

Here let me quote Dr Ribemont-Dessaigne's exact words:

"In no case was there any bad after-effects. There was no sign of over-exertion; there was no reaction; there was no fatigue, even; there was none of that moral anguish—that moral breakdown which so often follows childbirth. They had suffered no physical torture—these women. Not in one of them did I discover depression or nervous excitement. Those who bore children in the evening fell quietly asleep, and slept until day—instead of passing the usual night of insomnia."

And what of the child?

How came he forth into that silent world?

No shrill cries welcomed him; but he lifted up his voice and announced his presence—howling. What he said was: "Hail, O silent, smiling woman! There's a new man in the world!" And cried a greeting to her—and to life. Not all of them. Here are the statistics. We are dealing, you will remember, with a hundred and fifteen children—new-born men and women. Of these, seventy-seven roared lustily, attesting their perfect health. That was well. This new medicine would be no thing for common universal use if it took away pain from the mother only to injure or weaken the child. Seventy-seven shouted lustily. Of the others, twenty-eight came dumb into the world; but the regularity of their heart-beats, the rosy tint, the tonicity of their muscles were ample evidence of sound health. In a little while some of them piped up shrilly, and then slept. Others took an immediate nap—naps not of long duration, a few seconds, two or three minutes at most—and then howled manfully. There were ten others. These ten new-born men and women preserved a stolid and disquieting silence. So the Professor held them up by the heels. Nine of them broke into yells of indignation. But one of them—the stolidest of the hundred and fifteen—looked at the world upside-down and made no outcry. Then the omniscient doctor turned the sleepy little head up and blew his breath into the gaping mouth—once, twice, thrice. A satisfying howl answered this last indignity. And the hundred and fifteenth babe screamed a salutation to his smiling mother, to Paris, to humanity, to the planet.

In certain cases, then, there is an effect upon the child. In certain cases he comes sleepily into the world. It does not occur in the majority of cases, and the somnolence lasts only a little while. A breath or two can blow it away. Parents, alarmed by the absence of respiration and of immediate cries, need have no real fear. The condition of quiet will not last long in their happy home.

A young mother with whom I had word had thought of something which had not occurred to me or to the men of science, it may be. She was looking at her new-born man with approbation.

"He did not suffer at all," she said, confidently and gladly.

It seemed a queer thing to say—only a mother would have thought of it—that she herself had not suffered seemed a negligible thing compared to the enormous fact that her man-child had been born without pain.

He was a rare historic man—one of the few men who have come painlessly into life. The next generation (it is curious to think of) will be men born (without suffering) of mothers who lay smiling in their narrow, white beds. Will it be a better world? Perhaps it will be a better world.

As succinctly as possible I shall state the case for the new medicament as it was presented by Dr. Albin Ribemont-Dessaigne and accepted by the French Academy of Medicine. The words are weighed and measured with scrupulous exactitude. They represent precisely the opinion of official French science.

1. It is possible to-day, without causing the slightest danger to the mother, to produce an analgesia sufficient to ensure an entirely painless childbirth.

2. This treatment causes neither check nor delay; indeed, it seems rather, in the great number of cases, to accelerate the process of childbirth.

3. The infants born are, in the proportion of one in three, voiceless—a condition which it is perfectly easy to put an end to, and which is, in fact, often advantageous.

4. The after-effects are favourably influenced.

5. It is a scientific certitude that hereafter women may bear children without pain.

So far science, speaking with the cold decisiveness of carefully acquired knowledge; and I have tried to look

at the subject as the scientist would like to have one look at it. But whether I will or no, my thought goes toward the women who are sleeping to-night in the homes of the world. Their sleep must be soft and deep. For the fear is gone—that awful fear of the new life, which was also the fear of death.

For the first time, since that harsh curse was laid upon Eve, love may look into the eyes of love unafraid—stripped of peril.

And you—husband, bridegroom, man—does it mean nothing to you? And you, young lover, looking down into the sweet, flushed face of the dear eventual mother of your children, does it mean nothing to you?

At least you feel less like a beast.

THE COUNTESS OF LIVERPOOL FUND.

To the People of New Zealand,—

I desire to take this opportunity of thanking all those who have so kindly responded to my appeal for socks for the New Zealand troops, as many of the parcels were sent anonymously, and could not be acknowledged. At the same time, I wish also to express my thanks to those committees who assisted me so much by packing these gifts ready for despatch. During the past month, 30,000 pairs of socks were sent off, while many other gifts were also enclosed. In addition, 500 parcels, each containing two pairs of socks and other useful articles were despatched to the Maori Contingent. I am now hoping that I may shortly be enabled to forward a further consignment of comforts to our troops at the front.

As the Mayoresses and Committees of Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, and the President and Committee of the Otago Patriotic Association have kindly undertaken to pack the gifts for the men in their respective areas, it would be a great advantage if other Committees would co-operate as much as possible with them, in order to facilitate the quick despatch of all the gifts contributed.

It is requested that all gifts for the Maori Contingents may be sent direct to Her Excellency the Countess of Liverpool, Government House, Wellington, marked "Maori Contingent."

ANNETTE LIVERPOOL.