THE NATIONAL MATERNITY HOSPITAL, DUBLIN.

The Master of the Rolls presided at the Annual Meeting of the National Maternity Hospital, Dublin, last week, when the report was presented by the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Henry C. Lynch. It stated that the work of the Hospital had been satisfactory during the past year. There had been an increase of 81 in the number of cases admitted, and a decrease of 161 in the number of cases treated at the patients' homes. The work of the hospital had been much hampered by the absence of a gynæcological examination room, it being undesirable to bring outside patients into the wards of the hospital for examination. Owing to the generosity of the regular subscribers, the Dublin Corporation grant of £250, and increased profit from the Private Nursing Home, it had been found possible, by the exercise of rigid economy, to meet the current expenses. The balance sheet showed, however, that further capital had had to be realised, and the proceeds, together with certain bequests and Lord Iveagh's £1,500, temporarily applied in discharge of the overdraft due to the bank. The Governors earnestly appealed for £3,600 in addition to Lord Iveagh's £1,500 for the works which most urgently needed completion.

THE WORKING OF THE MIDWIVES' ACT IN NEW ZEALAND.

The Report on Public Health and Hospitals and Charitable Aid, 1911–1912, presented by Dr. T. H. A. Valintine, Inspector-General of Hospitals and Chief Health Officer to the Hon. the Minister of Public Health, Hospitals and Charitable Aid in New Zealand, contains some interesting information in regard to midwifery.

Dr. Valintine states that the names of 74 midwives were added to the Register last year, 55 having been trained in the Dominion; and that there is now some hope of meeting the needs of the Dominion in this particular branch of work, especially as during the ensuing year three additional training schools for midwives may be provided.

The total number of midwives on the Register is 1,097, of whom 415 are fully trained, and 682 untrained. On the 31st March, 1907, the number was 891, of whom 102 were trained and 789 untrained. The number of untrained midwives is gradually decreasing from death and other causes; while the increase in the number of trained midwives more than compensates for this decrease. Thus, though the names of many untrained midwives disappear from the register each year, it will be possible to keep up the standard of one midwife to every 1,000 of the population. With the present low birth rate the proportion should be sufficient.

Dr. Valintine goes on to say that in previous reports comment has been made as to the difficulty of obtaining midwives for back-blocks. Though Hospital Boards have not taken the fullest advantage of the Department's proposal —to give free training to women specially recommended by Boards as likely to make suitable midwives, provided those trained guarantee to practise for two years in any part of the hospital district which has recommended them—it is satisfactory to note that several of the St. Helen's nurses are "going back" and undertaking work in those parts of the Dominion where their services are particularly needed.

The St. Helen's Hospitals continue to do good work, and the demands on these institutions are increasing every year. The actual cost to the State of these four maternity homes was £1,820, excluding capital expenditure.

Incorporated in the Report is that of Miss H. Maclean, Assistant Inspector of Hospitals, which gives detailed information as to the St. Helen's Hospitals at Wellington, Dunedin, Auckland, and Christchurch; and of other Maternity Hospitals. It must be both stimulating and encouraging to the Matrons in these hospitals to know that the work is inspected, and on occasions warmly commended, by an expert Government official.

At Wellington, the Matron (Miss Eleanor B. Brown), was seriously ill for some time. Eleven pupils were trained during the year; but the medical officer reports that the want of proper supplies of washing and sterilizing appliances has told severely upon some of the nurses, and the strain upon those in responsibility.

At Dunedin, Miss Maclean reports, Miss Holford and Miss Gow are still Matron and Sub-Matron; and the success of the hospital is largely due to their conscientious work.

At Auckland it will be necessary, in the immediate future, to build a new hospital, as the work is steadily increasing, necessitating a large staff for whom there is no provision.

The Medical Officer reports that the Matron, Miss Ludwig, has worked hard and very successfully, and has trained the nurses very well.

At Christchurch the accommodation has been severely taxed and tenders have been called for a new hospital. Miss Maclean reports that Dr. Irving's capable conduct of the medical department of the hospital, and the conscientious management of Sister Cameron, aided by Sister Newman, have been very satisfactory to the Department.

From which it may be gathered that the St. Helen's Maternity Hospitals have proved very satisfactory in New Zealand.

When, we wonder, will a Blue Book be published in this country, containing a report on the nursing departments of hospitals by an inspector who is an experienced nurse and midwife.

It is evident that Miss Maclean's work is of great value in the Dominion which has had the wisdom to utilize her expert services, and we hope the example will be followed elsewhere.

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