

FEMALE MEDICAL SOCIETY.

THE second Annual Meeting of the subscribers and friends of this Society was held at the Hanover Square Rooms, on Monday, June 25, at three o'clock. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided, and there were also present upon the platform, Lord Houghton, Dr. William Farr (Somerset House), Dr. Edmunds, Dr. Murphy, Rev. Jabez Burns, D.D., Rev. W. D. Corken (of Bermondsey), Rev. W. W. Wastell, Henry Carre Tucker, Esq., C.B., George Burney, Esq., F. A. New, Esq., C. H. Elt, Esq., George Wilson, Esq., H. C. Stephens, Esq., &c. There was a large proportion of ladies in the assembly.

Letters of approval, regrets of absence, &c., had been received from William Ewart, Esq., M.P., H. Fawcett, Esq., M.P., Thomas Hughes, Esq., M.P., Sir W. C. Trevelyan, Bart. (enclosing £10), H. Bonham-Carter, Esq., Dr. G. D. Longstaff, Dr. Hardwicke, Dr. Searle, Winwood Reade, Esq., Dr. Croft, Arthur Trevelyan, Esq., J.P., the Rev. Newman Hall, Captain Charlton N. Tucker (enclosing donation of £21, in addition to subscription of £10 10s.), annual subscription of £10 10s. from Mrs. Stephens, one guinea from Mrs. Bayley, of Cambridge Square, one guinea from the Rev. — Rooke, of Brentford.

The following report was read :—

“Your Committee are able to report with considerable satisfaction upon the operations and progress of the Female Medical Society during the last year. More than 50,000 pamphlets, reports, and other papers, have been circulated, 30,000 of which have been sent by post; and a considerable impression has been produced upon the mind of the general public. The objects of the Society were but recently looked upon with little respect or sympathy, but a great and increasing change is now perceivable in this respect. The introductory address delivered by Dr. Edmunds at the commencement of the last session was reported at considerable length in the *Times* and the other daily papers, and it became the subject of leading articles in the *Star* and *Standard*, and of notice in various journals. In that address a long series of statistics was brought forward which showed conclusively that the mortality in childbirth among patients attended by even the present uneducated midwives, was less than half that which occurs among patients attended by medical gentlemen in general practice. This startling and to many persons almost incredible disparity in the mortality of mothers was explained by the light of the undoubted fact that ‘puerperal fever’ is often produced among lying-in patients by the accidental conveyance of infection from other contagious patients, and the corollary was put

prominently forward that midwifery should be separated from the general practice of medicine and surgery; and that, as a general rule, this branch of medicine should be left in the hands of properly educated women.

"These views were subsequently summarised in a letter from Dr. Edmunds which appeared in the *Times* of October 10, 1865, and produced a great impression on the public mind. They have since been reproduced in various forms by other journals, and to quote from a leading article which recently appeared in one of the most widely circulated organs of the general press 'have shown that it is not only better for the heart and mind but safer for the body that a woman should be attended in her hour of trial by an educated attendant of her own sex.' But it is only fair to remark that midwifery has devolved upon male general practitioners from the neglect of society in not having provided proper means of instruction for women,—the consequent untrustworthiness, degradation, and comparative extinction of English midwives as a class,—and the evolution from bare necessity of an anomalous social usage. And medical gentlemen, in stopping the gap thus produced, have doubtless done their best to perform with safety duties which are not practically compatible with scientific general practice, and for which the English language has no designation more euphuistic than 'man-midwifery.'

"The *Lancet** strenuously contended against and denied the accuracy of the startling 'statistics of mortality in childbirth' on which these conclusions were based; nevertheless, that deservedly great representative of the medical profession has since † handsomely inserted a leading article containing the following avowal:—

"'We have thought it right to state at once the result of further inquiries which we have made into the questions at issue between Dr. Edmunds and the *Lancet*; and we have ascertained that not only do Dr. Edmunds's arguments appear to have been put forward in good faith, but that *the facts and figures quoted were correctly stated, fairly compared, and drawn from the most authentic sources.* . . . We have no sympathy for the notion of making "lady physicians," but as to the Female Medical College we learn with satisfaction that its present lectures are designed to supplement the practical tuition given at our lying-in-hospitals, and to furnish ladies generally with an opportunity of acquiring the principles of hygiene and preventive medicine, dietetics, and the management of the sick room, and of the ailments peculiar to women and children. . . . The supply of well-educated midwives is undoubtedly less than the demand, and the more actively and successfully that object is pursued the greater will be the benefit to society.'

