

Middlemarch.—The Louisa Roberts Maternity Hospital at Middlemarch is a four-bedded one, with an average occupied bed rate of 0·84, and twenty-two patients were confined therein last year. There is no doubt that the hospital is rendering valuable service, which must be continued, but there is much to be said for the desire of the Otago Hospital Board to replace it with a smaller institution if an alternative use for the existing one can be found.

Lawrence.—The Tuapeka Hospital has four beds, an average occupied bed rate of 0·99, and the number of confinements therein last year was twenty-six.

Tapanui.—The Tapanui Hospital has three beds, an average occupied bed rate of 1·7, and forty-six patients were confined last year.

Roxburgh.—The Roxburgh Hospital has two beds, its average occupied bed rate is 1·45, and the number of patients confined last year was thirty-eight.

Port Chalmers.—The Port Chalmers Hospital has six beds, an average occupied bed rate of 1·6, and the number of patients confined therein last year was thirty-five. Though the Board owns this hospital, it leases it to a nurse, guaranteeing her a minimum wage of £100 a year.

Indigent cases at Port Chalmers are required to enter the Hospital Board's Maternity Home in Dunedin.

Hospital Fees.—The fees payable in all the country hospitals administered by the Hospital Board are 9s. per day, and the hospitals are administered on the "open" principle. Indigent cases are admitted and arrangements for payment made after discharge. No provision is made for indigent cases other than in Board institutions.

There is, however, no smoothly working method of determining indigency.

DUNEDIN CITY.

Public Facilities.—Public facilities formerly consisted of the St. Helens and Batchelor Hospitals, but early in the year these were superseded by the Queen Mary Hospital of thirty beds, established and controlled by the Hospital Board. This modern building incorporates features which might with advantage be studied when the erection of other maternity hospitals is under consideration. It adjoins the general hospital, rendering the transport of patients from one institution to the other an easy matter; food is brought from the main hospital kitchen in special containers, and laboratory, X-ray, and other hospital facilities are close at hand. Though at present capable of accommodating thirty patients, the hospital is so designed that accommodation for a larger number could be added at any time, the present theatre, nursery, and clinic facilities allowing for this.

The ground floor of the hospital is occupied by the offices, ante-natal clinic, theatre, and residential quarters for house surgeon and six students, the lying-in wards and nursery being on the first floor, and the quarters for the nursing staff on the top floor.

The ante-natal clinic comprises interview and record rooms and examination cubicles so arranged that teaching can be carried out with the least possible disturbance of the patient's comfort and privacy. The theatre block contains two up-to-date theatres, three single first-stage wards, sterilizing, and sink rooms. It is so situated in relation to the lying-in wards that patients are not disturbed by noises from the theatre. The benefit to students of having comfortable quarters in the hospital building is evident.

The nursery, which faces north and west, is airy and pleasant. Adjoining it is a small, sunny room, the temperature of which can be easily regulated, and which makes an excellent ward for premature babies.

The lying-in wards, containing from one to four beds each, are cheerful and bright. No special provision is made for prolonged isolation, febrile cases being removed immediately to the gynæcological wards of the general hospital.

The hospital forms a compact unit admirably adapted to the purposes of modern obstetric practice and teaching.

Private Hospitals.—There are five private hospitals in Dunedin, supplying fifty beds. They are of varying size and meet reasonably well the needs of those who can afford such services, but the Committee is of the opinion that here, as in other centres, the interests of patients and the practice of obstetrics would be advanced by the provision of more modern private hospital facilities.

Intermediate Hospitals.—A limited amount of intermediate accommodation is provided at "Red Roofs" Salvation Army Maternity Hospital.

Ante-natal Care.—In the country districts ante-natal care is limited to some extent by the distances patients require to travel, and by the fact that in some areas there is not as yet a general recognition by the women of the great value of regular ante-natal supervision. In Dunedin an up-to-date clinic is in operation at the Queen Mary Hospital. Mother-craft instruction is given by the Plunket Society, while ante-natal care is given to a varying extent by the medical practitioners.

Unmarried Mothers.—The Salvation Army Maternity Hospital, "Red Roofs," provides the same good rescue and hospital service as their similar institutions in other towns. The hospital is pleasantly situated and well equipped. Unmarried mothers will also be admitted, if necessary, to the Queen Mary Hospital.