

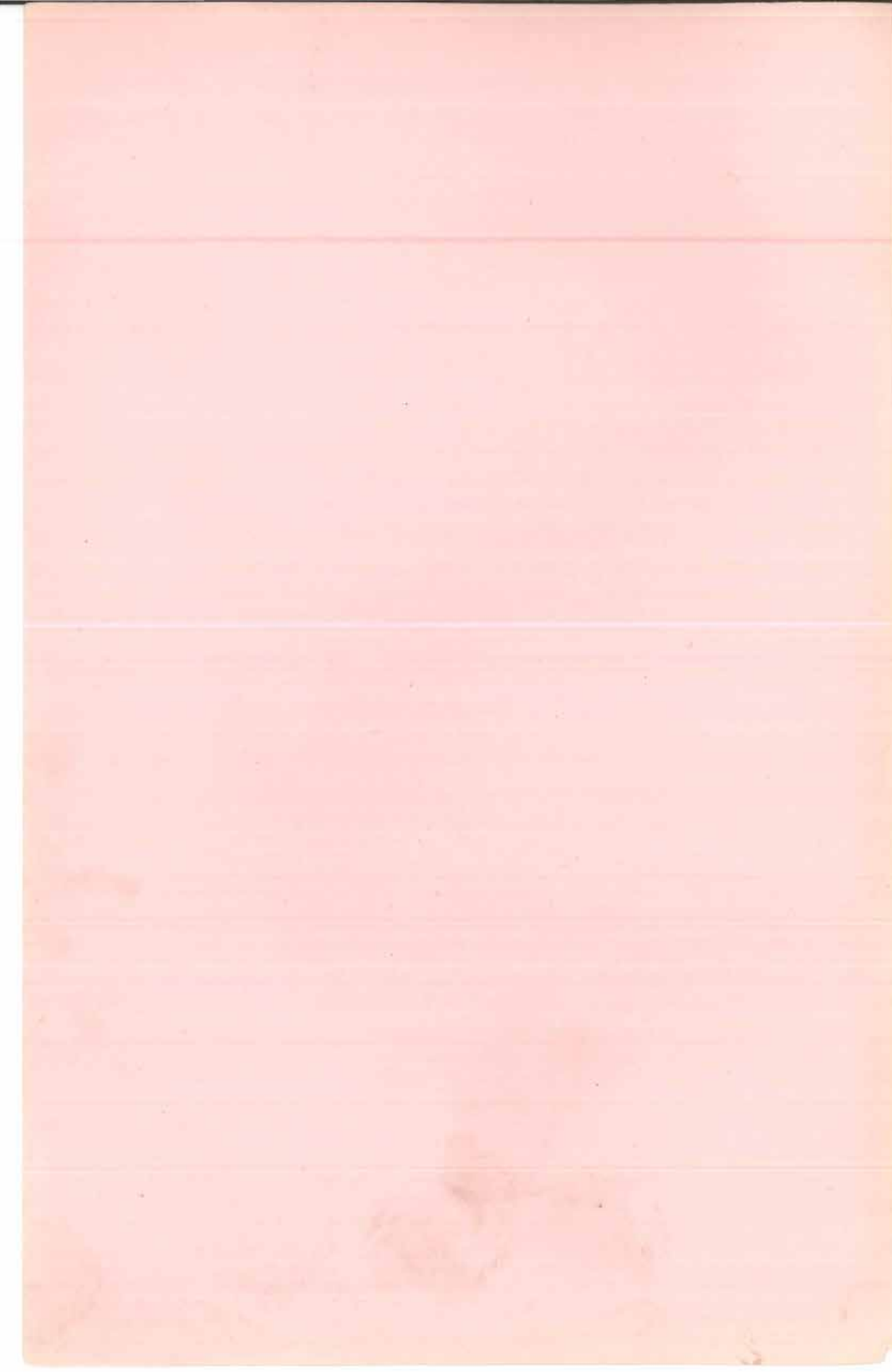
*The Society for the Health of  
Women and Children of Victoria*

PLUNKET SYSTEM.

FOURTH  
Annual Report  
1923-24



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Hickling & Powell, Printers



# *The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria.*

PLUNKET SYSTEM

## *Patronesses:*

HER EXCELLENCY LADY FORSTER.  
HER EXCELLENCY LADY STRADBROKE.

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## *Assistant Secretary:*

MISS L. C. MORELAND.

