

form of death certificate, stating that death was due to convulsions, and gave it to the hospital authorities with instructions to take it, after the name and address of the child had been filled in, to the Coroner, with a letter from himself, so that the Coroner might decide whether an inquest was requisite. This seems a somewhat irregular proceeding, although no doubt Dr. Robinson was acting in good faith, but it is not usual for a medical man to sign certificates of death of patients whom he has never seen. The Coroner stated that not only had Miss Sanderson filled in the name and address, but she had put in a date, making it appear as if Dr. Robinson had last seen the child on the 15th, whereas he had never attended it at all. Such a proceeding was very wrong. The jury added a rider to their verdict, which was in accordance with the medical evidence, expressing their opinion that (1) The body of a deceased person should be viewed by the medical practitioner signing the death certificate before he issued the same, especially in cases where he had not seen the deceased alive, or shortly before death; (2) No death certificate should be signed and issued until the necessary particulars had been entered; (3) As there was no resident medical officer at the British Lying-in Hospital, the committee should consider the advisability of having telephone communication with the physician of the out-patient department, so that he could be speedily advised of cases of emergency. We could wish they had further stated that they condemned as reprehensible the practice of sending uncertificated students to attend confinement cases. It is difficult to understand how the authorities who sanction this custom can subsequently certify to the London Obstetrical Society that the students, for whose education they are responsible, have attended the requisite number of cases "under supervision."

#### "DUST-WOMEN."

At the last meeting of the Lambeth Vestry the Medical Officer (Mr. Priestley) presented a special report in relation to the dust sorters of the parish. The whole process of sorting was, he stated, an exceedingly offensive one, and most degrading to those employed in it, more especially to the women and girls, who might be seen with the refuse up to their waists, if not higher. The sorting at present takes place at various wharves, in busy centres, such

as Commercial Road. Foul odours are, according to the medical report, given off during the process of sorting, and from the heaps of refuse awaiting sorting, which often became a nuisance to the surrounding neighbourhoods. The Lambeth Vestry have therefore done wisely in deciding to ask the City Corporation and the Clerkenwell Vestry to discontinue the practice at the wharves, which come under their jurisdiction. The storage of decaying refuse in populous districts must be injurious to health, and, if the process of sorting is necessary, it should be carried on well outside the Metropolis, but we cannot agree with a contemporary which hopes that what it terms the "scandal" of women sorters will soon be abolished. We should deprecate any arbitrary legislation on this point. How do those who wish for it propose to provide employment for the many women who would be thrown out of work, and lose the only occupation at which they are expert? The tendency of legislation at the present day is to become too grandmotherly where women are concerned. The women dust-sorters cannot readily take up any other occupation, any more than the girls at the pit's mouth, and the attention of legislators should be directed to improving the conditions of work, rather than to depriving women of the means of gaining an honest living.

#### THE DANGER OF SIDE SADDLES.

A CRUSADE against side saddles has been inaugurated by the Health Protection Association, Cleveland, U.S.A. This society urges that the side saddle is dangerous, and that women should wear divided skirts and ride man fashion. Not many years ago such a suggestion would have raised a storm of disapproval, but now that the divided skirt has come to stay, and women already bestride iron horses in the shape of bicycles, it seems difficult to advance sound reasons against their bestriding the real animal also. There is no doubt that the present conventional position for a woman on horseback places her at a great disadvantage, and, further, strains the abdominal organs. Prejudice dies hard, and no doubt there will be an outcry against the suggestion of the Health Protection Association, which will be stigmatised as unwomanly, but those who bring their common sense to bear on the proposition will see that there is much to be said for it.

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