

presented the case on its behalf.

He stated further that his Council was prepared to pay the expenses of Hertfordshire midwives cited by the Board.

The Chairman said that the Board would consider the representations of the Hertfordshire County Council, which appear most reasonable.

DECEMBER EXAMINATION PAPER.

1. Describe the position, and the relation one to another, of the organs in the pelvis. 2. Describe the movements by which the head may be born in the third position of the vertex, and mention the difficulties which may arise. 3. Under what circumstances would you consider the second stage of labour unduly prolonged? What ill effects to mother and child may arise from its prolongation, and how would you recognise them? 4. A patient is found to have a temperature of 101 degs. Fahr. on the fourth day of the puerperium; what other symptoms would you look out for, and what would your duty be in such a case? 5. Describe in detail how you would manage the breast feeding of the infant during the first four days. 6. What are the principal hygienic requirements as regards (a) The mode of life of the pregnant woman? (b) The lying-in room?

Christmas London.

It had never been our custom to refuse to admit unmarried girls with their first babies to our Maternity Home. The Committee, I am glad to say, did not see why in this branch of nursing work alone a test of character should be demanded before assistance was given, and so, in the large maternity practice of a poverty-stricken district we reserved the Home, as far as possible, for women with their first babies, and cases likely to be abnormal, and attended others in their own homes. Experience abundantly proved that in this over-crowded district, where the housing problem made the observation of the decencies of life well nigh impossible, and threw boys and girls, young men and young women, into contact unseemly in its closeness, that whether the woman with her first baby was married or single depended rather upon a remnant of honour in the man than upon any self-restraint before marriage. Marriage certificates of more than a few months duration were rare. In each case the girl trusted the man of her choice to "make an honest woman of her" before the child was born. In some cases the man acknowledged the claim of the woman upon him, in others he repudiated it. Why should we surround the one with every comfort and care and send the other to the workhouse ward? Those of us who knew the neighbourhood were of opinion that the main responsibility for the prevalent standard of morality belonged to the landlords, and that the motto of our Home should be: "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."

I was sitting one Christmas morning by the bedside of a patient who puzzled the medical staff. There seemed nothing definitely wrong with her, but just weariness and disinclination to get better. Even the appeal to her to rouse herself for her baby's sake failed to move Christmas London,

though she was evidently devoted to the sturdy little girl now nearly a month old.

Christmas London—it was a curious name, and I thought from the first that the girl had a tragic history, but we never forced confidences, though we generally received them sooner or later. Christmas was a refined, sensitive girl, with pretty manners, of which even her rough experience of life had not robbed her.

"Matron," came a voice from the bed; "may baby have your name, and will you see that she is well brought up when I am dead?"

"Why not your name?" I asked. "Christmas is pretty and uncommon; a nicer name than mine." (I had been called Louisa after some estimable and unknown aunt, and privately I thought the name hideous.) "And why should you die? The doctors think there is no reason why you should if only you would try to get better."

"I don't want to get better, and baby shan't have my name," she replied, and a hard look came into her blue eyes. It's been the ruin of me, and it shan't be of her if I can help it."

And then, bit by bit, she told me her story. Her mother, a governess, betrayed by her employer, and disowned by her family, had sought the shelter of a workhouse ward one morning, and our Christmas had been born there. The mother died, and while she lay unconscious everyone thought the fragile child to whom she had given birth would die too; so while the Christmas bells were ringing they baptised her "Christmas" because the bells suggested it as appropriate, and "London" because the mother had determinedly refused to give any name. So Christmas London grew up in the workhouse, and in due time a "place" was found for her, as scullery maid in the house of one of the guardians. "And very thankful you ought to be to have a good place like that, Christmas, when you never had no parents, at least not to speak of," said the workhouse matron. "Mind you behave."

"I did behave," said poor Christmas; "but my name was always against me. "Workhouse brat," "Nobody's child," the other servants called me. They laughed at me all the time, and one day I ran away. I would not go back to the workhouse, and there was nothing for such as me but the streets. Some of them were kind, and some—oh! I won't think of them—they were brutes. I saved the money to come in here because I wouldn't have baby born in the workhouse, to have the shame of it on her all her life. I'd have drowned myself first. And I don't want to live to shame her either. You've been good to me, Matron, and you'll be good to baby, I know."

That was many years ago. Louisa Robinson is house-maid in the Home now, and a good girl she is. She "passes the time of day" with the baker, who is a steady young fellow, and last Christmas Day she had tea with his mother. It seems likely that before the next Christmas bells ring out their message of peace and goodwill there will be a wedding from the Home, and that I shall have to give away a bride, and to look out for another housemaid.

MATRON.

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