## *Committee:*

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MISS M. IRVING.	MRS. WEBSTER.
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## *Matron:*

MISS L. C. MORELAND.

The Society for the Study of the History of the  
Children of the World

Vol. 1, No. 1, 1901

Published by the Society

# *The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria.*

(PLUNKET SYSTEM.)

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## **Fourth Annual Report.**

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To the Members,—

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council of your Society has much pleasure in presenting its Fourth Annual Report. On this occasion the activities mentioned cover eight months only. The alteration has been made in order to meet the Government's requirements as to financial returns.

The period under review has been one of marked progress. The sphere of the Society's usefulness has been greatly enlarged, and its value to the community is now being recognised to a degree which is gratifying to those who have so long worked to that end.

Although it may appear that the scope of the Society's work has not reached the high mark of former years, it must be borne in mind that the foreshortening of the year by four months prevents the inclusion of a number of matters usually undertaken between July and October. The next report will embrace a full year's work.

### PROPAGANDA.

To this most important branch of the Society's efforts much time and attention has been given. Lectures and addresses have been delivered to gatherings of mothers and others. The Society's literature has been widely distributed. Many replies have been written in answer to letters received from anxious mothers seeking advice in regard to the care of their little ones. The majority of these enquiries were from the country districts of Victoria; whilst others came from such far distant places as West Australia and the Malay States.

## ANNUAL MEETING.

The Third Annual Meeting of the Society was held in the Assembly Hall, Collins-st., Melbourne, on Friday, 30th November, 1923.

Dr. J. W. Springthorpe presided, and in the course of an illuminating address said:—"Life without ideals is a poor and pitiful thing. Of all human ideals, those bound up in service must be the best, since it is service that broadens and deepens the individual; and that is man's greatest contribution to the race. And of all human service, surely there can be none higher than that which concerns itself with Mothercraft and Infant Welfare. In this fundamental service, ever since Truby King started the Plunket System in 1907, New Zealand has led the world. Under his guidance and supervision, the question soon became a national one. It utilises only Plunket Nurses, specially trained under specially qualified competent Plunket Matrons, in Plunket Institutions. Its fundamental aim is not to lessen infant mortality so much as to secure healthy development; and for that purpose it has drawn up a world-accepted propaganda, and secures the interest and attendance, alike of girlhood and motherhood, both prospective and actual. The result has been that for years past the infantile death rate of New Zealand has been the lowest in the world. It would be easy to show how practically the whole civilised world is following his lead."

Comparing the infantile mortality rate of Victoria with that of New Zealand, where in Victoria on the average of the last ten years, of every 1000 children born, 15 died from diarrhoeal complaints within a year; whereas in New Zealand the deaths in 1922 were only three per 1000, he asked: "Will anyone seriously maintain that our vastly greater and stationary diarrhoeal death rate is even largely due to our generally warmer climate? Is it not fairer to claim that such remarkable differences are at least materially due to the widely different way in which Victoria deals with the underlying question of mothercraft and infant welfare?"

### PAPER BY DR. F. TRUBY KING.

A paper entitled, "Infant Welfare Work in Australia," by Dr. F. Truby King, was read. In the course of the paper he said that at the Annual Conference of the Australian Health Association, held in Sydney in September last year, at which he attended, it was stated that the essential reasons for so few babies dying in New Zealand, compared with Australia, were as follows:—(1) "The initially low rate of infantile mortality characteristic of New Zealand; (2) our cool, temperate, equable climate; (3)

the small size of our cities. Further, since the Conference, it has been asserted repeatedly in the Australian Press that, owing to some inherent natural difference between the two countries, serious infantile diarrhoea is, and apparently always has been, practically non-existent in New Zealand. Further, it has been stated on apparent authority, that but for the radical differences in climate and microbes, there would actually be a lower infantile mortality rate at the present time in some of the Australian States than in the Dominion."

Answering the point, he said: "While appreciating the excellent general public health work done in the Commonwealth, it seems desirable to set down the leading facts bearing on the relatively low infantile mortality rates in New Zealand:—

"(1) Originally the infantile mortality rates differed but little in the two countries.

"(2) That the coolness and equability of New Zealand is not the cause of the discrepancy is shown by the simple fact that the average infantile mortality rate for Queensland is considerably lower than the rate for Tasmania, which is climatically similar to New Zealand, and that in the Dominion the sub-tropical City of Auckland has a low rate.