"Curiously enough, also, the *Medical Times* of last Saturday‡ contains an important leading article on midwives, which fully admits the necessity of the movement in which this Society is now engaged.

* October 14, 21, and 27; November 11, 18, and 25; and December 2, 1865.

† May 26, 1866. ‡ June 23, 1866.

“We quote the following :—

“The *Journal de la Société de Statistique de Paris*, for April, contains an article by Dr. Viallet, on “midwives in France and the necessity for opening a school of midwifery in each department,” which, very properly, directs attention to an important want in the medical service, particularly of country districts, by the deficiency of well instructed midwives. Unhappily, there can be no doubt whatever that few countries are as well off in that respect as they ought to be, and it is a matter for profound thankfulness that childbirth is not oftener attended with fatal results, considering the very unnatural conditions under which great numbers of mothers bring forth children. *In the rural districts of England the women of the poorer classes are, in a majority of instances, unable to obtain any assistance, at the time of their delivery, from the parish doctor, who is wanted in a hundred opposite ways at once; and all the necessary requirements are therefore left to be fulfilled by uneducated uninstructed nurses, whose heads are oftentimes full of crotchets very much in opposition to medical science. Taking a series of years, the deaths of mothers from childbirth, &c., have averaged five for every thousand children born alive.*”

“The progress of the Society’s rudimentary College has been thoroughly satisfactory; the number of students has increased to twenty; the lectureships have hitherto proved almost self-supporting; and the entries of students for the next session are likely to exceed in number those of either of the former years. The reports from Dr. Murphy, Dr. Edmunds, and the Lady Secretary as to the regularity of attendance, general intelligence, and good conduct of the students are so unexceptionable as to amount only to a repetition of those which were printed at length last year. But several of those students who intend to support themselves as accoucheuses have now completed the prescribed course of practical as well as theoretical and general scientific instruction, and, having already commenced practice, a considerable number of lady patients have been referred to their care from the office. No sort of casualty or misfortune has occurred in any case, and a number of letters are at hand for perusal which have since been received from these patients and which, without exception, convey the warmest expressions of thanks to the Society and of satisfaction with the attendance of the ladies. One of the students, to whom a clergyman’s wife was referred in this way, has since the attendance been offered a handsome *douceur* in order to induce her to remove into the lady’s neighbourhood. The addresses of accoucheuses who are now settling in various parts of London may be obtained on application at the office, and there is no doubt whatever that this profession will prove a comparatively easy and lucrative employment for intelligent, gentle-handed, and properly educated women, and one to which the public will extend a rapidly increasing patronage.

“At the last Annual Meeting the Society had just removed to 4, Fitzroy Square. This very large and desirable house was taken for the Society in Dr. Edmunds’ name; and at that time it had been

agreed that another Society should, for a few years, make residential use of the principal part of the premises. Unfortunately, however, the Committee, after having held the premises open for three months, were disappointed in regard to the performance of that agreement; and, as the Society's funds would not have justified undertaking the heavy responsibilities connected with the lease, your Committee gladly accepted an arrangement proposed by Dr. Edmunds, viz., that Dr. Edmunds should personally undertake the dilapidations and incoming expenses of the lease, and provide the Society with house-room at an annual rent of £40. Recently, Dr. Edmunds has intimated to the Committee that he is willing to turn the lease over again to the Society, on receipt of his outlay on the premises or at a valuation in the usual way; and at the next Annual Meeting your Committee expect to find the Society in a position to avail itself of this very considerate and obliging offer.

"To gentlemen connected with the general press this movement is under great obligations, and your Committee rely with confidence upon the continued co-operation of those whose duty it is to think for and guide the public.

