

The Midwife.

THE CLAPHAM MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

The Annual Report of the Clapham Maternity Hospital for the fortieth year of its existence, is highly satisfactory, and, in reading through its pages, we cannot but be struck by what it must have meant to many thousands of mothers and to the well-being of their children to have had the good fortune to benefit from the work of this enlightened Institution. The whole Report seems to bear upon it the stamp of the personality of Dr. Annie McCall and her fine free spirit to which this Institution owes its splendid development. The chief demand of the hospital at the present time seems to be for more space.

The Battersea District Maternity, which was taken over in 1892 from St. John's House, then at Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C., gives evidence of energetic administration.

The Financial Statements included in the Report are comprehensive and give very clear indication of the sources of income and the many activities into which it passes, while the statistical tables bear evidence, not only of the great usefulness of the work, but they are excellent examples of what really scientific and comprehensive record-keeping should be.

A LICENCE REVOKED.

Health News, published by the New York State Department of Health, relates that one of the department nurses making a visit of inspection to a licensed midwife, detected an odour of ether in the house. The midwife, who has had the reputation of being one of the best in the State, sent word that she would be down in a few minutes. As three cars were parked in front of the house and two other visitors were waiting, the nurse became suspicious. Presently the midwife came downstairs and, not having caught the name of her latest visitor, told one of the others in waiting that she was now ready for her. The nurse stepped forward and insisted on going upstairs when she found a patient and all of the evidences of a criminal operation. The nurse secured from the woman a signed statement that she had been practising illegally for the past nine months.

At a hearing given the midwife by the Commissioner of Health she admitted the abortion. Her licence was revoked and a copy of the minutes of the hearing transmitted to the district attorney of the county in which the act was committed.

TRAVELLING KITCHENETTE FOR BABIES.

The same paper points out that it is a well-recognised fact that home is the best place for young babies, but realising that there are times when parents find it necessary to travel, members of the staff of the Division of Maternity, Infancy and Child Hygiene have devised a travelling suitcase kitchenette which contains all the utensils and essentials necessary to provide the same kind, amount and quality of food that the baby would ordinarily receive at home.

A sterno outfit with a tray and holder furnish the means for cooking the cereal, heating the prepared food, boiling the water for drinking and for boiling the nipples, bottles, etc. Soap powder and bottle brush are part of the equipment, so that the bottles may be cleansed after which they are rinsed and then boiled. A small egg-beater, tin measuring cup, tablespoon and spatula are included for use in preparing the usual feedings. A dish towel is carried to dry the various utensils so they will not rust; with the holder, rubber apron or bib it also is used to pack around the glass-ware to prevent breakage. The measuring cup and spoon

may be used for feeding the baby or his feeding dish may be carried. A cheap suitcase forms a convenient carrying case.

The food suggested for the journey includes dried milk purchased of any drug store, dry whole wheat cereal, which is cooked as needed, zwieback and an ample variety of cooked and strained vegetables in small glass jars. This provides as liberal and as varied a diet of the same quality as the baby is accustomed to at home.

BUSH NURSING ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA.

The value of trained nursing in the outposts of Empire is nowhere more strikingly exemplified than in the State of Victoria, in Australia, concerning which *Una*, the Journal of the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses Association, gives the following information in regard to the work of the Bush Nurses.

In the primeval forest clearings of giant-treed Gippsland; in the sand and dust of the Mallee; in settlements where the primitive and urgent necessity of earning a livelihood precludes the attainment of anything approaching city comfort; where asepsis is impossible and antiseptics is extremely difficult; where facilities for carrying water are too often lacking—the Bush Nurse has carried on her work and has achieved 100 per cent. efficiency.

The record of this Association is three thousand consecutive maternity cases without one mother losing her life—an achievement, indeed, of which to be proud. And this despite the doleful statistics of maternal mortality in the whole of Victoria. Despite the fact that there has been no improvement in this direction during the last few years of wider medical education.

The national and community service our obstetric nurses are doing commends itself to the people of other countries who are watching our results. The enthusiasm of the nurses working under oftentimes adverse conditions is the keynote of their success.

Nor can the assets be measured only in the lives of mothers spared to guide their children and homes. There is a less tangible asset, the terrors these women are spared in the outback during the ante-natal period, this time when skilled nursing and advice are of such enormous importance to mother and babe.

The superintendence of this work can be of no mean order, and those nurses who have taken part in this labour and in the ever-increasing organisation of the Association deserve enormous credit, and they, with their members, are to be congratulated on the powerful, albeit silent, assistance rendered in the settlement of the outback, and in robbing these districts and the nearer country townships of terror to the women in a critical period of their lives.

“How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear.”

THE NATIONAL BABY WEEK COUNCIL CHALLENGE SHIELD.

Lord Astor has presented to the Northampton Infant Welfare Voluntary Association the shield he gave to the National Baby Week Council three years ago for the promotion of infant welfare, and which the Northampton Association has acquired outright by winning it three times in succession.

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