

purpose. The Inspector admitted this and said that she had a great deal of trouble in this respect with the cases under this Charity, and there were numerous complaints from patients in consequence.

The Chairman held that the rules of the Royal Maternity Charity could not over-ride those of the Central Midwives Board, which laid down definite directions for the washing of the patient antiseptically. This he said could not be done by an incompetent person.

The case of Midwife Curtis included charges of ruptured perinæum and retained placenta, which were not notified in the prescribed manner. The case was defended.

The midwife's defence was a denial that the perinæum was torn, in spite of the evidence of a medical man to the contrary. The doctor whom she called in made no remark upon it when he examined the patient, and it was only upon the patient's removal to Whipps Cross Infirmary that anything was said on the subject.

The patient died and an inquest was held. It was stated that at this infirmary all midwives' cases of death from puerperal fever are the subject of an inquest.

In the case of Susannah Dory who stated that she was eighty-one and in receipt of the old age pension, and who seemed in a shaky condition, the charge was that owing to neglected retention of urine the patient had died from uræmic coma. She stated that she wished to have her name removed from the roll, and the Chairman sympathetically told her that in future she would be free from inspection.

The charge against Midwife Harper, who was defended, was that she had given a certificate of still birth, whereas in truth and in fact the child had been born alive. The mother of the child, who was living with a man not her husband was present and asserted that the child, a B B A, had twice cried. It died before the arrival of the midwife. There was much conflicting evidence, but the Chairman said they had come to the conclusion that the child had breathed and pointed out to the midwife that she was not entitled to say the child was still born if she were not present at the birth. In answer to an argument that the mother's evidence could not be taken as credible because she had falsely affirmed that this was her first child, Mr. Bertram held that the woman was entitled to withhold evidence of her former life. The Coroner's officer was in attendance.

The case of Midwife O'Sullivan was complicated, inasmuch as it dealt with a charge of leaving the patient before the expulsion of the placenta, the midwife being engaged with two patients in labour at the same time. Whilst engaged with her first patient the midwife was called to the second, for whom she was not engaged, and whom she delivered with twins. Before completing this case she was recalled by an urgent summons to her first patient. The second patient died of puerperal convulsions, though the medical

attendant would not say they were caused by the retained placenta.

In this case the midwife asked leave to resign, as she felt her competence was failing after forty-seven years of practice.

Sir Francis Champneys: She ought to have done her best to procure another midwife or doctor. And the other charges of negligence being proved, the midwife was struck off.

LECTURES ON INFANT CARE.

The fifth lecture in the Advanced Course on Infant Care was delivered at the Royal Society of Medicine on February 21st by Eardley Holland, Esq., M.D., F.R.C.P., on the subject of "The Effect of Venereal Disease on Pregnant Women and on Children."

The lecturer began by saying that it was rather difficult to give such a lecture to an audience which he understood was composed of health workers, mothers, and teachers, and whose knowledge of things medical must be less than elementary.

It might be said that it was not a subject to be laid before such an audience, but it must not be regarded in a falsely righteous, falsely moral, or falsely religious spirit. It was necessary to face the truth, bear the consequence, and find the remedy. He began with giving a brief survey of the effects of gonorrhœa, and pointed out the difference in its effect on the child between it and syphilis, in the former case the infant being infected at birth and not previously, and in the latter being infected as it lay in the uterus.

He concluded his lecture with comments on the amazing attitude of our legislature on this subject, and the causes that accounted for this attitude. He impressed upon his audience that except in the case of trained nurses or midwives there was little or nothing that they could do, and above all they must never attempt to diagnose this condition. But it was the duty of everyone to acquaint themselves with this subject, the effects of which were such a terrible curse to the nation.

MEMORIAL TO THE L.G.B.

The Women's Local Government Society has sent a memorial to the President of the Local Government Board, urging that pressure should be exerted on those local authorities which are least conscious of the need for the co-operation of women in maternity and infant welfare. The memorial says:—

"We venture to suggest that local authorities whose schemes have not as yet been approved by the Board might be advised by circular as to the provisions of some of the best local schemes and might at the same time be informed that no scheme will be approved by the Board which does not make full provision for the co-operation of women on committees and sub-committees for the care of mothers and young children."

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