

of towns. New Zealand was the first part of the British Empire to establish a Ministry of Public Health, in 1900.

2. The Midwives' Act, passed in 1904, under the superintendence of the late Dr. MacGregor, Inspector-General of Hospitals, and his assistant, Mrs. Grace Neill, a trained nurse and midwife.

3. The establishment of training schools for midwives and hospitals for maternity patients, from which thousands of women have gone forth, some as midwifery nurses, into all parts of the Dominion, some as mothers, taught how to properly care for their infants and impressed with the importance of breast-feeding and fresh air.

New Zealand was the first part of the Empire to establish State Maternity Hospitals. This was one of the great life works of the Right Hon. Richard John Seddon. Himself born at St. Helens, Lancashire, the hospitals were all named "St. Helens." He was also responsible for labour laws which, tending to produce good social conditions, are certainly responsible in a good measure for decrease of infantile death-rate.

4. Midwifery Nurses trained in the State Maternity Hospitals, many of whom are now Plunket Nurses, have undoubtedly had a large share, and through them their training schools, in the reduction of Infantile Mortality.

Ante-natal and post-natal teaching has been given to mothers in these Institutions since 1905, when the first hospital was opened, three years before Dr. Truby King started his campaign, and a year ago special ante-natal clinics and free ante-natal advice and treatment for mothers were established in connection with each State Maternity St. Helens Hospital.

When the fact is considered that New Zealand is for the most part a rural country with no real slum areas, even in her largest cities, that poverty such as prevails in the old world is unknown, and that food is cheap and plentiful, it will be seen that the problem of the reduction of the infantile death-rate is a very different matter in the Old Country.

I am, yours truly,

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A NEW LEAGUE.

As we go to press, a meeting is being held in the Nurses' Home at the Fulham Military Hospital, Hammersmith, W., to discuss the formation of a Nurses' League of nurses trained at the Fulham Infirmary. Amongst other matters which will come up for consideration is the establishment of a journal. Nurses trained at the Fulham Infirmary, if unable to attend, are asked to write to Miss L. A. Wallace, Assistant Matron at the Hospital, and give their opinion on the above subject, the amount of subscription to be paid and kindred questions.

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

FOODS AND DIETARIES.

Dietetics are concerned with a branch of professional knowledge of which nurses can scarcely absorb too much; firstly, because suitable, nourishing, and well-prepared food is one of the great essentials to recovery in any patient of whom they have charge; and secondly, because the selection and administration of food are frequently left to the nurse, whose knowledge of food values is usually most superficial and inexact, even if the subject is not one of which she is totally ignorant. It is only comparatively recently that a short course of sick room cookery has been included in the curriculum of some of our nurse training schools, and few nurses have any adequate knowledge of the science which underlies the presentation of a well-balanced and appetising meal, suited to the needs of the individual patient.

Nurses who are desirous of increasing their knowledge of this subject will find in "Foods and Dietaries: a Manual of Clinical Dietetics," by Sir. R. W. Burnet, K.C.V.O., M.D., J.P., a book which will furnish them with a large amount of information in a readily assimilable form. It is published by Messrs. Charles Griffin & Co., Ltd., Exeter Street, Strand, at the modest price of 4s. The fact that it is now in its fifth edition is proof of its popularity. As the author remarks: "Sick-room cookery is now much better understood than it used to be, but it is to be feared that many nurses and attendants on the sick, not to speak of medical men, hardly yet appreciate fully the help that attention to such details will bring to those under their care."

The plan followed by the author is to arrange his chapters in relation to different diseases. Thus the first chapter deals, broadly, with "Diseases of the Stomach," and its general contents include Chronic Gastric Catarrh (Chronic Gastritis; Irritative Dyspepsia; Inflammatory Dyspepsia), Atonic Conditions of the Stomach (Atonic Dyspepsia), Ulcer of the Stomach, Hæmatemesis, Inflammations of the Stomach (Acute and Subacute Gastritis; Acute Gastric Catarrh). The symptoms of these allied diseases with their origins and causes are enumerated and the correct dietary given. Other diseases and their dietaries are dealt with in the same way. If, therefore, a nurse is in doubt as to a suitable diet in a given case, she has only to turn up the disease in her "Foods and Dietaries," which she can readily do with the aid of the admirable index, to receive sound and expert advice on the point.

A valuable chapter is that on "Prepared and Pre-digested Foods," and the great advance made in "prepared foods," by the addition of malt,—mainly on account of the action of the diastase it contains in converting starch into dextrose and sugar—is emphasised. In this connection, "Liebig's Food for Infants and Invalids," Allen & Hanburys Malted Food, and Kepler's Extract

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