"An inspection of the subscription list will show that the friends of the Society have largely increased during the past year. Your Committee regret, however, that they are still indebted to their kind treasurer, Mr. George Wilson, for a loan, and they trust that before the year is out this amount will be repaid. Your Committee are also most anxious to increase the interest and usefulness of the lectures by the foundation of a properly illustrative museum, and they would suggest that a 'museum fund' be formed, to which contributions may be specifically devoted. This object would require about £200, and it ought to be accomplished before next October.

"Your Committee would also earnestly solicit, not merely the pecuniary contributions of the friends of the Society, but also their personal influence and active co-operation in promoting its objects. Printed slips for enclosure in letters, and pamphlets for circulation, may be obtained gratuitously at the office.

"A balance-sheet of monies received and paid is annexed, but owing, unfortunately, to the absence from England of one of the auditors (Mr. Hemans) and the pressure of public business on the time of Sir John Thwaites the other auditor, the accounts have not been formally audited. It will therefore devolve upon the present meeting to direct their audit by a professional accountant, or to leave them to be formally checked by the auditors elected for the ensuing year.

"4 Fitzroy Square,
June, 1866."

The balance sheet to Midsummer, 1866, gave—subscriptions and donations, £365 7s.; students' fees, £101 6s. 6s.; balance due to treasurer, £167 7s. 11d.; total, £634 1s. 5d. Rent, lady secretary, office expenses, advertising, printing, postage, collector, and interest on loan, £529 1s. 5d.; lecturer's fees, £105; making a total of £634 1s. 5d.

(Signed) GEORGE WILSON,
Treasurer.

59 Threadneedle Street, June, 1866.

Mr. George Burney said: My lords, ladies, and gentlemen—It is with peculiar gratification that I rise to propose the adoption of this report. Several gentlemen in conjunction with myself have steadfastly nurtured and nourished this project for a number of years, through good and evil report, and have extreme satisfaction in coming here to-day, and hearing the various matters which have been stated. From a position poor indeed, we are getting to be not so poor, for we have actual results before us. Our project has reached actual fruits, and has done something in the way of filling up the void of the question of the present day—of female employment—and has provided a great want, and that is of qualified accoucheuses. The facts stated in this report are worthy of peculiar notice, and are very satisfactory to ourselves and the public. Not only has the society already provided a goodly number of well qualified lady-midwives for the service of the public, but those who have gone out to practice their new profession have rendered unqualified satisfaction. I am, perhaps, entitled only to a small portion of the gratification this fact affords. My coadjutor from the beginning, Mr. Wilson, has worked harder than I have, and has provided more money; and I must give the praise where it is due. Those who work in this vocation will undoubtedly receive a proper reward for their labour, as we do already by the presence of the honourable gentlemen on the platform. I hope persons of property and influence here, who doubtless have influence over other persons of property, will not forget that the institution is still in debt. It seems natural that these institutions should be in debt at first; but this is one which, when it succeeds, as we mean it eventually to succeed, will become self-supporting. For the present, we only want you to supply us with the means, and what we have done shall be nothing to what we will do in the future. As there are several gentlemen waiting to address the meeting, I beg to conclude by cordially proposing—

“That this report be received and adopted.”

Lord Houghton rose to second this resolution, and said: I have been asked to attend this meeting, because I am known to take an interest

in the question of the employment of women. I think the employment of women in useful occupations is one of the most important questions now being agitated. Education has now become more generally diffused, and education brings certain desires. Now, the first thing a good education brings with it is the desire for an useful and legitimate occupation ; and I think none of us can be better employed than in forwarding the interests of institutions for the employment of women. This institution will go far to dispel a prejudice—an unjust prejudice—against women making themselves useful in this branch of the medical profession. Of course, in all these things there will be a low element, which must be got over, of competition. That element of competition can only be got over by exertions on the part of those who compete ; and therefore, I would wish all women who come here to think that they are commencing a work which will require serious attention, great labour, and much patience. It will not do for anyone who joins this society to hope to attain their desires without being ready to give proper application. I believe there will be a great number of women who will obtain from this society useful employment. As a trustee of the "Nightingale Fund," I may say Miss Nightingale takes great interest in this society. As she has shown us a glorious example of what a woman can do by loving and courageous exertions—what difficulties she can surmount—what fame she can acquire (though that was not wanted by her), I say we have a good example before us. A woman need only act in that spirit, and she will reap the highest reward. I believe it will require only a very few examples of intelligent women, modestly, and at the same time courageously, pursuing a course which may at first expose them to ridicule, to show that the objects of this society will confer a great benefit, not only upon women, but upon society in general. I believe, too, you will find that every woman and individual engaged in this cause will help to dispel the prejudice upon the subject of the general employment of women. That prejudice has sprung up from a feeling which is most honourable—that the women of this country being the subjects of idolatrous regard and chivalrous feeling, there is a disinclination on the part of many men to see women employed in any unwomanly occupation. But the indulgence of mere prejudice on this point would retard the advances of civilization, and would be to follow the example of the Eastern world, and to shut our women up in harems, instead of making them the partners of our lives and our sympathetic companions in the business of our lives. I am glad to see the society has prospered and that it is now well founded, and I will do all I can to help it.

