

THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL ON THE MIDWIFERY TRAINING OF STUDENTS AND MIDWIVES.

Sir Donald MacAlister, President of the General Medical Council, has communicated with Sir Robert Morant, Chairman of the National Health Insurance Joint Committee, transmitting to him a Memorandum, prepared by its National Insurance Committee. Sir Donald MacAlister points out that the Council is by statute entrusted with the duty of maintaining the standard of proficiency in respect of midwifery required of candidates for medical qualifications; and it is advised that the regulations for the administration of maternity benefit, which the Insurance Commissioners are empowered to approve, may possibly have the effect of interfering seriously with the important functions of lying-in hospitals and maternity institutions, in relation to the promotion of obstetrical knowledge and skill. The Council's Committee, however, has formed the opinion that the danger may in great measure be obviated, if the regulations in question are suitably framed.

The Committee state their reasons for believing that under the Act there is no insuperable obstacle to the admission of women to a maternity hospital without loss of benefit.

The second point of difficulty, the Committee states, arises in connection with the outdoor departments of maternity institutions, which enable candidates for admission to the *Medical Register*, to complete their obstetrical training by attending some or all of the twenty cases which the regulations of the General Medical Council require; it also arises in connection with the training of midwives.

We may point out, however, that difficulty does not arise in the case of out-door midwifery pupils, who attend their cases accompanied by and under the supervision of a certified midwife; and this practice, both in the interests of the patient and the pupils, should always be observed.

THE SALVATION ARMY MOTHERS' HOSPITAL.

Princess Louise (Duchess of Argyll), on July 4th, lays the foundation stone of the Mothers' Hospital, Lower Clapton Road, to be established by the Salvation Army.

The site is about three acres in area, with a frontage of six semi-detached houses which are to be linked together in a façade. Behind this, four model bungalow wards are being erected, each to provide accommodation for twelve mothers. At present, it is proposed to use one bungalow for unmarried mothers, another for special cases, another will be reserved exclusively for married women; while one will, it is hoped, be used by Jewish mothers. In addition to the wards, an Administration Block will be provided, and quarters for the staff. Eventually the hospital will accommodate 100 patients, but a beginning will be made with half that number: £60,000 is estimated as the

cost of the entire undertaking, £26,000 of which is required for the present scheme, towards which Mrs. Booth has received £20,000.

THE NATURAL FEEDING OF INFANTS.

Dr. Harold Scurfield, Medical Officer of Health for Sheffield, in a paper on "The Importance of the Natural Feeding of Infants," said the medical profession must lay it down that it was a crime for any woman, be she princess or peasant, who was able to do so, to refuse to feed her own baby; and so expose it to risks of digestive disturbances, rickets, tuberculosis, and premature death from diarrhoea. At medical schools teachers were wanted who combined the experience and knowledge of the doctor, the mother, and the monthly nurse. All maternity hospitals did not sufficiently impress on their students the importance of breastfeeding; and nothing was said in the Rules of the Central Midwives' Board on the subject.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, MANCHESTER.

The Lord Mayor of Manchester, Mr. S. W. Royle, who was accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, presided at the Annual Meeting of the friends and supporters of St. Mary's Hospital last week. The report of the Board of Management showed that the number of patients treated during the year was 19,305, an increase of 800 over the preceding year. Twenty-one students resided in the hospital, and 70 midwifery nurses were trained. It is satisfactory that the income for the year has increased by nearly £900, chiefly in new and increased annual subscriptions; but it is less so that there is a deficit of over £2,000.

The new building was opened on April 18th, 1911, in accordance with the terms of the gift of Mr. Edward Hopkinson, and other generous donors, by the opening of the children's ward (25 beds); and the transfer of the gynaecological department in July, accommodation being provided for 85 patients. At the Whitworth Street West Hospital, 50 beds are now used for maternity patients, and accommodation provided for 11 medical students and 28 midwifery pupils. It is hoped that before long this branch may be fully developed, and the number of beds brought up to 60 at least.

THE NATIONAL MATERNITY HOSPITAL, DUBLIN.

At the Annual Meeting of Governors of the National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street, Dublin, at which the Master of the Rolls presided, the Right Hon. M. F. Cox, M.D., said if the hospital's work of succour were not done, it would leave an inferno of human suffering. In consequence of the Insurance Act, its resources would be crippled very seriously; and it behoved the public to bear in mind that women must not be left to suffer because the benefits of the Act did not apply to hospitals.

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