

A CASE OF INFECTION IN UTERO WITH MALARIAL PARASITES.

IN a paper by Dr. Lindsay Peters, published in "The Johns Hopkins Bulletin" for June, 1902, a brief resume is given of the views at present held as to the possibility of infection in utero by the plasmodium malariae. As quoted by him, Laveran states that, "It has been proven in the affirmative beyond a doubt," while Marchiafava and Bignami call especial attention to the fact that, "no truly demonstrative case of congenital infection has been published since the discovery of the malarial parasite. Furthermore, after a series of autopsies in still born children of malarious women, they express the belief that the foetus enjoys immunity even against the anaemia and other secondary effects of the infection, although these effects may be well marked in the mother." Again, "Bastianelli, and in fact practically all of the eminent Italian observers agree on this subject with the opinions of Marchiafava and Bignami," and Thayer states that, "Since the discovery of the parasite no one has been able to bring positive evidence of the congenital presence of parasites in the blood of the new born child, or of the development of true malarial fever in the infant where the possibility of post-partum infection was out of the question." In the paper above referred to, Dr. Peters reports the case of an infant, 50 days old, in whose blood he found the parasite, and, while strongly convinced that the infection occurred in-utero, yet he admits the slight possibility of post-uterine infection.

The case I desire to report seems to me to indisputably prove that intra-uterine infection is a possibility, but I would premise by saying that true malarial fever is almost unknown in this city, nor can I find on enquiry among my confreres that any true malaria has been seen here during the last twenty years, except, of course, occasionally (and that rarely) when those who have been infected elsewhere have come here.