

self and changed all her clothes before going to the other patient, and that she went because it was an emergency and no other midwife was available. The Board deliberated, and on being recalled, Mrs. Bord was severely censured by the Chairman, who told her she had been very careless, that the fact that she held the certificate of the L.O.S. proved that she was not an ignorant woman. That she had been guilty of criminal negligence in going from one case to the other, that nothing is to be put in the balance against the lives of the mothers of families, and that the decision of the Board was that her certificate be cancelled.

The next case was that of Mrs. Price, who was charged with malpractice, negligence, or misconduct while in attendance on seven cases of labour, the charge of drunkenness being added in three of the cases. Mrs. Price was present, accompanied by counsel, Mr. Sumner, instructed by Mr. Douglas Brown. Mrs. Girdlestone, a midwife, who had been a pupil of Mrs. Price, appeared as witness against her. The charges went to show that Mrs. Price had been rough in her treatment—result ruptured perinæum—drunk on several occasions, guilty of using bad language, had not sent for the doctor when she should, also that she had on more than one occasion taken a hairpin out of her hair and used it as an instrument to rupture the membranes. In cross-examination counsel proved that one or two cases quoted by witness were only hearsay; this, of course, weakened the case. Mrs. Price denied the charge of drunkenness, though admitting that she was by no means a teetotaler; she admitted the occasional use of the hairpin, denied the use of bad language at her cases, though admitting that she was not at other times always particular in this matter.

After rather a lengthy summing up by counsel for the defence, the Board deliberated, and on the Press and defendant being recalled, the Chairman addressed Mrs. Price as follows:—The Board has deliberated, and by a very small majority has come to the conclusion that the case against you is not sufficiently proven; at the same time they consider you have been very careless; they advise you to study the rules, to give up unbecoming language; they consider from your own showing your habits with regard to stimulants are irregular, and strongly advise you to become a teetotaler at once. The Board return you your certificate, and hope your future conduct will be such that you are able to retain it.

The Board wish to express their indebtedness to Nurse Girdlestone for having come up and given her evidence so well.

The last case heard was that of M. M. Herbert, charged with (1) not declining to attend alone in a case a midwife is not allowed to deliver; (2) not expressing the placenta in the manner directed by the rules, but using traction on the cord, and further unauthorised measures; (3) of not sending for a registered medical practitioner on the occurrence of *post partum* hæmorrhage; (4) of undertaking the duty of laying out the dead contrary to the rules. She did not appear, nor was she represented. The Secretary therefore read the case for and against, and after deliberation the Board decided that she should be severely cautioned and told that a note would be placed against her name on the register in case of any further infringement of the rules. She was also told that no uncertified woman must in any case be called in as assistant by a certified midwife, as had been done by her.

The Infants' Health Society.

This Society (of which mention was made in our columns a few weeks ago) held another meeting, Lord Mansfield presiding, to further discuss the project for starting a milk depôt for the infants of poor parents in the Borough of St. Pancras.

We have heard much lately of municipal dairies and the State supply of milk, and are painfully familiar with the wrangles of ardent reformers, angry rate-payers, and jealous wholesale and retail milk-dealers. But into the proposed scheme, for which Dr. Ralph Vincent is one of those chiefly responsible, *sterilised* milk does not enter at all, and the depôt at St. Pancras is intended to demonstrate the principles laid down by the Society, principles which are effectively carried out at the Infants' Hospital, Hampstead. In connection with this hospital a farm has been established, where the cows are specially dieted, the milk refrigerated to a temperature of 40 deg. Fahr. directly it is drawn, in order to arrest the development of bacilli, and afterwards pasteurised and modified according to the doctor's prescriptions.

The promoters of the scheme do not for a moment propose to relieve the mothers of the district from the responsibility of nursing their babies whenever possible, unless the natural milk is proved to have an injurious effect upon the child. But unfortunately so many of our young women of the working classes are employed in factories, and under conditions which render the natural rearing of their children impossible, that a substituted food becomes in their case a necessity. To supply this demand numerous brands of tinned milk have been produced, with more or less serious results in the rate of infant mortality.

A distinctive feature in the proposed arrangements will be the appointment of an honorary physician, who will attend at the depôt to examine infants and to order a suitable milk; and a nurse, whose duties will be chiefly to visit at the homes, get in touch with the mothers, and try to inculcate the methods of right feeding, as well as to see that the doctor's orders are thoroughly carried out. A charge will be made for the milk varying, according to the age and requirements of the infant, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. a week.

A committee has been formed and a subscription list opened at the offices of the Infants' Health Society, 120, Victoria Street, S.W., but no steps will be taken towards carrying out the scheme until at least £200 has been promised. The Society hopes, in the future, to extend its exertions to other boroughs besides St. Pancras. As Mrs. Crawford, of the Marylebone Board of Guardians, pointed out, similar schemes are successfully working abroad, and attempts at a municipal supply of milk for infants have been made at Leith, Glasgow, and other towns of the north.

The rate of infantile mortality is becoming a serious national question, and all honour to individuals who, like the Mayor of Huddersfield, make some real effort to grapple with the subject. It certainly appeals more to our sense of congruity and the fitness of things that we should strive to preserve the life which accrues to us from our annual birthrate, rather than increase our families, as urged by the President of America, in order to maintain our numerical standard. With all our boasted civilisation and religion, neglect of this important subject can hardly fall far short of Western practices in China, where infanticide, especially of girls, is a common and recognised occurrence.

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