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Treatment of Fracture of the Femur in the Newly Born.

Dr. J. Shaw Lyttle describes in the *British Medical Journal* a method of treating fracture of the femur in a newly born infant. He writes:—So far back as seventeen or eighteen years ago I was asked one day to see a baby whose femur had been fractured during delivery a few hours previously. On extending the leg the short upper fragment projected anteriorly, and I saw that neither extension nor splints would serve any purpose. So I flexed the leg on the abdomen, with the knee extended, as described by Dr. Edmondson, and bandaged it to the body. The result was most satisfactory, there being no shortening, and that baby is now a smart, active young woman.

The Injury of Babies' Eyes by Direct Sun Glare.

The injuring of babies' eyes by direct sun glare is, says *American Medicine*, an old practice of ignorant nurses, or perhaps of equally ignorant mothers, carried away with the alleged benefits of a sun bath. The poor little sufferers are strapped in their carriages and kept for hours on their backs with the sun pouring down in their faces. It was supposed that the habit was dying out, but recent reports show that it is still very much in vogue. Physicians have frequently had occasion to call attention to this brutal practice, and it is evident that more instruction is needed.

Perhaps quite a lot of the troubles of early childhood might be traced to these painful sun baths; and it is certain that the eye suffers more or less permanent injury.

Midwifery in Surrey.

DR. SEATON'S REPORT.

Dr. Seaton, the Medical Officer of Health for the administrative County of Surrey, in his report for the year 1907, just published, devotes a section to the working of the Midwives Act in the county.

The main objects of the Act were to secure that, as far as possible, every woman should be properly attended in childbirth; that by increased attention to cleanliness and to surgical and sanitary precautions, the occurrence of puerperal fever should be gradually suppressed; and that by proper care of newly-born children the occurrence of infantile ophthalmia, which often leads to blindness, should be prevented. In all these respects the report may be regarded as satisfactory. During the year there were 190 certified midwives practising in the county, and of these the great majority were described as being cleanly in their habits and in their dwellings. They attended 4,798 women in childbirth, and there were 92 stillbirths among this number. During the ten years, 1895-1904, the number of cases of puerperal fever notified was 278, or an average of 27.8 per annum; and during the three following years, 1905-1907, when the Act was in operation, the number was 66, or an average of 22 per annum. Hence, although the number of births in the county has increased (although not in proportion to the population), the number of puerperal fever cases has been reduced by nearly 20 per cent.; while infantile ophthalmia is said to have been "of very rare occurrence." There are still about 70 uncertified midwives practising in the county, who will be practically legalised until April 1, 1910, after which date they will be suppressed. The report declares that the replacement of these persons by younger women, practised in midwifery as now taught, would mean a diminished child-birth death-rate and a diminished infant mortality; but it is at present by no means clear how the future wants of the community are to be supplied. In many districts it cannot possibly pay a competent midwife to establish herself unless she is subsidised by a national or county association. Dr. Seaton is of opinion that, unless numerous subscriptions to county nursing associations are forthcoming, there will be great danger either of the Poor Law provisions having to be considerably extended at the cost of the ratepayers, so that midwives may be partly State supported, or of the provisions of the Midwives Act being frustrated through a lack of supply of competent women.

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