

Court was of a woman who had married without consideration, and provision for the coming confinement had been delayed till the last moment. The husband had not bothered at all—that was “woman’s affair.” When her trouble came, unless within half a mile of the London Hospital, she was probably without skilled attendance. A short time ago, Mr. Wynne Baxter said, he held an inquest on a healthy child, whose death was due to the incompetence of the Midwife in attendance. He warned her, but within a fortnight she was before him again for the same thing. He then found she had been struck off the Register for incompetence. Very few puerperal deaths should occur. The cases were most frequent where ignorance was greatest. The handy woman attended a lying-in case in her every-day clothes, which she had probably worn for months. She carried no bag of appliances—nothing, in fact, but contagion—and she did not wash her hands.

Dr. P. Macdonald.

Dr. Macdonald, Ophthalmic Surgeon to the York Hospital, spoke of the number of children who were made blind by purulent ophthalmia. Fully one-fourth of the blindness in the country was due to this disease which is a preventable one. The disease occurred most frequently in the class attended by Midwives, among the ignorant section of whom there is neither the knowledge nor the conscience to employ the necessary methods. It was essential that this Association, concerned in the training of Midwives, should insist on proper steps being taken to prevent this terrible disease. A knowledge of the methods employed should be included in any scheme for the training of Midwives.

Dr. Walker.

Dr. Walker, of Liverpool, said that, though a baby can howl from its birth, it cannot shed tears for the first three months, and thus lacks the necessary means of washing out the eye. If a case of ophthalmia occurs in the practice of the handy woman, she probably says the child has “caught a cold,” and tells the mother to bathe the eyes. Thus, the outside of the eyes are kept clean, but within the lids they are a mass of corruption. By the time the child is taken to a hospital the eyes are probably either destroyed or badly damaged. Trained Midwives are taught the danger of this disease, but a gap in our present hospital system is the lack of accommodation for such cases. At St. Paul’s Eye Hospital, Liverpool, a special ward has been opened for cases of ophthalmia neonatorum, containing three beds and three cots, where mother and child are admitted at the onset of the disease; both need treatment. Attendance on such a practice should be a compulsory part of every Midwife’s training.

The following Resolution was then moved by Lord Balfour of Burlington, K.T.:—

“That this meeting appreciates the benefits that the nation will derive from the Midwives Act, and realises the importance of preparing to supply the demand for a larger number of qualified Midwives, which will occur in the year 1910, when the

law becomes more stringent. The meeting is therefore of opinion that the extension of the work of the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives is an urgent public duty; and that the objects of the Association demand national and generous support from all those to whom the health and welfare of the nation appeal.”

The speaker said a case had never been brought before the public which had been more conclusively proved to the hilt.

The resolution was seconded by Miss Jane Wilson, President of the Midwives’ Institute, and supported by Miss Lucy Robinson, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Association.

SPONTANEOUS RUPTURE OF THE UMBILICAL CORD.

In reference to a paragraph in a recent issue of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING, *re Spontaneous Rupture of Umbilical Cord*, it might be interesting to other midwives to know of two cases at the Belfast Union Maternity Hospital, which support Dr. Tissier’s view.

Both cases were multiparas, and quite healthy; in the first case the woman gave birth to a healthy child, on the path leading up to the Maternity Hospital; on examination the cord was found to be broken off about 8 inches from the umbilicus.

In the second case, the child was also healthy; it was born just on admission, in the corridor of the hospital; the cord in this case was broken off long, the placental end was not visible from vagina.

There was no perineal tear in either case; both patients made a good recovery, and were able to leave the hospital in ten days.

The children were not injured in any way, and the cords were quite normal. Both women were in the upright position.

ELIZABETH DOUGLAS.

The General Lying-in Hospital, York Road, Lambeth, has instituted, thanks to the generosity of the under-mentioned firms, a permanent exhibition of requisites used by midwives and monthly nurses. This has great practical value, and is most useful for teaching purposes. It was opened on December 11th, and it is hoped by constant additions to keep it thoroughly up-to-date. Among the exhibits are an electric food warmer, an excellent sterilisable douche, a simple and inexpensive lithotomy strap, etc. The midwifery bags are numerous and well stocked, the prices being such as to meet all pockets. The exhibiting firms are as follows:—Allen and Hanburys, Aymard Steriliser Co., Bailey and Son (case), Benger’s Food, Ltd., Berliner and Co., Burroughs and Wellcome (case), Cuxson, Gerard and Co., Dalmas and Co., Evans and Wormull, Messrs. E. and R. Garrould, Grimwades, Hospital Contract Co. (case), Maw, Son, and Sons (case), Medical Supply Association, Rearall Bros. and Co., Sanitary Wood Wool Co., Sanitas Co., Ltd., Southall Bros. and Barclay.

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