

A Generous Gift.

Sir William P. Hartley, of the well-known jam-making firm, has given £15,000 towards the funds of the Liverpool Maternity Hospital for the purpose of establishing a new institution. The building is to accommodate 50 patients and a staff of 25 persons. In addition, there is to be a laundry, furnished and equipped in a plain and substantial manner, a department which must add greatly to the efficiency and comfort of an institution of this kind.

Sir William Hartley, at the annual meeting, last week, said that to keep the hospital fully occupied would necessitate the raising of at least £20,000 as an endowment fund. He suggested that this amount should be invested with the Corporation of Liverpool, or elsewhere, for fifteen years, the principal and interest to be exhausted in that time. This would produce £1,700 a year, paid half-yearly. Mr. Sutton Timmins has opened the endowment fund with a subscription of £1,000.

A Maternity Nurse's Fees.

It is a condition of success that a private nurse should cultivate business habits, and this is especially essential for maternity nurses and midwives. Their services are usually retained some time before the date when they are required, and although a nurse may faithfully fulfil her part of the arrangement, and refuse other cases in order to be free on the date agreed upon, she can prove no valid claim to compensation should her services be dispensed with at the last moment, or should the date when she is required not coincide with that for which she is engaged. The employer should, therefore, always be supplied with a form for signature, stating clearly the terms of the engagement, which should not be considered complete until this signed form is in the possession of the nurse or the co-operation or society with which she is connected.

Recently Mrs. M. J. Rose, of Lynton Road, Hove, brought a claim against Mr. H. Watson, of Westbourne Gardens, Hove, for four guineas, for four weeks' salary. The case for the nurse, presented by Mr. Trevor Pollard, was that she was definitely engaged by Mrs. Watson about a fortnight before Easter, 1908, to nurse her about the middle of September; she booked the engagement and declined another case, but subsequently heard that Mrs. Watson had engaged another nurse.

Under cross-examination, the plaintiff admitted that she could not remember the precise time of the engagement, and that she had destroyed the diary in which she booked it.

The Judge remarked that this was very unfortunate. To make entries and then destroy the book struck him as the height of absurdity.

Mrs. Watson emphatically denied the contract, and said that she inquired the plaintiff's terms and said she would let her know later if she required her services. Mr. Watson corroborated his wife's statement, and the Judge held that the plaintiff's

case had not been made out, and gave judgment for the defendant with costs.

Uncertified Practice.

An inquest was recently held at Upper Dovercourt by the Coroner, Mr. Harrison, on Mrs. Emma Leura Large, who died after giving birth to twins. She was attended by an uncertified woman, who had been in the habit of attending women in the neighbourhood.

The Coroner appeared to regret that a limit has been set to the time when unqualified women can attend on women in labour. He said that in the present instance the woman had done nothing contrary to law. She was engaged by the deceased herself, who said she did not wish for a doctor. But there would doubtless be great trouble after April 1st, 1910. It would be impossible for the old village nurses to go in for examinations. When they got to know what they had to be examined in they would have nothing to do with it. The villages, therefore, would have much difficulty in getting qualified nurses.

There is, however, nothing whatever in the Midwives' Act to prevent the old village nurses from continuing to act as such after 1910. What it does provide is that "no woman shall habitually and for gain attend women in childbirth, other than under the direction of a medical practitioner," unless she is certified under the Act. Surely it is time that the State afforded this amount of protection to poor lying-in women, and that needless deaths, disease, permanent disablement of mothers, and blinding of children for life, should no longer be permitted as a result of gross incompetence on the part of ignorant attendants.

The Technique of Gentleness.

In an old medical journal which is before us, says the *Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette*, we note the reports of three cases of puerperal mastitis, two of which ended fatally. In each case the milk had been expressed from the breast with the result of aggravating the trouble. The writer reminds us that pus organisms are frequently found dormant in the milk ducts, and that infection of the gland is frequently the result of rough handling in the expression of the milk. The lesson is obvious. Such a simple operation as the "drawing" of the milk and the "massage" of the breast should be performed with the utmost skill and gentleness or not at all.

If the obstetric nurse has been so fortunate as never to have any breast trouble in any of her patients, she should congratulate herself and then -- be more gentle than ever with her next cases. For with over-confidence and assurance there is too frequently a temptation to neglect the little points in technique and to take those liberties which result in infection and disaster.

The same rule holds good in connection with artificial respiration applied to an infant.

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