

Schools of Midwifery.

THE MATERNITY HOME AND TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR MIDWIVES, MAHE, SEYCHELLES.

The objects of the above Home, as detailed in the official explanatory Memorandum, signed by Dr. J. B. Addison, Chief Medical Officer, are: (1) To provide accommodation and medical attendance to women during their confinements, and subsequently, in the Home. (2) To train midwives. (3) To provide skilled nursing to women in their own homes during their confinements, and subsequently.

1. It has long been felt that many women who, owing to the distance of their homes from town, or for other causes, are unable to obtain proper attention during their confinements, are placed in a very difficult and dangerous position. The Home will now be open to these women, as well as to those needing operative treatment who before had to be admitted into the general women's ward at the Victoria Hospital, concerning which the unsuitability, we are told, is "so obvious as to need no comment."

2. The training of midwives has always been an insuperable difficulty in the Colony, with the result that the midwives of the present day in the Colony are utterly untrained; and as by very far the larger proportion of the women in their confinements are unable for many reasons to obtain the services of a medical man they have only these untrained women to fall back on, with the result that many women who with proper attention would have made good recoveries from their confinements, have either lost their lives or had their health permanently injured.

One of the principal occupations of the Nursing Superintendent of the Home will be to train Midwives.

The Official Memorandum states that the Colony has been extremely fortunate to obtain the services of Miss Beedie (formerly Matron of the Aberdeen Maternity Hospital) for this purpose, as she has had great experience in this particular work.

Probationers will be taken into the Home to live there for the necessary period, and will be under the personal tuition and guidance of the Nursing Superintendent. They will receive certificates after passing such examinations as the Chief Medical Officer and Nursing Superintendent may impose.

It is hoped to formulate a scheme by which these certificated midwives will be either directly paid or subsidised by the Government and sent out into the country districts, so that within a short time the services of one of these

well-trained midwives shall be at the disposal of any member of the community who may need them. It is also hoped to give instruction to the women who hold certificates at the present time.

3. The services of the Nursing Superintendent will be at the disposal of the general public either to act in the capacity of a midwife, or as a nurse under the direction of a medical man.

The scheme is an excellent one, and cannot fail to be of great benefit to the women of the colony. Its weak point seems to be that the Nursing Superintendent is expected to manage the Home and train the pupils, and supervise the cases in the Home, and, at the same time, her services are to be at the disposal of the public in their own homes as midwife or nurse. The training of pupils must inevitably suffer under these conditions, and we hope that this part of the scheme may be amended.

In the Memorandum of a Scheme proposed by the Chief Medical Officer for the utilisation of the services of the midwives who are to be trained at the Maternity House, which, with the Regulations has been referred to a Committee for report, it is proposed that the midwives, when trained, shall be under the control of the central organisation at the Maternity Home, and that they shall be sent to work in the country districts or directed to work in town as the exigencies of the service may require. Unless some such scheme is carried out, it is feared that the trained midwives would congregate in the town where the number would be very much greater than necessary, and the country districts would have none. It would also be easier to get these midwives back for further training, if necessary, if they were under Government control.

It is estimated that with 22 trained midwives all parts of Mahé, Prastin, and La Digue could be well looked after.

A New Maternity Home.

A Maternity Home, for the reception of six patients, exclusive of an isolation ward, is to be erected in connection with the Sick Room Helps Society (a Jewish institution) in Underwood Street, Vallance Road, E. It is proposed to have a general ward of four beds, two single wards, and an operating theatre on the ground floor, and the isolation ward, with nurses' quarters, on the first floor in a detached wing. In addition, there will be accommodation for a Matron and six nurses and the necessary domestic staff. The offices of the Sick Room Helps Society, which will form part of the building, are to have a separate entrance.

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