The motion was then formally put to the meeting, and carried.

The Rev. Jabez Burns said, he was exceedingly glad to see his lordship in the chair, likewise that the resolution, just carried had been

moved by gentlemen who had clearly spoken as to its importance and value. If he were inclined to skeletonise at all upon the second resolution, it would be something after this manner; but, first, he would read that resolution—

“That midwifery, as an important branch of medical practice, constitutes a lucrative profession, for which women ought to have proper means of instruction, and in which it is highly desirable that women should be employed.”

Now there was, in the first place, a necessity presented to their notice—a necessity for the employment of women—which was increasing every day. He found, in all voluntary societies for the promotion of benevolent objects, that women were the most able, intelligent, and indefatigable labourers, and that they acted more efficiently and were more reliable than men. There was a delicacy, a consistency, a warm-heartedness about a woman, which constituted her one of the most philanthropic creatures. The necessity mentioned in the resolution was twofold: first of all, for the employment of women; then, in a higher and more useful sphere than hitherto. He could not conceive any sphere more useful than the one the society contemplated, where woman, by her gentleness and Christian feelings, might be a ministering angel, and might be the means of doing good to body and mind. He believed women could readily be educated to make them capable for the work. Then, as to the morality of the question, let anybody read the papers which the society had circulated by thousands, and if they were not convinced by the arguments it would be from some remarkable obtuseness. Socially and morally there was an absolute necessity for a society of the kind. In that society they had the remedy required. There was a large amount of dormant lady energy and talent, and the operation of the society would develop and bring out that talent and energy. They had begun the educational machinery to make the material efficient, and they must now fully organise and perfect that machinery. He could not but compliment the committee on the style as well as the substance of the report. It was a model report. He had read that part with great satisfaction where it said that “no casualty or misfortune had occurred in any case” undertaken by the students. He congratulated the meeting upon the general progress the report presented, and hoped they would succeed still more as the institution became public. He had felt no difficulty in announcing the society to the people of his Church. If the Christian public were once informed of the importance of the society he believed they would respond. It would be necessary for old friends to stand by the society, and for new ones to be brought to it; and he urgently appealed to the meeting that they would solicit the aid of their connexions, and get the society out of debt, and then it would be out of danger. As a Christian minister he wished the society every success.

Mr. C. H. Elt, in seconding the resolution, said they were neither introducing a novelty nor opposing the medical profession; they were simply following up old paths. They only expected the practice of female medical practitioners to extend to women and children. The consort of George III. was never attended by an accoucheur, but by a midwife; and other examples could be given showing it was customary to employ midwives in olden times. They never thought now of putting the lives of their friends in the hands of male nurses, yet quite as much depended upon the nurse as the physician. If, therefore, women could be trained as nurses, there must be an abundance of them capable of filling that higher position which this society wished them to take, and it was imperative that women, as well as men, should be provided with proper instruction.

The resolution was then put and carried.

Dr. Murphy moved:—

“That no sufficient system of instruction in midwifery and the accessory branches of medical science has hitherto been accessible to women in England—that the present utterly unregulated state of female practitioners in midwifery is repulsive to educated women and degrading to this important vocation—that great public inconvenience, and frequent loss of life, now occurs for want of a properly qualified and sufficiently numerous class of midwives.”

