

The Midwife.

An Interesting Case.

Mr. J. Wilson, F.R.C.S., reports in the *Lancet* a case of intussusception in an infant reduced by an air enema as follows:—

The child was a male, and when I first saw it, a week after its birth, was quite up to the average in size and weight for an infant of that age. It was being fed at the breast, and, as the mother told me, was the best child she had ever had, and did not give the least trouble. It had been suddenly seized with pain early that morning and had since been vomiting all its milk. They produced two napkins which were soiled with what looked like blood and stringy mucus. Inquiry elicited the fact that the last proper motion took place the evening previous about 6 p.m., and that the child vomited for the first time shortly after the pain seized it that morning. The child did not seem to be in any great pain when I saw it, but every few minutes it vomited a small quantity of bile-stained fluid. The abdomen was soft and on palpation I failed to discover a tumour of any kind. However, whilst palpating in the right iliac region the child became very restless and began to whimper.

I diagnosed the case as one of intussusception, either ileocæcal or ileocolic, and before leaving I told the mother that it would be possibly necessary to open the abdomen in order to put the child right. When I returned a few hours later the condition of affairs was unchanged; the child still continued to vomit bile-stained fluid at intervals, and although it attempted to suck when put to the breast, the smallest quantity of milk was immediately ejected.

The parents absolutely refused to allow an operation, nor would they allow me to give the baby chloroform. I attempted to reduce the intussusception by means of a warm water enema, but the tenesmus was so great that without an anæsthetic I found this method to be impracticable. I was about to give the case up as hopeless, when I thought I might try the effect of pumping air into the bowel. So I laid the infant upon a pillow in the centre of the kitchen table, and by means of an ordinary Higginson's syringe I pumped in air till the abdomen assumed a distinct fulness. As there was no means of ascertaining whether reduction had taken place or not, I returned the child to its mother and left the house fully convinced that under the circumstances there was very little hope of the child living. Nevertheless, when I called the next day I was agreeably surprised on being told that the child had vomited only once or twice since I left on the previous day, and that most of the milk was being retained. The mother showed me a napkin which had recently been soiled with something very like mæconium. The next day the napkins were stained a

distinct yellow, and the child had ceased to vomit. It is now about five months old and looks quite healthy and contented. I do not know if an intussusception has been reduced by an air enema before, but on this occasion I think the end quite justified the means.

The Central Midwives Board.

A Meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, on Thursday, May 18th, Sir Francis Champneys in the chair.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A letter was read from a firm of solicitors at Bristol, asking the Board to reconsider their decision not to admit a woman to the Roll who had made application during the extended period of grace, and had been refused. She had since been summoned for practising midwifery without being certified. Her solicitors supported their application by a petition signed by local people, and stated that there were only four midwives in the parish in which the woman resided, and two of them were over 70 and in receipt of old age pensions. The Chairman said that the Board had carefully considered the circumstances before arriving at their decision. It was agreed to reply that the Board had now no power to add further names of midwives in practice before 1905 to the Roll on that ground, as the period of grace expired on September 30th.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

The Board, on the recommendation of the Standing Committee, accepted alterations suggested in the revised rules by the Clerk of the Council, the Chairman having informed it that they were merely drafting alterations.

The Board considered a letter from the Inspector of Midwives of the County Borough of Hull, as to the difficulties experienced by midwives in obtaining medical help in cases of emergency, and decided to reply in connection with it that the midwife is not responsible to the Guardians; but to the Local Supervising Authority, and to the Board.

A letter was read from the Clerk of the Council transmitting for the observations of the Board a letter with enclosures addressed by Mr. Harold Baker, M.P., to the President of the Local Government Board, in regard to the case of Annie Ireland, late No. 4407, whose name was removed from the Midwives' Roll on March 30th, 1911.

The Secretary was directed to communicate the facts of the case to the Privy Council.

The Secretary reported that on counting up the papers written at the Examination of April 25th it was found that one paper was missing. The candidate nevertheless declared that she had handed in her paper and in the circumstances the Chair-

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