

The Midwife.

Schools of Midwifery.

THE ROTUNDA HOSPITAL, DUBLIN.

The Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, must always possess a great interest for midwives—firstly, because it was the first lying-in hospital established in the British Dominions, and, secondly, because of its high and well deserved reputation as a training school both for students and midwives.

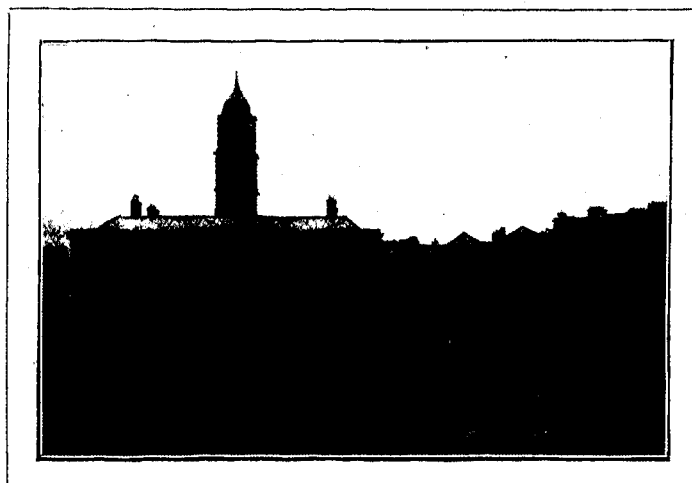
A most interesting History of the Hospital, by Sir William J. Smyly, which is now becoming rare, records that it owes its foundation to Dr. Bartholomew Mosse, who was born in the year 1712. He was licensed as a surgeon in 1733, and four years later was employed by the Government to take charge of the men drafted to Ireland to complete the troops in Minorca.

Quoting from an old manuscript, the author proceeds:—“Dr. Mosse, both before and after the above appointment, practised surgery and midwifery with great success. This did not, however, prevent his seeking to add to his information by intercourse with practitioners of other countries. In a paper, which he afterwards published, he states that, intending to perfect himself in surgery and midwifery, he travelled in England, France, and several other parts of Europe, and that from his first entrance into such study and profession he became convinced of the great usefulness and necessity of having a hospital for lying-in women in the city of Dublin. He resolved, as far as lay in his power, to have such an institution established, and for that purpose laid himself out particularly to inquire into and to observe the hospitals in the countries through which he travelled.

“In the course of his practice, charity often demanded his assistance, and he hath often declared that the misery of the poor women of Dublin at the time of their lying-in would scarce be conceived by anyone who had not been a witness of their wretched circumstances. Then lodgings were generally in cold garrets open to every wind, or in damp cellars subject to floods from excessive rain; destitute of attendance, medicine, and often proper food, by which hundreds perished with their little infants.

“The sight of such misery excited his compassion, and he resolved no longer to delay in his endeavours to establish a lying-in hospital.

“Having communicated this humane and charitable intention to a few particular friends, who highly approved of his schemes, he took a large house in George's Lane, which he furnished with beds and other necessities, and this establishment he opened on the 15th of March,



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1745.” A memorable date for the Hospital.

“He continued to support it chiefly at his own expense, and attended it constantly in person. Its usefulness became so soon apparent as to induce several well-disposed persons to encourage the undertaking by benefactions and yearly subscriptions, which encouraged him to enlarge his plan.”

Such were the beginnings of the Rotunda Hospital.

But in twelve years the accommodation proved insufficient, and Dr. Mosse determined to erect a hospital which would combine extent with every suitable convenience.

He therefore purchased a large piece of ground, and then the memoir states:—“In order to secure the probability of maintaining such a hospital he first, at the risk of his whole

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