

The Midwife.

Disinfection after attending Infectious Cases.

One of the questions which midwives and maternity nurses ask from time to time is how soon they may safely resume midwifery work if they have come in contact with a case of puerperal fever. The Royal Maternity Charity of London in its "Rules for Midwives," deals with this point, and we give its practice believing that it will be of interest to many midwives. It is as follows:

When a midwife has under her care a case of puerperal fever, the exigencies of the case require her attendance at least once, and in most cases two or three times a day. At these visits she comes into special contact with the patient. She has to adjust the binder, apply fomentations to the abdomen, syringe out the vagina, and otherwise attend on the lying-in woman. The conscientious performance of these duties involves the impregnation of the midwife with puerperal fever infection. She is thus rendered specially liable to convey infection to others.

During her attendance, therefore, on a case of puerperal fever, she should hand over her other patients to some other midwife, and give immediate notice to the surgeon and secretary, and cease for the time attending any fresh labours. She should also avoid going into a lying-in hospital or having any intercourse with another midwife.

At the termination of the case she should have all her clothes disinfected. She should disinfect herself by taking a Turkish or warm bath, and, if possible, an air bath in the shape of a few days' holiday in fresh air. It is important to keep her finger nails cut short and cleared, by the careful use of the nail brush, and a solution of Lysol or Cyllin, of any debris which might harbour infection.

Under these precautions she may safely resume her practice by the advice of the physician, which must be communicated to the Secretary. The regulation of the Central Midwives' Board as to disinfection is also quoted. This is:

Whenever a midwife has been in attendance upon a patient suffering from puerperal fevers or from any other illness supposed to be infectious she must disinfect herself and all her instruments, and other appliances to the satisfaction of the Local Supervising Authority, and must have her clothing thoroughly dis-

infected before going to another labour. Unless otherwise directed by the Local Supervising Authority, all washable clothing should be boiled, and other clothing should be sent to be disinfected by the Local Sanitary Authority.

The Central Midwives' Board thus places the responsibility for the efficient disinfection of the midwife with the Local Supervising Authority, and has never issued any regulation as to a quarantine period. Some conscientious midwives and nurses, for lack of definite instructions on this point consider themselves unsafe to attend a lying-in case for months after they have been brought in contact with a case of puerperal fever. The practice of the Royal Maternity Charity will, therefore, be of interest to them.

A Certified Midwife Charged with Neglect.

Mrs. Ada Charlotte Chowne, a certified midwife—who is also approved by the Central Midwives' Board for the purpose of signing certificates required by the Board as to the attendance on cases, and during the lying-in period, of candidates for its examination—was last week indicted at the Newington Sessions, before Mr. Loviland, K.C., for neglecting three children in a manner likely to cause them unnecessary suffering.

TRAINED NURSES' UNIFORM AGAIN IN THE DOCK.

Mrs. Chowne, who appeared in a nurse's uniform, is the Matron of an institution described as the Stockwell Maternity Hospital and School of Midwifery. It is noteworthy that while reference to the Midwives' Roll readily enables her identification as a certified midwife, there are no means of ascertaining whether she has any qualifications as a trained nurse.

CHARGES AGAINST THE ACCUSED.

Mr. W. B. Campbell, who prosecuted, formulated the following charges. The first child was one of a young Italian woman, who got into trouble, and was sent to the institution by her mistress. The child was left there, the mistress agreeing to pay 7s. a week. When it was proposed to remove the institution to Brixton the mother was asked to remove the child. It was found in a deplorable condition, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was communicated with. An officer

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