

on a rope attached to the ceiling. Or the midwife sits behind the woman and presses on the fundus with both hands. To facilitate the expulsion of the placenta, the woman is made to cough, or her hair is thrust into her mouth to bring on retching. The principal mode of removing the placenta is that of tugging at the cord, which often causes it to rupture; or the woman is made to blow forcibly into a bottle; should the child be asphyxiated, the attached placenta is put into a pot and heated on the fire. To hasten labour, a midwife will freely smear her head with oil, and, placing the patient in a standing position against the wall, will knead her abdomen with the oiled head; or the husband is set to hard, mechanical work, the idea being that, the husband being too strong for his wife, his strength must be reduced to facilitate early delivery. When a low-caste midwife attends a high-caste woman, the patient, after confinement, is made to walk to the nearest stream or tank, and is dipped in a sufficient number of times to remove the pollution. For three days subsequent to the confinement a woman is actually starved, even fluids being withheld, with the idea that they cause the intestines to suppurate. Among the well-to-do a dose of musk and ginger-juice is given immediately after delivery, and the genitals are fomented with hot water to which several drugs are added. Turmeric (*Hydrastis canadensis*) is largely used, both internally and externally, to help the process of involution of the uterus. If symptoms of eclampsia set in, the woman is made to sit up and her hair is attached to a cord suspended from the roof; what the therapeutical effect is, is difficult to understand. In natural cases very little results from these primitive methods of treatment; but in complicated cases the most inhuman and crude methods are resorted to, such as pressing upon and shampooing the abdomen, the assumption of various postures, constant movement, beating and branding of the thighs and buttocks, &c. All these failing, the hand is introduced, and everything and anything that can be got a hold of is pulled upon; occasionally a bent iron hook is used and is fastened to the head of the child; when this slips, the amount of injury inflicted can well be imagined. Numerous cases are eventually taken to the hospitals, horribly mutilated and generally die of hæmorrhage or septicæmia. It is no exaggeration to say that all difficult cases end fatally, for the ignorance of these women is only equal to their perseverance, and they will haul and pull at a woman for as many as five days until sloughing genitals, rectal and urinary fistulae, ruptured uterus, and septic complications arise. Their knowledge is not even rudimentary, and is acquired by simply attending cases with other midwives, and what knowledge they have—and mistakes—are handed down from mother to daughter, and thus midwifery becomes an hereditary profession.

From these selected remarks it will be seen that Lady Curzon's scheme ought to satisfy one of the most crying needs of India. *Dhais*, we understand, are in training at Lahore, Amritsar, Multan, and a few other places, where excellent institutions for the medical treatment of women exist. And as the work of the fund progresses, let us hope that trained women will be sent into the "highways and hedges" of this vast, benighted continent, carrying a rational method of treatment to many a poor sufferer.

Practical Points.

Worm Disease.

Reports on the outbreak of ankylostomiasis in the Westphalian colliery district in Germany have been issued in Blue-book form. The reports are by Mr. T. R. Mulvany, His Majesty's Consul-General at Düsseldorf, and Dr. F. Ph. Koenig, the British Vice-Consul there. Ankylostomiasis, known in Germany as "Die Wurmkrankheit" (worm disease), has already been introduced from tropical countries into Cornish mines, as shown in the report by Dr. Haldane, recently presented to Parliament and issued as a Parliamentary paper. Dr. Haldane thinks there is considerable risk of its also spreading in British collieries unless effectual means are taken for improving the sanitary conditions underground. The essential measures necessary for preventing the spread of this disease are clearly indicated in the following passage from Dr. Haldane's report: "The spread of ankylostomiasis, as appears from the life-history, of the parasite, depends entirely on contact with material which has been polluted with human faeces (from an infected person) and remained for a sufficient time under such conditions of temperature, moisture, &c., that the ova contained in the faeces have developed. It is evident that the spread of the disease may be entirely checked by preventing the pollution of mines by human impurities. Unless this is effected, as it certainly can be, the disease will probably spread gradually throughout the mines of England wherever the temperature and moisture are favourable to the growth of the larvæ."

The *Sozialistische Monatshefte* contains an article by Mr. William Düwell on this terrible "worm disease." Mr. Düwell bitterly attacks the decision of the conference on the subject which assembled on April 6th this year. It decided that no drastic measures were to be taken against the plague until further researches had been made. Meanwhile the number of sufferers increases rapidly year by year. In 1897 there were 125; in 1901, 1,029; and in the first nine months of last year 1,200. A man may be discharged from hospital cured, and before long be back again as bad as ever. The only satisfactory thing about the scourge that has as yet been found out is that women escape the attacks of the worms entirely. The worm itself is from six to eight millimetres long—the female four millimetres longer—and belongs to the *Dochmius* species. Some men have as many as 300 to 400 worms, which suck the blood and poison the system.

The Future Wonders of Radium.

An intensely interesting article dealing with the practical uses to which radium can and may be put appears in last week's literary supplement to the *Times*. The writer first calls attention to the fact that some of the most hopeful and important of the uses to which this wonderful element can be applied are in the field of medicine: "Instead of the cumbersome focus tube nearly as large as a football, and the manifold and expensive items of an X-ray outfit, a glass tube, somewhat smaller than a toothpick, containing from one-tenth to one-fifth of a grain of radium, has already been successfully employed in the treatment of cancer. Since the little tubes can be inserted into cavities no bigger than the nostril, it is obvious that a

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