"(3) That the relative sizes of cities is not the determining cause is shown by the fact that while New Zealand cities have been almost doubling their populations they have been nearly halving their infantile mortality rates; and in 1920 the City of Auckland, with 200,000 inhabitants, lost a smaller proportion of babies than Wellington, Christchurch or Dunedin, which average about half the population of Auckland. Further, in the States of the Commonwealth itself the infantile mortality is sometimes in inverse proportion to the size of the cities.

"(4) That New Zealand enjoyed no natural immunity to infantile diarrhoea and enteritis is proved by the fact that from fifteen to twenty years ago, this form of disease killed annually from ten to twenty babies per thousand births. For the last five years the average rate for the Dominion has been only three deaths per thousand, as compared with thirteen deaths per thousand for the Commonwealth.

"The persistence in Australia and Tasmania of gastro-enteritis as the main cause of death among infants who survive their first month, and the extreme reduction of the disease in New Zealand cities of late years, is to be attributed to one essential cause, viz., the systematic education and training in mothercraft, which has been carried on throughout the Dominion for the last sixteen years."



## THE MATRON'S REPORT.

The Matron (L. C. Moreland), in her report, gave a general review of the good work done by the Welfare Centres, especially in regard to the restoration of the natural food supply for baby in cases where mothers have been pronounced unable to feed their infants; also an outline sketch on the training of Plunket Nurses.

### WELFARE CENTRES.

The work in the districts has been efficiently carried out by the Plunket Nurses in charge, and their untiring devotion to duty, sometimes under most trying conditions, calls for the highest praise.

That the efficiency of the Plunket System is greatly appreciated is undoubted. Many mothers living in suburbs to which the Plunket System has not yet been able to extend its activities, regularly come from great distances to consult the Society's Plunket Nurses.

The Municipal Council of Preston, finding the hall in High Street altogether unsuitable as a consulting room for its Centre, has leased a house, the front rooms of which are furnished as an office and waiting rooms. The change is much appreciated by the mothers, as well as the Sister in Charge.

The Williamstown Centre, which, since its commencement, has used a room at the Town Hall, will shortly remove to new quarters, the Municipal Council having bought a fine property in Lenore Crescent, which is being furnished and fitted out as an up-to-date Centre.

#### *Summary of Work Done by Plunket Nurses in their Several Centres from October 30th, 1923, to June 30th, 1924.*

Name of Centre	Visits of Adults and Babies to the Rooms	Visits paid by Plunket Nurses to Homes	Number of New Cases for the Year, Babies only	Number of Babies Entirely Breast Fed	Number of Breast Fed Babies Complimented
Coburg -	5170	42	221	211	3
Footscray -	2663	957	180	99	35
Preston -	2195	529	111	65	13
Williamstown -	2065	1039	88	57	13
Yarraville -	2938	1279	90	60	18
Total -	15031	3846	690	302	82

*Note.*—The number of visits paid to Rooms only includes those who attend for advice. *Visitors are not included.*



## BABY HOSPITAL AND TRAINING SCHOOL.

The Society's "Tweddle" Hospital for Babies and School of Mothercraft was officially opened by the Countess of Stradbroke on March 10th, in the presence of numerous friends and well-wishers. For the benefit of those unacquainted with the work of this Institution the following details are inserted.

### *Details of the Training of Plunket Nurses.*

1. The Training School is under medical supervision.
2. A Trainee is in residence at the Training School, from four to six months; the term of training for a General Hospital Trained Nurse being four months, and that of a fully trained Registered Maternity Nurse, six months.
3. The Trainee is given a good theoretical and working knowledge of the normal baby, as well as the nursing, care and treatment of babies suffering from all forms of mal-nutrition, and practical experience is gained in the care and dieting of premature infants.
4. Full opportunity is given to gain experience in dealing with a nursing mother, and her own baby, embracing difficulties arising out of failing lactation; in other words, the technique of breast feeding.
5. She learns how to deal with and advise the expectant mother on all matters pertaining to her own health, and that of her unborn babe.
6. She is taught the caloric values and percentage composition of foods, so as to assure absolute accuracy in all details when dealing with an artificially fed baby. For this she must have a working knowledge of the decimal system in arithmetic, and has to go into figurative practice during training.
7. The Trainee must understand how to modify milk, and be able to describe and demonstrate methods. She gains a knowledge of dietetics generally, but especially in relation to infant feeding.
8. She is taught the various methods of case recording by means of charts and books.
9. The training includes two weeks on a District with a Plunket Nurse, that she may learn to deal with mothers in their own homes.

