

bour, C. E. Curran, B. L. H. Gunn, M. T. Sheeran.

#### IRELAND.

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*Belfast Union Maternity Hospital.*—M. J. Dodds, B. G. MacClelland, M. Seaton, M. McGeagh Stewart.

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### Infants' Consultations.

The report of the first year's working of the Infants' Consultations in connection with the St. Marylebone General Dispensary, organised somewhat on the lines inaugurated by Professor Budin in Paris, is on the whole satisfactory. The work is largely educational, and part of a scheme for dealing with the preventable infantile mortality of the district. The babies are stripped, weighed, and submitted to a very thorough medical examination; the Health Society's visitors are present, and assist by taking notes, etc. In this way they get many valuable hints, and are able to intelligently follow up the case in the home. The mother is advised as to feeding, sleep, clothing, etc. With regard to the latter, it is rare to find a baby with less than fourteen separate articles of clothing, and one poor mite had eighteen! If breast-feeding is apparently unsatisfactory, a "test feed" is given at the Dispensary, the infant being weighed before and after; this experiment has been found of great value. Only fifty-eight babies attended regularly. This is partly due to the facts that the population is migratory, and that there is no pecuniary benefit; one mother objected to defects in her baby being

pointed out, and another discontinued attending because she did not like her baby weighed in the same scales as the others.

Of these 28 the progress of 16 is reported as highly satisfactory, of 8 as satisfactory, and of 12 as unsatisfactory; the majority were "difficult cases," so that the medical staff consider the results encouraging.

### The Regulation of Midwives in Cape Colony.

At a recent meeting of the Cape Colony Medical Council, under which midwives are registered in that Colony, a report was brought up from the Committee appointed to consider the Midwives' Regulations. The principal recommendations, all of which were adopted after a brief discussion, were as follows:—

That all registration of midwives without examination be abolished, the diplomas of applicants from outside the Colony being accepted as proof of curriculum only, but the holders being required to submit themselves to the same examination as candidates trained in the Colony.

That the exemption from the written portion of the examination hitherto permitted in the case of persons who had been in practice for five years, be abolished.

That from all candidates be required proof of having been trained for at least three months in a recognised lying-in institution, of having personally attended at least fifteen cases under the supervision of a medical practitioner or registered midwife, and of having attended a satisfactory course of lectures.

That the exemption of unsuccessful candidates from payment of a fee for re-examination only extend to the second examination, and that on further occasions half fees be paid.

Dr. Darley-Hartley explained that the motive influencing the committee to recommend the abolition of registration without examination was partly the idea that their own locally trained women now deserved some protection in view of the stringency of the test they had to pass, and partly the practical impossibility of properly gauging the value of a whole host of diplomas submitted from all parts of the world. There was always the danger of admitting into competition with their own midwives people who had not been nearly so well tested as they had themselves. As regards the requirement of three months' institution training, this was probably not a sufficiently long period, but it introduced an excellent principle which could be extended later if found necessary.

We think it follows as a logical sequence that having established standards for midwives in the Colony, the Cape Medical Council should protect those who have attained these standards. At the same time it would do well to endeavour to establish systems of reciprocity with countries where legal systems of registration are in force.

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