; (2) the Midwives' Act, 1904; and (3) the Private Hospitals' Act, 1906. Nothing could prove more conclusively the value to the Administration of the appointment of a trained nurse to an official position in the Inspector-General's department than the lucid and practical exposition given by Miss Maclean in this Report. The chief points noted are the appointment for a certain number of years of a conjoint Board of Medical Practitioners and Nurses as examiners under the Nurses' Registration Act. Their office being a continuous and settled one, it is hoped that they will study the question of nurse training and examination, and that their advice and co-operation with the Department in these matters will be of great value. The question of the training of mental nurses is also discussed, Miss Maclean favouring the adoption of a post-graduate course in mental nursing for nurses with general training.

In regard to the difficult question of untrained registered midwives, Miss Maclean advocates individual inspection and supervision combined with suitable lectures.

Under the Private Hospitals' Act every licensee of such hospital must in future be registered. In short, throughout the nursing world in New Zealand, system and order are now being introduced into all departments—a noteworthy result of the benefits of a Nurses' Registration Act.

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