The Trainee gains her practical experience by serving a certain length of time during her training in each of the under-mentioned departments:—

1. The Nursery.
2. The Wards accommodating normal and mal-nutrition babies.
3. The Ward set apart for premature infants.
4. The Milk Dispensary.
5. The Mothers' Cottage, where mothers troubled by failing lactation are in residence.

The theoretical side is in charge of the Medical Staff connected with the Institution.

Lectures and demonstrations are also given by the Matron.

A series of lectures are given each term.

At the end of the Trainee's term, in order to determine whether she is able to impart intelligently to the mother the knowledge gained, she is called upon to give a demonstration and lecturette before the Matron and her fellow Trainees.

At the end of each term an examination is held.

## WORK OF THE TRAINING SCHOOL.

*Trainees.*—Eight Nurses have entered the Training School for the first term of training. These Nurses are without exception keenly interested in their work, and are astonished at the difference between this and every other form of training for which they hold certificates.

*Lectures.*—Lectures have been given to the students by Drs. J. W. Springthorpe, Allen Robertson, J. V. Griffith, F. Lind and K. McCarthy. Lectures and demonstrations on everything pertaining to the Plunket System have been given by the Matron.

*Examinations.*—The final examination of the first class of students, for the Certificate of Efficiency in Mothercraft and Baby Welfare, will be held early in July.

*Examining Board.*—An Examining Board has been appointed, the members being Drs. Charles Perry, J. V. Griffith and Matron Moreland.

## HOSPITAL.

*Admissions.*—On March 15th the first cases were admitted. To June 30th the totals are as follows:—Babies, 22; Mothers, 8.

*Average Length of Stay.*—Babies, 30.5 days; Mothers, 14.7 days.

*Babies.*—The babies admitted came from various districts, namely:—Caulfield, Surrey Hills, Essendon, Williamstown, Balwyn, Laverton, Albert Park, Maidstone, and Footscray.

*Visitors.*—Visitors to the Hospital of people interested in the work numbered 308.

## FINANCE

A statement of the Receipts and Expenditure, and of the financial state of the Society's affairs at 30/6/24 is appended. A list of the donors will be found on the last page; as also a list of those who have contributed in goods.

Although members' annual subscriptions are not due until October, this opportunity is taken to remind them of the date.

With regard to Life Members, the Council would consider it a favour to receive nominations. The fee is £5/5/-. Any assistance that can be given with respect to these or possible annual members will be appreciated.

## THANKS.

As it is almost impossible to individually thank those from whom donations have been received, the Council takes the present opportunity to warmly thank all those who have contributed in cash or in kind during the period under review.

It also takes occasion to place on record its appreciation of the work of the Nurses in the several Centres, and on the excellent results they have obtained. Though not exactly a part of their duty to attend to mothers and babies non-resident in the districts they serve, their enthusiasm for the Plunket System is so great that they never refuse to give assistance and advice; the result of which is that the System is continually gaining new adherents.

In particular, the Council has very great pleasure in acknowledging the exceptionally fine services of the Society's Matron, Miss L. C. Moreland. Her work in organising and running the Hospital from its initiation onwards has been excellent in every way; and it is only her due that the best thanks of the Council be tendered to her for her very valuable and far-reaching assistance.

During the temporary absence of the Matron through illness, Sister Hall acted as Matron. She carried out her duties with untiring faithfulness, and a special vote of thanks was accorded her by the Executive.

being able to state that the Executive has met with perfect

## CONCLUSION.

In drawing this report to a close, your Council is happy in being able to state that the Executive has met with surpassing

regularity, and that its meetings have been well attended. The duties devolving upon it have been admirably performed; and as all the ladies and gentlemen giving their time to the work are giving their services for the love of the cause, the Society is fortunate in having so much energy and enthusiasm at its disposal.

On behalf of the Council,

J. W. SPRINGTHORPE, President.

J. HUME COOK, Hon. Secretary.

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*The Tweddle School of Mothercraft  
and Hospital for Babies.*

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PLUNKET SYSTEM.

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*Trustees:*

DR. J. W. SPRINGTHORPE.

HON. J. HUME COOK, J.P.

MR. F. N. VINCENT.

*Hon. Medical Board:*

DR. J. W. SPRINGTHORPE.

DR. ALLEN ROBERTSON.

*Hon. Medical Consultant:*

DR. J. V. GRIFFITHS.

