

Ladies' Committee either send it with the mother or have it cared for elsewhere.

THE CITY OF LONDON LYING-IN HOSPITAL.

Situated in one of the busiest thoroughfares of the city, the City of London Lying-in Hospital is well placed for helping poor married women in their hour of need. The Hospital was founded on March 30th, 1750, and the old prints which hang in the waiting-room show a very different condition of the neighbourhood to that which exists to-day. In 1907 it was re-built, and now the patients are housed in a very imposing, commodious, red brick building, whilst the old portion is used as the Nurses' Home, where the cubicle system has given place to the single bedroom for each nurse, with ample bath-room accommodation.

The Hospital can receive sixty-four patients, and the staff indoors and out consists of matron, six sisters, four staff nurses, all trained nurses as well as midwives, and about thirty pupils. The training for midwifery is three months, and monthly nursing two months.

The floors of the Hospital are of terrano, the basis of which is a thick layer of sawdust, and a thick acid mixture is floated over that; this hardens as it dries, and forms a smooth floor surface, which can be scrubbed or polished as taste dictates. In appearance it is like a thick cork carpet, being elastic to the tread, and deadening sound, both great advantages.

Being so recently rebuilt, of course everything is up-to-date. The nursery has a series of wee baby baths with knee action. The wards are large, lofty, bright and airy, each containing eight beds. There are two labour wards, for use alternately, the reserve one being used for serious operation cases.

The two private wards must be a great boon to women of the better class in case of a serious confinement. The out-patient department is a large, comfortable room, with tiled walls for easy cleaning, with consulting room, receiving and bath room close by, so that patients enter the Hospital quite ready for their clean beds.

During the past year there has been a change of matron and many of the nursing staff.

The pretty little chapel, which was dedicated about two years ago, and has been largely furnished by the gifts of friends, nurses and pupils, is used daily for prayers, read by the matron, with a weekly celebration and services by the Chaplain. The mothers are churched and babies christened here before leaving the Hospital, which is usually at the end of a fortnight. On looking through the Reports of this and other similar hospitals, one cannot help wondering why all the Committee of Management should be men. True they have also a Committee of Ladies, but usually their duties are confined to procuring funds, to provide clothes for, and to render personal service to the patients. All excellent objects, but women have no voice in the *management* of these institutions, which exist solely for the needs of women.

MARY BURR.

THE FIRST WOMAN PRACTITIONER OF MIDWIFERY, AND THE CARE OF INFANTS IN ATHENS 300 B.C.

Dr. Gilbert Totten McMaster, of New Haven, Connecticut, in a most interesting article in a recent issue of *American Medicine*, after declaring that "there is nothing new under the sun," states that this assertion is better appreciated when we study past methods of medicine, crude though they may appear from their admixture with religious fads.

Dr. McMaster says in part:—

The Greeks certainly placed medical and surgical knowledge on a scientific basis. They were a nation of real culture, even though they were rude and unpolished in their forms of expression. But in the care of newly born infants they were much like us of to-day; like us in the little things, and that is what counts after all. They were strikingly like us, in enforcing the laws governing the practice of midwifery, in Athens, 300 B.C. The old Athenian M.D.'s were jealous of their rights, just as we are to-day, for jealousy, I am sorry to admit, has never been a stranger to those of the "Physic Art." As the story goes, there was a law in Athens forbidding women, or slaves from practicing midwifery. Men only had this right.

Modesty, then as now, was common to women, regardless of the assertion of the great Pope some 1,700 odd years later. These women of Athens objected strongly to being exposed "*To the hands of men.*"

The first midwife in Athens was one Agnodice, a woman who was evidently backed by her sex—"*the Sex*"—for when she got into trouble her Athenian sisters stood by her.

Agnodice disguised herself as a man, and repaired to Herophilus, a famous physician and anatomist of Athens, 300 B.C., and began the study of midwifery. She became proficient in her chosen profession, and then disclosed herself to her sex.

Women have always talked among themselves. *Eustathius* out of *Euripides* says in these immortal lines:

ἐνδον γυναικῶν καὶ παρ' οἰκέταις λόγος

"Women should keep within doors, and then talk."

And they did talk—and settled the fate of some doctors, then as now. The result was that women about to be confined would have none but *Agnodice*. The demand for her was excessive; greatly to the discomfiture of her

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