

he was strongly opposed. He believed it to be against propriety.

The Chairman then asked Mrs. Lee whether she wished to move her resolution, and on Mrs. Lee's rising to speak he asked did she move it or not, he did not want another speech.

Mrs. Lee formally moved the resolution.

Miss Rosalind Paget, who seconded it, said that she noticed if a committee wished a resolution withdrawn they treated it as a vote of censure. She disclaimed this as the intention of the resolution before the meeting on her own behalf and that of the proposer.

The Rev. Charles Clark said that as Rector of a poor parish he was in favour of getting help for as many people as possible, but the committee felt that with so many people withdrawing subscriptions, if they could say they were only giving letters to the very poorest of the poor they would go to the public with a stronger case. He was not against the resolution unless it was going to be a hindrance to the Charity's getting funds.

The Chairman said they must deal with this matter emphatically, seriously. He believed as a lawyer that it ought not to be put before the meeting; he believed it to be *ultra vires* and unbecoming to the Charity.

In regard to the question of part payment mentioned in the resolution Major Killick said that the Charity had always paid the midwives 5s. on each letter; the letters were, in fact, vouchers for payment. If assured persons, in needy circumstances received the letter of the Charity its value to the midwife would be 5s. and she would then charge the patient an additional 7s. 6d., not the 12s. 6d. which she could claim under the Insurance Act. (N.B.—Neither the Insurance Act nor the regulations of the Commissioners contain any provision defining the midwife's fee, or for making it a charge on the maternity benefit, this is only done in the case of the medical practitioner.)

The Chairman said this would be getting behind the Act in a way which in his opinion was grossly illegal.

Mrs. Owens said that she was at present attending a case in which a free letter had been given by a Governor of the Maternity Charity; both husband and wife were insured persons and she had two certificates put before her as midwife to sign, entitling them conjointly to £3. Was it right that the midwife should only have a 5s. fee for a case of that kind?

Dr. Sunderland then reported what was being done by other lying-in charities, and said that, taking this into consideration, and the views of Mrs. Lee and Miss Paget as shown in their motion, which appeared to him to be based on sound common sense and to show a clear and intelligent grasp of the situation, he would like to offer an amendment, or would prefer Mrs. Lee and Miss Paget to withdraw their motion and accept it because it embodied their own views, and went a little further. It was:—

"That it be a recommendation to the General Committee that as soon as it is expedient they

shall consider (1) the suggestions of Mrs. Lee and Miss Rosalind Paget as embodied in the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on February 12th (2) the statement of Dr. Sunderland put forward at this meeting, and shall consider whether it is advisable to formulate a scheme for the attendance of insured women by the midwives and doctors of the Charity."

This was seconded by Mr. William Grayson.

Dr. Sunderland thought that the Charity should endeavour to get into line with other Lying-in Charities such as the City Road Lying-in Hospital which was charging 7s. 6d. for out-patients insured under the Act, and making arrangements with Approved Societies to hand over the money direct to the Secretary. It was important to keep up the number of patients, otherwise subscriptions would fall off. Also they must have material to carry on the teaching school, and he was informed by Major Killick that, apart from the tangible profit to the Charity the School did good by advertising it through the medium of the pupils who went forth speaking well of it, thus sometimes influencing subscriptions.

Major Killick being requested to state his views said that he regarded the question from the point of view of the Charity. Where husband and wife were both insured the question of one of the Charity's letters need not be considered. But there were many cases of undoubted hardship. He instanced one in which a woman, whose husband died in December, was confined in January. Although his card was fully paid up the Insurance Society would not pay the widow the maternity benefit which, if alive, he could have claimed. It had been the proud boast of the Charity that during the last 157 years its letters had been absolutely free, but during that long period it had not had to face the peculiar situation created by the National Insurance Act.

Mrs. Lee and Miss Paget then expressed their willingness to withdraw their resolution and to accept Dr. Sunderland's amendment. This was then put as the substantive motion and carried *nem con.*

MATERNITY BENEFIT IN IRELAND.

The Local Government Board (Ireland) has circularised the Boards of Guardians throughout the country emphasising the duty of Guardians and relieving officers to satisfy themselves that applicants cannot otherwise obtain aid before issuing tickets for free medical attendance and medicine. The Board points out that in a number of cases recipients of the maternity benefit under the Insurance Act will not be entitled to relief from the rates, but that on the other hand there may be many cases of exceptional poverty concerning which this view could not be maintained. The Board further suggests that Boards of Guardians should try to make arrangements in respect of the fees of the medical officer and midwife, bearing in mind that the Maternity Benefit of 30s. is intended to provide comforts in addition to skilled attendance.

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