

ST. HELENS HOSPITALS.

The St. Helens Hospitals, as indicated above, have been going through a difficult period owing to the changes instituted in regard to maternity and midwifery training. This has been aggravated by the economic conditions in the country causing a larger number of mothers wishing to avail themselves of the services of these hospitals.

Improvements in regard to hours of duty have been instituted, though it is not possible to have a schedule, as in the general hospitals, as the type of work in a midwifery hospital is so different. To obtain the necessary experience for her training a nurse's hours must vary somewhat.

DISTRICT NURSES TO MAORIS.

There have been various changes in this service. Two of our nurses having married during the year. There are now twenty-one districts provided with a nurse, while a relieving nurse is stationed in Auckland City.

On the eve of my retirement I should like to place on record my deep sense of gratitude for the willing co-operation of those associated with me in my work in the Department during my twenty-four years' service, particularly my immediate associates in the Nursing Division, who have so whole-heartedly supported any efforts made for the improvement of nursing conditions. It is gratifying to realize that they will carry on the good work, bringing to the task younger brains and expert knowledge.

To yourself, Sir, I should like to express my thanks for your fair-minded attitude at all times and for the assistance you have so readily given me in any difficulties.

J. BICKNELL,
Director, Division of Nursing.

PART VII.—MATERNAL WELFARE.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF PRIVATE AND MATERNITY HOSPITALS.

T. L. PAGET, L.R.C.P. (Lond.), M.R.C.S. (Eng.).

I have the honour to submit my annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1931.

REPORT ON HOSPITALS.

The general development of a higher standard of convenience and efficiency in the 350 hospitals under my inspection continues to be satisfactory.

In addition to the public hospitals for general medical and surgical cases controlled by Hospital Boards, New Zealand is served by the following hospitals: Seven St. Helens Hospitals providing 121 beds for maternity cases; seventy-six public maternity hospitals or maternity wards attached to public hospitals providing 506 beds; 274 private hospitals providing 873 maternity beds and 1,385 medical and surgical beds.

Of all these hospitals, eighty-nine are solely medical and surgical hospitals; 194 are solely maternity hospitals; seventy-eight are classed as mixed hospitals, and admit both maternity and medical and surgical cases under certain restrictions. This group of hospitals does not include the general hospitals, which, although not having recognized maternity departments, are occasionally forced to admit normal maternity cases for their confinements and also admit a considerable number of abnormal cases, particularly cases of puerperal septicæmia from other hospitals.

Private Medical and Surgical Hospitals.—The private hospitals licensed to receive only medical and surgical cases continue to maintain a sufficiently high standard of equipment and general convenience for this class of work. The conduct and management of the large majority of them leaves little to be desired.

Private and Public Maternity Hospitals.—Table I gives a statistical summary of the work done in the 270 hospitals normally admitting maternity cases. It does not include any of the comparatively few cases admitted as an emergency measure to the general wards of public hospitals.