

Miss Holford is in Europe on six months leave. Lately she has been "doing" London, and realises that it would take a lifetime to do it thoroughly. She is deeply impressed with its wonders, but the evidence of terrible depths of poverty, in such acute contrast to its marvellous wealth, denotes a screw loose somewhere. One sight horrified her. The resplendent "pubs," soul-snatching at every corner, into which slatternly women crowd to booze at a public bar, she considers a very shameful sight, one not to be seen in New Zealand, and which she will never forget.

Miss Holford has gone to Scotland for a "bracing rest," and hopes to return to London in time to attend the meeting of our National Council of Nurses in November.

E. G. F.

EXTENSION OF THE PREMATERNITY SYSTEM.

As is well known, says the *British Medical Journal*, the Royal Maternity Hospital in Edinburgh has been provided since November, 1901, with accommodation for cases of pregnancy showing one or other of the maladies of gestation; at first a single bed was available, but of late years there has been a ward with four beds in it, called the prematernity ward, ready for the reception of such patients. The success of this part of the work, which may be named the indoor department of the prematernity system, has been so great that within the past few weeks a corresponding work complementary to it has been commenced in the outdoor practice of the hospital. A trained nurse is now ready to visit any pregnant patient in the "district," give advice as to the preparations for confinement, the accouchement outfit, the baby clothes, position of the bed, &c.; make inquiries respecting the health of the expectant mother and take notice of any of the danger signals of the pregnant state (such as headache, oedema of the face and fingers, rickety deformities, excessive vomiting, intractable constipation, red or white discharges, &c.). She reports on these matters to the medical staff of the hospital. In cases of grave trouble the patient can be brought for treatment into the prematernity ward; in less serious cases she is seen by one of the resident surgeons and watched over by the nurse in her own home. It may be said that the new departure affects almost wholly married women, who constitute about 98 per cent. of the extern work of the hospital. The hospital gets into touch quite simply with the pregnant women; nurses attending extern confinements let the patients know that in their next pregnancy they can have one or more visits from the pregnancy—or prematernity—nurse if they wish it. Already there have been instances in which the prodromata of eclampsia have been observed and the urine tested for albumen,

obstinate constipation relieved, and troublesome vomiting treated. It will probably be found useful to supply the prematernity nurse with cards containing some simple rules of hygiene in pregnancy and the like. The system is not dissimilar from that which was established in Boston some four years ago. There the Women's Municipal League, working through its prenatal committee, have appointed a specially trained nurse—the prenatal nurse—to visit and supervise pregnant patients. At first she attended women whose names had been given her through the two large maternity hospitals in Boston, but in time women began to apply to her directly, and were by her recommended (when necessary) to go into hospital or have attendance from it. Mrs. Lowell Putnam, who has had much to do with the starting of this scheme of social service, states that since the prenatal nurse began her work eclampsias have been averted, premature labours have diminished in number, and the average weight of the babies at birth has risen; these improvements have been progressing during the four years for which the nurse has been at work. The difference in the Edinburgh system is that the nurse is a member of the staff of the Maternity Hospital itself.

MATERNITY ASSOCIATION NO LONGER NEEDED.

The Bute Maternity Nursing Association is a society that has done much good in the past, but the committee are now of the opinion that it is no longer needed.

In former years the expense in connection with the birth of a child was a severe tax on the resources of many a household, and it was a great boon to secure the services of a trained nurse at a nominal fee. But the maternity grant of 30s. under the National Insurance Act, has altered the position, and patients are now able to pay the full fee for a nurse themselves.

In these circumstances the committee have decided to bring the Bute Maternity Nursing Association to an end, and they take this final opportunity of thanking all the kind friends who have for so many years supplied the necessary funds and helped in various ways. The committee regret that this step they are taking involves parting with their present nurse—Nurse Campbell—who has served them faithfully for four and a-half years. Nurse Campbell intends remaining in Bute till after the New Year, and while there she will be glad to attend to the wants of the district as formerly.

The National Conference of Friendly Societies at its recent meeting in London did not pass the resolution proposed, objecting to "gratuitous interference in the domestic economy of the home" by paying the maternity benefit to the wife instead of to the husband. After all, the woman bears the child, and wives need protection from bad husbands, and not from the models of connubiality.

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