He felt, speaking from the practical experience which he had acquired in lecturing to male students at University College for so many years, that the ladies of the college were equal and able to do anything in which a sound practical knowledge of midwifery was required, and it was a matter of great disappointment with him that there were no possible means for them to get legal evidence of their competency. The only examination before them was that of the Apothecaries' Company—an examination fit only for the general practitioner. The whole practice of midwifery was at one time in the hands of midwives. The medical profession kept completely away from it, and there were only a few exceptions who studied midwifery in order to assist the midwives. Those gentlemen were called man-midwives, showing the reproach which attached itself to their position. The City of London Hospital was established for the particular purpose of giving midwives a proper education, as anyone could see by looking at the inscription on its walls. But although the public had made various efforts for the education of midwives, they had always been baffled by the apathy and negligence of the profession; and although women could easily get certificates of attendance at a maternity charity, they could get none to prove the competency of their knowledge. The great Maternity Charity of London employed midwives, the Middlesex hospital the same. The public had lost all confidence in the midwife from the ignorance of those who practised, and their low and bad habits. Before

he had gained the experience he had with that society, he had been inclined to look upon a midwife in the character of Dickens's Mrs. Gamp, but he had been surprised to find that ladies of high intelligence and independence were anxious to attend the lectures of the society for the purpose of learning midwifery and the accessory branches of medicine. When such was the case, why should they not have an authorised medium, where they could undergo examination and obtain a suitable diploma? The College of Physicians was established for the purpose of examining and giving licenses to those who should practise medicine. The College of Surgeons was for those who wished to practise surgery; the Society of Apothecaries for those who desired to practise as an apothecary; but not a single step had been taken to establish a College for Midwifery, and, consequently, any lady desirous of practising midwifery could, under present circumstances, be met by the costermonger's wife on equal terms, and therefore he hoped the society would receive sufficient support to enable it to establish a College of Midwifery for women. The learned gentleman then referred to the many ways in which women are now employed, but thought the instruction that this society provided would have a more powerful and beneficial influence than any other.

Dr. William Farr, of the General Register Office, in seconding the resolution, said that he was glad to see the old English word "midwife" was not discarded by the society. The midwife was an Anglo-Saxon institution, descended from the remotest time. The dictionaries told us the word came from "meed" (reward), and "wife," and implied that the wife was to be paid for her work. That was a very proper thing; the labourer was worthy of her hire, and the practice of midwifery was a very legitimate means of gaining a livelihood. It must, however, be frankly admitted that midwifery remained in a very rude state so long as it continued exclusively in the hands of women—old women—whose superstitions were the laughing-stock of the wits and the bane of mothers. In the last century it was taken in hand by men, and by a series of such practitioners as William Hunter, Denman, Davies, Clarke, Ferguson, and a host of practitioners in the present day, including two gentlemen there present—Professor Murphy and Dr. Edmunds—it had become a science. As an art, midwifery was probably the most advanced and useful branch of medicine, and it was now quite in a state in which its practice might easily be taught to well-educated women. In childbirth two lives were at risk, the mother and the child; and sometimes both were lost, when by judicious art both might be saved. In eighteen years (1847-64) no less than 58,001 English women had died in childbirth—18,897 of metria or puerperal fever, and 39,104 of mishaps of various kinds. These figures did not include those other deaths in childbed which occur from non-puerperal causes, as consumption,

cancer, heart disease, pneumonia, small-pox, scarlet fever, &c., the deaths from such causes being registered under their own proper headings, and apart from the deaths of childbirth. Nothing struck him as more deplorable in nature than the death of a healthy young mother; when the husband was expecting a child, he lost a wife. He had a long list of the deaths of wives of miners, labourers, masons, ministers, and other classes in remote districts of Wales; and similar series of such deaths happened in other districts. He believed that a great majority of the women of the country, and many poor women in towns, got no skilled attendance in their lying-in. He should be glad to see well-instructed women taking up this old business of their sex—not in opposition to medical men, but in concert with them. The College required help at first; and it had deservedly obtained the support of some of the most eminent philanthropists, but women, when successful, would be able and willing to pay for their professional training. The plan of this institution appeared to be well suited to teach the art as well as the science of midwifery, and its indispensable subsidiaries, physiology and hygiene. Doubtless, therefore, when once fairly organised and started, it might be expected to prove self-supporting. He believed that the medical profession, however much they might oppose female doctors, would be glad to see educated young midwives take the place in every district of ignorant old women. There were more than a million children born every year in the United Kingdom, and on them the perpetuity of the English race depended. It was important that they should start well in the world, and vitally important that they should not lose their mothers. He hoped to see the day when less than five women die out of a thousand delivered of children.