# The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria

## PLUNKET SYSTEM.

### Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for Eight Months ended 30/6/1924

<i>Receipts</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
To Cash in Hand	By Overdraft at
1/11/23 .. .. . £35 6 6	1/11/23 .. .. . £136 17 6
Private Subscriptions 16 7 6	Hospital Maintenance .. .. . 643 13 7
Proceeds of Entertainments .. .. 70 11 3	Hospital Equipment 763 12 6
Payments by Patients and Nurses .. .. 219 14 3	Administration Expenses .. .. . 96 10 5
Donations .. .. . 659 10 3	
Bank Overdraft, at 30/6/24 .. .. . 639 4 3	
£1640 14 0	£1640 14 0

### STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS AT 30th JUNE, 1924.

<i>Liabilities</i>	<i>Assets</i>
Commercial Bank of Australia Ltd. .. .. £639 4 3	Buildings .. .. . £3678 5 0
Surplus .. .. . 4107 8 3	Furniture & Equipment 1068 7 6
£4746 12 6	£4746 12 6

Audited and found correct,  
(Signed) DAVIS & RAVEN,  
F.C.P.A., Auditors.  
Melbourne, 28th July, 1924.

LOUIS J. LEVY,  
Hon. Treasurer.

DONATIONS.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Alston, Mrs. . . . .	10	0	0	Lemmon, J. . . . .	1	0	0
Burrell, Watkinson . . . .	1	1	0	Mitchell, Mrs. . . . .	5	5	0
Card Evening Proceeds				MacRobertson's . . . .	50	0	0
(per Mrs. Gent) . . . .	18	10	0	Masonic Effort (Foot-			
Dramatic Entertainment	4	5	3	scray) . . . . .	67	0	0
Danks, A. T. . . . .	50	0	0	Napier, Theo. . . . .	1	1	0
Doery, G. H. . . . .	10	10	0	Nichols, Sybil . . . .	1	1	0
Eagle Star & British				Northcote Brick Co. . .	1	1	0
Dominion Ins. Co. . . .	3	3	0	Coburg Centre . . . .	10	10	0
Felton Bequest . . . . .	50	0	0	Parker, Mrs. H. . . . .	5	5	0
Felton Bequest . . . . .	200	0	0	Sumner Trust Estate . .	5	0	0
Felton Bequest . . . . .	50	0	0	Wilson Trustees . . . .	50	0	0
Kozminsky, Mrs. . . . .	5	5	0	Wilson Trustees . . . .	75	0	0
Kiwi Polish Co. . . . .	1	1	0				
					£690	10	3

Our thanks are due to the following for gifts in kind towards the equipment of the Hospital:—Singers Sewing Machine Co., sewing machine; Ingram Bros., clock for Nursery wall; Mrs. Anderson, cot and furnishings, meat safe; Bradshaw's, tea spoons; Edment's, cruet; Gaunt's, cruet and table silver; Dr. Springthorpe, pictures; Mrs. Forge, set of carvers; Messrs. Forge, cots (2); Mrs. Larcher, cots (2); Mr. T. Launder, cot; Lucini Pty. Co., dining table; Tye and Co., kitchen table; Art Furnishing Co., floor coverings; Robertson's, door mats; Warburton, Franki, radiators; Electric Co., radiator; Mr. Farnsworth, gas stove; Stott and Hoare, typewriter; Mason, Firth & McCutcheon's, certificates; Harvey, Shaw & Co., clock; Huddard, Parker, coal; Mrs. A. Macpherson, oranges (2 cases per month); Swallow & Ariell, biscuits; Deepdene & Balwyn Aux. League, hot water bags, bed linen, towels; Mrs. Dye, baby garments; Mrs. Hubert Parker, babies' singlets; Mrs. and Miss Kilpatrick, table linen; Mr. Saddler, towel rails; Laycock, Son & Co., blankets; Merrick Boyd, vases; Mrs. Tweddle, standard rose bushes; Mrs. Dye, preserves; Mrs. Gent (proceeds of "Afternoon"), preserves and pickles; Mrs. Dr. Gardiner, preserves; Miss Forbes, preserves, cakes and fruit; Mrs. Coleman, preserves, cakes; Mrs. Springthorpe, preserves and cakes; Mrs. Taylor, eggs; Mrs. Stewart, vegetables and cakes; Mrs. Farnsworth, fruit, flowers and cake; Mrs. Greenwood, dusters and preserves; Mrs. Thompson, fruit; Mrs. Easton, cakes; Myers Ltd., babies' singlets.









