

band, the General, was specially encouraging the work in connection with the Children's Departments. In caring for the mothers they helped the children also, and either in hospital or in the district 17,860 mothers had been attended at the birth of their infants by members of the nursing staff of the Salvation Army hospitals.

In Lorne House, which had been placed at their disposal by Her Royal Highness, fourteen young mothers were in residence, seven of whom were under sixteen years of age and five under fifteen. The Army did all in its power to succour and redeem these poor children.

The Salvation Army touched every aspect of the life of the people, and middle-class patients would be received into the hospital who it was hoped would pay something suitable, and so help the work amongst the destitute cases. Mothers entitled to the Maternity Grant would also be received.

It seemed, from a study of the birth rate, that the poorer classes were the main source of the life of the nation. If so, it was most important that they should be skilfully cared for in childbirth. She often felt a deep sense of pain that money should be poured out on armaments, while for the mothers, who were more important than soldiers, for without them there would be no soldiers, money was so hard to get.

The Princess then said :—

"With this key just presented to me I figuratively open this Mothers' Home. I visited the old one, and know how greatly it was needed. I wish every blessing on this new hospital, and am sure that in Mrs. Booth's hands it will have the most marvellous success."

Commissioner Adelaide Cox then presented the financial statement in a most interesting way, and appealed for a good collection, and to the Mayor and Corporation for liberal treatment with regard to the rates. They did not think they ought to pay any rates.

A vote of thanks to the Princess was then moved by Dr. Mackintosh, consulting expert to the hospital, who said that Her Royal Highness had come to lay the foundation stone, and her presence there that day showed her deep interest in hospital work. Dr. Mackintosh referred to the value of the silent look of affection and regard bestowed upon the patients. They would have not only the best of treatment, but the kindly word. He concluded by expressing their deep indebtedness to Her Royal Highness for the encouragement which her presence had given them.

Captain Fenton Jones seconded the resolution, referring to Her Royal Highness as "Hackney's Princess," and it was heartily carried by acclamation.

The Duke of Argyll expressed the Princess' thanks, and said how pleased he was to see the "good old uniform" still unchanged.

M. B.

STEAM BATHS DURING LABOUR.

Professor E. Lampén, who writes on popular hygiene in a series of essays on "Finlande and Finlandais," recently edited by Professor Werner Söderhjelm, describes the communal or family steam bath which has been in use in Finland probably for the last 2,000 years.

On the walls of the bath-house (according to the *British Medical Journal*) are shelves one above another to the ceiling. The hearth is in one corner, and piled upon it are large stones on which a fire of logs is kept burning all day. In the evening the whole household assembles and each person, having undressed, disposes himself or herself on a shelf. Then hot water is poured on the red-hot stones, and instantly the room is filled with steam. The bolder spirits choose the upper shelves, where the heat is most intense, and there is a sort of bravado in bearing the highest temperature. When they have had enough of it the bathers get off their shelves, have a douche of tepid water, and go out into the open air whatever its temperature may be. In summer they lie down on the ground until the surface of the body, reddened by the heat, has resumed its natural colour; in winter they dry themselves rapidly, though some of the bolder spirits may first roll in the snow; in any case, the rule to dress in the open air is absolute.

If there is no obstetric clinic at hand a woman always goes to the bath-house when labour sets in, and when the critical moment is at hand the room is filled with steam. It is believed that in this way the pains of labour are diminished, and it is suggested that as the room and its furniture are so frequently exposed to the action of hot vapour, they must be clean, if not sterile, and that therefore the risk of puerperal infection is diminished.

Experience has convinced the people of Finland that the steam bath, in addition to its cleansing virtue, possesses a certain therapeutic use. It is considered a sovereign remedy for a chill or fever in the earliest stage to put the patient on the hottest shelf in the bath-house and to dose him with brandy; if this combination fails to produce perspiration the doctor is sent for, but there is a proverb to the effect that when bath and brandy fail death is at hand. For muscular stiffness and joint pains the steam bath is combined with rubbing, and in every parish, Professor Lampén says, there are numbers of old women skilled in massage:

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