The resolution was then carried.

The Rev. W. D. Corken proposed the third resolution—

“That the present meeting pledges itself to use all its influence to promote the objects of the Female Medical Society.”

He had no doubt that other clergymen, like the Rev. Dr. Burns, would take the opportunity of announcing the society to their congregations, and recommending its objects. He was sure the time was not far off when the subject would be brought before their warm-hearted and charitable Queen of England, who would give a charter to their institution. Before that meeting he had written notes to all the clergymen and doctors in his district in reference to the society, from many of whom he had received most sympathising replies. One of them said—“It is the best thing I ever heard of; put my name down for a guinea, and if it is any use to double it, I will give it with all my heart.” He hoped he had used the practical means recommended by the Rev. Dr. Burns. In conclusion, he begged to say that

he had the honour of being deputed by the ladies to present a written testimonial of thanks to the committee for their efforts in commencing this College, and to the two professors, Drs. Murphy and Edmunds, for their kind, patient, and efficient instruction.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Turner, and carried unanimously.

The rev. gentleman then read and presented the testimonial.

Dr. Murphy returned thanks in an appropriate speech, and went on to say that after his lectures he generally held an examination, and he desired to give the best two pupils a testimonial each—one to an amateur student, who wished her name not to be published, as having obtained the first prize; the other to Miss Fletcher, as having obtained the second. He hoped that by-and-by more substantial rewards would be forthcoming.

The testimonials having been presented,

Lord Shaftesbury said, he had for many years been engaged with a society which was trying to find employment for women. There were a great number of considerations to think of. Let them take the census returns of the last ten years and they would find that there were a greater number of women than men, by five or six hundred thousands. Such a fact showed that a large proportion of women were thrown upon their own resources. He thought they all ought to use their energies to obtain an honourable and proper livelihood, and some means ought to be devised for the employment of women in more suitable and more intelligent occupations, and he believed that by encouraging this society they would be doing very much to redress the evil that now existed. But 99 out of every 100 merely out-door occupations were abominations. Evils have crept up in our trading manufactories, but he was glad to find that with respect to our textile manufactories legislation had stepped in and done a great deal of good. The hours of labour for women in these manufactories were between six in the morning and six in the evening, whereas, previously, women were employed until twelve o'clock at night, and sometimes till two o'clock the following morning—thus working eighteen or nineteen hours a day. Everybody knew how women had succeeded in printing, law writing, and book-keeping, and those who had been to Paris, and seen the ladies who preside over the restaurants, must have observed how well they ordered and looked after the waiters, and pleased everyone by their gracious smiles. He was sure this proposition for the employment of women was one to which they might devote their best energies with the greatest success; and, speaking from his knowledge of the populations in large towns and villages, he could answer for the necessity of persons of this description being always at hand. A great deal of life would be spared. Sometimes it happened that a surgeon might have to ride several miles at night to his patient, and then might be wanted else-

where. He was glad that they kept the objects of the society within the bounds of prudence; that they did not go into the general practice of medicine and surgery. They could not expect the public mind at once to acquiesce with them; their progress would have to be progressive. If they went on in their present prudent and discreet way he had no doubt they would obtain the end they had in view, more so, perhaps, than they now dared to anticipate. He wished God-speed to all institutions providing employment for women, and especially to this one, because it was directed to a most generous and beneficial result.

Mr. George Burney moved—

“That this meeting hereby express their sympathy with Dr. Edmunds upon the personal annoyance and professional injury which has accrued to him in consequence of his exertions to forward the objects of the Female Medical Society, and they also tender their hearty thanks to him for the ability and success with which he has advocated the claims of these objects upon the general public.”

