

The Vanishing Midwife.

Miss du Sautoy, in the course of an interesting and instructive address before the Shepton Mallet Association, said nursing as a profession was one of the worst paid that a woman was employed in. All associations should be self-supporting as far as possible, and in Shepton Mallet she should like to see the club benefit system adopted, and an endeavour made to see if one Queen's nurse would be sufficient to carry out the town work. In a place of that size there should be at least one fully trained nurse. The nursing associations were probably doing more work than any other to try to stamp out the terrible disease of tuberculosis. Referring to the Insurance Bill, Miss du Sautoy said the word midwife had not been mentioned in the Bill, and Mr. Lloyd George had refused to see a deputation from the Midwives' Institution, London. If some change was not made it looked as though midwifery as a profession would be completely stamped out; it would mean that midwives would lose all their incomes, and not part, as the doctors.

Queen Charlotte's Hospital.

At a meeting held recently at the residence of Viscount and Lady Portman, Lord Portman, opening the meeting, explained that they had met that afternoon for the purpose of considering the formation of a Ladies' Association in connection with Queen Charlotte's Hospital. By means of that Association they wished to augment the funds of the Institution and to spread the knowledge of the Hospital among their friends. He laid emphasis upon the fact that the hospital was greatly in need of clothing for both mothers and babies.

Sir Samuel Scott, M.P., who proposed the formation of the Association, said it was no use mincing matters. Hospitals, not only in London, but all over the country, were really in a very precarious financial position, and he thought, looking to the future, that their position could not hope to be improved, but, on the contrary, as year by year went by they would find it more difficult to obtain annual subscriptions. He thought it was the duty of the Ladies' Association to obtain as many subscriptions as possible from outside the Association. That was one of the great reasons why they wished to form the Association. Another reason why they thought it expedient to form such an Association was that the Committee of Management did not think the ladies took sufficient interest in the hospital, which was essentially a women's hospital. It was their object to get the ladies to visit the wards. Lord Portman had told them, and rightly so, that they were greatly in need of clothing. There was a great increase in the usefulness of the hospital, and, therefore, it was essential and desirable, as the work increased, that they should require more money. That was one of the reasons why he wished that Association to be formed.

Dr. W. J. Gow seconded the motion, and an Executive Committee was formed with Lady Portman as President.

As it is considered the "duty" of the Ladies' Association "to obtain as many subscriptions as

possible," the Committee of Management might conceivably consider it a duty to give the ladies who collect the money a voice in its expenditure by appointing some of their number as members of that Committee. It might increase their interest in the hospital.

The Pembroke Dispensary, Dublin.

Just before the visit of the Queen to the Coombe Hospital, Dublin, the new Infant Pembroke Dispensary, in connection with that institution, was opened by her Excellency the Countess of Aberdeen. The Dispensary is the result of a gift of £1,000 from the trustees of the Gertrude Countess of Pembroke Charities (Ireland) Fund, which has enabled the Board to provide the much needed increased accommodation for the treatment of women and children in the out-patient department of the hospital. The Dispensary is supplemental to that erected by the generosity of the late Sir Benjamin Guinness, which has proved a great boon to the poor of Dublin.

In declaring the Dispensary open, Lady Aberdeen said that she had had a peculiar opportunity of knowing something of the work of this Hospital under the able Master, Dr. Gibson, and the Deputy Master, Dr. Cassidy, in connection with the work against infant mortality, which the Women's National Health Association of Ireland have been endeavouring to conduct during the past three years. The special campaign against the loss in infant life in Dublin, which was carried on by that Association during the summer months of 1909, brought it very specially into contact with the efforts which were being conducted by Dr. Gibson under the Hospital Board.

The average infant death-rate for Dublin, her Excellency said, is sadly high, and the doctors say that at least half of it is preventable. More practical training for girls, which would result in more knowledge on the part of the mothers as to the details of how to care for a baby, which means so much; more fresh air; better housing; better food for the mothers; better and purer milk; these were the things which must be dealt with if the infant mortality of Dublin was to be brought down to the level of the average infant mortality of Ireland. This new Dispensary for infants and their mothers, which had been made possible by the grant given by the Trustees of the late Lady Pembroke, to whom Ireland was so dear, was, she believed, destined to be a great factor in this work of saving the babies, and not only saving them from death, but from the worse fate of weakly health.

In connection with the case of a dentist's assistant, in Paris, who contracted syphilis while attending to a patient, the *Lancet* reports, the Tribunal of the Seine has decided that, in the liberal professions, it cannot be regarded as an industrial accident. Up to the present midwives and nurses contracting the disease in the course of their professional duties have received a pension from the *Assistance Publique*.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)