

pletely born, can show "a sign of life"? For upon the answer to this question must depend our answer to the other:—Down to what age of intra-uterine life should stillborn children be registered? In some countries, as Switzerland, only such stillborn children as have completed the 6th month of intra-uterine life are registered. In Denmark, those attaining the 28th week must be registered. In their "Midwives Register" they are entered under one of two headings: 1st, those stillborn, *i. e.*, those dead in the womb; 2nd, those born alive but asphyxiated and not resuscitated—a most practical and important distinction. In that country, in the five years—1883 to 1887—33.6 per cent. of stillborn children were dead before birth, *i. e.*, exhibited signs of maceration. In the Netherlands, no legal definition is given.

But if complete delivery, coupled with the performance of some vital act by the child, be a sign of livebirth, then stillborn children under the 6th month must be registered. Barnes states that children which have completed the 4th month when born may live for some hours. Athill informs me he has seen a child under 4 months breathe after birth. No doubt children of this age die soon after birth. But for the purposes of registration, the question of the duration of life after birth need not be entered upon. The question of intra-uterine age might be ignored, if, for the purposes of registration, it were enacted, that all stillborn conceptions expelled from the womb, and having the outward form of a child, were to be registered. If it be held that only these stillborn children of 9, 8 or 7 months, viable children, be registered, we accept the barbarous admission that because a child has not attained the 7th month its life is not to be considered. My definition of a stillborn child would be—a child which, before, during, or after its birth, has not shown or does not on examination of the

body show any sign of life. For the purpose of registration I would define a "child" as a conception born after 4 months of pregnancy, the pregnancy being dated from the last day of the last period. Consequently, every stillborn child of 4 months and upwards would be registered. The present Registrars of Births and Deaths should register stillbirths, and those persons already mentioned as having the responsibility of notifying deaths should also be called upon to notify stillbirths.

No stillborn child should be interred until a certificate of registry from the registrar of deaths is presented. Penalties for neglecting to register should be provided. Some may suggest that both the birth and death should be registered—such being the custom in Switzerland. In Sweden the birth is registered. In Germany, France, Belgium, Denmark, and Greece the death is registered. I think we should register the death only and not the birth. It should be registered within 24 hours after delivery, 2 witnesses to the *fact of birth and death* being required by the registrar. In Berlin and Brussels, the office of the registrar is open on Sunday as well as on other days. Heavy penalties should be provided for the punishment of those who use any means which cause the child while being born to be stillborn. Against those who fail to use every means to induce the newly born child to breathe, penalties should be provided. While those who burn the bodies of newly born children, or dispose of them in any way other than burial in a burial ground, should be fined. For reasons already stated, the medical certificate of stillbirth should contain particulars of the sex, date of confinement, and address at which it took place; whether the confinement was natural or artificial; mode of presentation of the child; measures used at the confinement; name of medical practitioner pre-