

PRIVATE NURSING SERVICES.

There are at the present time in New Zealand approximately 2,250 registered midwives and maternity nurses in active practice either in hospitals or otherwise, besides a large number who having these qualifications are engaged in general nursing. Practically the whole of 5,764 patients confined in private houses, Group (d), Table II, had the services of trained women to attend them, mostly in conjunction with the patient's own private practitioner. The emergency complications in this group requiring hospital treatment were for the most part transferred to the medical and surgical wards of public hospitals. It will be to the advantage of this class of patient to have the benefit of treatment in obstetric hospitals.

ANTE-NATAL SERVICES.

In addition to the services set out above the Plunket Society conducts eleven ante-natal centres. Table III sets out the work conducted in these centres and in the public clinics connected with maternity hospitals from whom returns have been received.

ANTE-NATAL CLINICS.

Table III.—Ante-Natal Clinics.

| Year. | | | Number of Clinics. | New Cases. | Total Attendances. | Average Number of Attendances by each Patient. | Outfits sterilized. |
|-------|----|----|--------------------|------------|--------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1925 | .. | .. | 16 | 2,289 | 7,816 | 3.0 | .. |
| 1926 | .. | .. | 20 | 3,238 | 12,554 | 3.8 | 401 |
| 1927 | .. | .. | 20 | 3,919 | 15,406 | 4.5 | 515 |
| 1928 | .. | .. | 21 | 5,050 | 20,740 | 4.11 | 728 |
| 1929 | .. | .. | 24 | 5,177 | 17,555 | 3.39 | 924 |
| 1930 | .. | .. | 25 | 6,027 | 22,078 | 3.66 | 1,106 |
| 1931 | .. | .. | 28 | 6,306 | 22,869 | 3.63 | 1,221 |
| 1932 | .. | .. | 31 | 5,882 | 22,594 | 3.84 | 986 |
| 1933 | .. | .. | 33 | 5,978 | 23,794 | 3.98 | 914 |
| 1934 | .. | .. | 34 | 6,191 | 24,929 | 4.04 | 859 |

TRAINING-SCHOOLS FOR MIDWIVES AND MATERNITY NURSES.

Four of the St. Helens Hospitals undertake the whole of the training of midwives in New Zealand and twenty-six maternity hospitals are training-schools for maternity nurses. The training in these hospitals is controlled by the Nurses and Midwives Registration Board, and a very high standard of teaching in midwifery and maternity nursing is assured.

REFRESHER COURSES.

The very necessary development of refresher courses for midwives is proceeding satisfactorily. Courses of lectures are arranged from time to time on matters of interest. The Jessie Hope-Gibbons Hospital, Wanganui, affords opportunities for refresher courses in practical work. These lectures and classes are obviously being more and more appreciated by the practising members of the nursing profession engaged in obstetrical nursing, and the information imparted through the above agencies has been supplemented by the issue to all practising midwives and maternity nurses of the Department's pamphlet on "The General Principles of Maternity Nursing, including the Aseptic Technique of Labour." This pamphlet, which was first issued in 1925, has been completely revised.

INSPECTION OF HOSPITALS.

Inspection of all maternity hospitals has been systematically carried out by the Nurse Inspectors of the different health districts, aided when necessary by the Medical Officer of Health. From the reports received and from my own inspections of the majority of these hospitals made during the year I am satisfied that the standard of nursing and conduct in nearly all of them is satisfactory, and the less well conducted of them are being slowly but surely improved or eliminated. The aim is to make all inspections instructive and helpful to the licensees, and I can state that the work of inspection is being performed with tact and ability. The result is that the relationship between the licensees, the Nurse Inspectors, the Medical Officers of Health, and myself is one of helpful co-operation. The almost infinitely varied conditions regarding population, finance, &c., which applies to different private hospitals requires something more than the rigid application of regulations to maintain efficiency. Only in those cases where appeal to reason fails is it necessary to enforce them. Such cases are, I am glad to say, increasingly rare.