

Forty Cases of Fever in the Puerperium.

WILLIAMS, WHITRIDGE J. "Forty cases of fever in the puerperium, with bacteriological examination of the uterine contents."—*Am. Jour. of Obstet.*, Sept. 1898.

Dr. Williams has adopted the rule of making a bacteriological examination of the uterine contents in every case where the temperature reaches 101° F., in hospital cases, and 102° F., in out-patient practice. After thoroughly cleansing the external genitals with soap and water, and a 1-1000 bichloride solution, the patient is placed in the Sims' position, and a Sims speculum inserted, the anterior lip of the cervix is seized with a bullet forceps, drawn down as far as possible and then the exterior of the cervix is wiped off with sterile cotton. A sterile glass tube 25 cm. long and $\frac{3}{4}$ millimeters in diameter with one end curved like a uterine sound, is then inserted and passed up to the fundus. A large syringe is attached to the free end of the tube and by suction a quantity of the lochia thus drawn up with it. Both ends of the tube are sealed after its withdrawal. Both cover glass and cultures are then made from the contents of the tube.

The cases reported were from the following sources: 22 from the obstetrical wards of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, eight from the out-patient department of the same hospital and 10 cases from consultation practice.

Streptococci were found in eight cases: staphylococci in three cases; colon bacilli in six cases; gonococci in two cases; anaërobic bacteria in four cases; unidentified aerobic bacteria in three cases; bacteria in cover glass, but cultures sterile in four cases; diphtheria bacilli in one case; typhoid bacilli in one case; gas bacilli (*Bacillus aerogenes capsulatus*) in one case; cover glass cultures, but blood sterile in 11 cases; cover glass and cultures sterile, but with malarial plasmodia in blood, in one case. Total of 44 cases.

The apparent discrepancy is due to mixed infection in several of the cases.

In the eight cases where streptococci were found, they were demonstrated in pure culture in six, while in two there was a mixed infection. None of these cases terminated fatally. Staphylococci were found, once alone and twice associated with other organisms.

Colon bacillus present in six cases, were found in pure culture in four and mixed in two. Two of these cases were subjects of eclampsia, in which the bowels were acted upon by croton oil so the source of infection was not far to seek.

The practical value of bacteriological examination was specially