Dr. Edmunds had stood like a good soldier in fighting for the principles of the society. He had consequently incurred a great deal of vituperation, and he had also sustained a great deal of personal loss. The worthy doctor had been the target at which all thrusts had been made. He only reflected and expressed the opinion of the meeting when he said that for the courage, steadfastness, and singleness of purpose with which Dr. Edmunds had combated the mis-conceived ideas of the medical profession, he was entitled to their thanks. Few could have turned the *Lancet*, as he had done, at the point of arms, from an open enemy into a friend. That journal was misguided in the first instance, and he admired its manliness in confessing it.

Mr. F. A. New seconded the resolution, and said he knew of no one who could have acted with so much ability as Dr. Edmunds. He quite agreed with Dr. Farr that the institution must be self-supporting, but it had not only its students indoors to educate, but public opinion out of doors, and that had been done by Dr. Edmunds. He was sure Dr. Edmunds' perseverance would not flag until he saw the society occupying the pinnacle of fame which had been depicted for it that day, and which they all wished it to occupy. As to what Dr. Edmunds had lost, he hoped the future would repay the past, and that the worthy gentleman would be known by future generations as the prime mover of the Female Medical Society.

The resolution was carried with acclamation, and in acknowledging it Dr. Edmunds said that he looked to the future to make amends for any little inconvenience or annoyance he might have suffered in the past, and he felt perfect confidence in the ultimate success and permanency of the work in which they were now engaged. Lord Shaftesbury had told them how large a proportion of our women were thrown upon their

own resources, and the difficulty with which they found remunerative employment. Dr. Farr had told them that more than a million births take place every year in the United Kingdom, that he believed a great majority of the women of the country, and many poor women in towns, got no skilled attendance in their lying-in, and that on an average five mothers die for every thousand deliveries. Now the Royal Maternity Charity delivered more than 3,000 poor married women at their own homes in the worst parts of London during the year 1865, and 97 per cent. of these deliveries were completed under the unaided superintendence of the ordinary illiterate midwives. Yet among all these cases, only three mothers had died, and their deaths were, without exception, due to previously existing organic disease; therefore, these patients had been delivered with less than one-fifth of that mortality which they had just heard, on the highest possible authority, attended the average of English births. Now, in vindication of a great principle, in defence of those who could not yet help themselves, and in refutation of the falsehoods which had been set abroad as to an alleged fatality in the attendance of midwives, he (Dr. Edmunds) had investigated and published the "Statistics of the Mortality of Women in Child-birth," and the real facts of this matter had gone, not only to every newspaper reader in England, but into every country in the world. He had done this on purpose to demolish the falsehoods with which vested interests had striven to block properly educated women out from the practice of midwifery, as he well knew that, until these falsehoods were exposed, it would have been impossible for other arguments in favour of the objects of this society to have their weight. Some of the gentlemen, finding the tables turned, had adopted the old maxim—"a bad case, abuse the plaintiff's attorney"—but when he saw among the new advocates for this movement, men like Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Houghton, Dr. Farr, the Rev. Dr. Burns, and others, he was rather amused than otherwise at the resentment which, from other quarters, had come in place of argument. But he had never said anything to gratuitously disparage the noble profession to which he belonged, and he believed that all the best men in that profession would range themselves among the supporters of this movement when its objects were correctly understood. This movement would not only save multitudes of lives by the skilled female attendance which it would provide for lying-in women, but it would open up a new employment, unrivalled in scope, variety, or importance, by anything hitherto accessible to women. The attendance upon more than a million births a year—paid, say at an average of only one guinea each—would produce a revenue in comparison with which all other female employments dwindle into insignificance. Moreover, the practice of midwifery was, in its very nature, precisely fitted to supplement the present range of female vocations, and it could be

learnt more easily and more cheaply than dressmaking or any other one of the miserable callings in which educated women of average gifts now struggle against poverty or dependence. And it was not only the easiest, most lucrative, and most womanly section of medical practice, but it was the surest and easiest stepping-stone to such other branches of medicine as it might hereafter prove desirable for women to undertake.

Dr. Edmunds then presented two certificates of honour for the medical class—the first to the lady who received the first certificate for Dr. Murphy's class, and the second to Miss Amelia Ann Bauerman.

The honorary officers were then re-elected, and votes of thanks passed to the noble chairman and the other speakers for their kind attendance.

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