

A Midwives' Bill in New Zealand.

A copy of a Bill for the Registration of Midwives, which has been introduced into and passed the House of Representatives in New Zealand is now before us. We refrain from printing the Bill, as it is quite possible that before it passes into law it may undergo considerable alteration. It is, however, interesting as showing the efforts now being made in that young and enterprising country to bring midwifery work into line.

The Bill is intitulated "An Act to provide for the Better Training of Midwives and to regulate the Practice of Midwifery." It provides that the Registrar (*i.e.*, the Inspector-General of Hospitals) shall from time to time cause the names of all duly qualified midwives to be registered in a book to be kept by him at his office, called the "Register of Midwives."

The requisite qualifications are much the same as those required under the Midwives' Act in this country.

It also makes provision for the future training of Midwives, in the following Clause.

"There shall be established in New Zealand one or more State Maternity Hospitals where pupil nurses can on payment of the prescribed fee be carefully instructed in all duties required for the welfare of mother and infant during and immediately after childbirth."

It proposes that "every pupil nurse who satisfies the examiners at any such examination as to her proficiency, and that she has attended lectures at a State Maternity Hospital or other institution recognised by the Inspector-General as affording to its nurses sufficient training in midwifery, for a period of six months in the case of a nurse registered under 'the Nurses' Registration Act, 1901,' or of twelve months in any other case, and has attended the prescribed number of cases of labour, is entitled to a certificate under this Act."

The Bill also provides that the Registrar may cause to be registered as a State maternity hospital any public, or private hospital, the managers of which provide to his satisfaction for the instruction of pupil nurses, and comply with the other requirements of the Act, and also that he may at any time cancel such registration in the case of any such hospital which fails to comply with such requirements, or any of them.

It is also proposed that any woman, who after a given date not being recognised under the Act, practises as a midwife or takes or uses the name or title of a midwife either alone or in combination with any other word or words, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £20, but provision is made that this shall not apply to any woman rendering assistance in a case of emergency.

Nursing in Austria.

For some time past Austria has had energetic advocates of a nursing system on modern secular lines, to replace the religious orders which have hitherto occupied the nursing field almost entirely. The Association for District Nursing in Vienna may be mentioned as especially urgent upon this point. The Governmental Public Hospitals Department has recently established an Institute for training lay nurses according to modern ideas. For the first six months the pupils receive instruction, and this includes, besides the professional teaching, the elements of general education, if the pupil has not already had an education equal to that of the common schools. The pupils have their lodging and living expenses given them, and after the first six months begin to receive a salary, which may with long service rise as high as 900 krone (about £37 10s.) a year. If invalided they are to receive a percentage of the salary received at the time of loss of health, as an annuity. After forty years of service (!) they will receive an annuity, even if not invalided. The pupils have formed an association among themselves to advance their interests further. They are free to leave the Institute at any time during the first six months without notice, and afterwards with three months' notice. The general education of women is on a low plane in Austria, and, no doubt, this new step means that so poorly educated is the material available by the hospital authorities that, as in Paris, the pupil nurse must often first be taught to read and write; and the trouble with these reforms, when initiated by men alone is, that they cannot attract a desirable class of women to the service.

The Hôpital du Tondu, Bordeaux.

The Directrice of the newly-organised training-school for nurses at the Hôpital du Tondu, Bordeaux, is Miss Catherine Elston, who was trained at the London Hospital, where she held the position of Sister. She was subsequently appointed Home Sister at the Poplar Hospital. In 1903 Miss Elston was appointed *Cheftaine* (Sister) at the Maison de Santé Protestante, Bordeaux, and in April of the present year took the direction of the Nursing School at the Hôpital St. André, where the nuns and lay nurses worked together. When it was decided to separate the lay and religious elements, Miss Elston was appointed Directrice at the Hôpital du Tondu, to which the lay section of the school was transferred. The hospital contains 120 beds, and the nursing staff includes the Directrice, three Cheftaines, two Staff nurses, twelve pupils, and a Home Sister. Miss Elston warmly appreciates the work done by her late chief, Dr. Anna Hamilton, for the improvement of nursing in Bordeaux is due in the first instance to her Thesis: "Considérations sur les Infirmières des Hôpitaux."

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