

Mrs. Gunter put in a statutory declaration in her own defence. The Board considered the charges against her proved, and directed her name to be struck off the Roll, and her certificate cancelled.

SARAH MORRIS.

The next case taken was that of Sarah Morris. The charges were that, in a case of protracted labour, Mrs. Morris did not decline to attend alone, that she was not scrupulously clean, and did not wear a dress of washable material, that she habitually neglected to wash her patients, and that she made excessively frequent examinations of patients, that she did not use or possess the necessary appliances and antiseptics, and that she did not keep a register of cases.

Mrs. Morris (12898) appeared before the Board, and was defended by her solicitor. The patient concerned also attended, and gave evidence. She said a friend, who was with her, asked Mrs. Morris if a doctor was needed, and she said no. Later she told Mrs. Morris that she would "have to have a doctor." Mrs. Morris again declined, saying it would "make such a tale." Eventually her husband and sons went for a doctor, who delivered her with instruments. She had had Mrs. Morris in two previous confinements, and had got on well. In reply to a question from the solicitor for the defence, the witness said she never spent more than a penny a week on stout, and then she shared it with other members of the family. Mrs. Morris did not wash her after her confinement. She wore a black dress at the time.

A statutory declaration by Dr. Young stated that the patient was in a grave condition when he saw her. It was a case of protracted labour with great pain, and loss of blood, and there was considerable difficulty in effecting delivery.

Dr. Rogers, Medical Officer of Health for Cambridge, said that the case was reported to him by Miss Wilson, the Inspector of Midwives. He received no official information from the midwife. Mrs. Morris's register was not kept case by case, and was filled in in a very imperfect manner.

The Inspector, Miss Wilson, stated that patients informed her that they were examined more than twice by Mrs. Morris. Her house was untidy, but clean. Her bag was not clean, the contents being dusty. She had antiseptics. She had never seen her in a washing dress.

Mrs. Morris produced from a parcel a bodice of washing material, a white apron, and a blue one. That was the dress she wore. She did not say it was a grand one, but it did well enough for a job like that. She challenged anyone to say she was not a clean woman. As to washing the patients after the confinement, she was not a paid nurse to wash them every day; that was a nurse's work. It was not for her to nurse them and do the confinement work as well. She washed her hands in carbolic water, and used a sponge or flannel to wash the patients with, if they had got it. In reply to Mr. Parker Young, she said that she did not understand the clinical thermometer. She was not a doctor; she would know that a

temperature of 98 degs. was "very high indeed."

The solicitor for the defence contended that his client sent for a doctor as soon as she reasonably thought one should be called in. In regard to her washing the patients, there was a conflict of evidence. In regard to the charge of too frequent examinations, he submitted that she had been a midwife for twenty years, and, if this were true, in a small village the doctors would have known, and the neighbours would have known. The clergy were always about, and their wives were always in and out, but no complaints were made of Mrs. Morris.

The Board having deliberated, the Chairman stated that it had decided not to cancel Mrs. Morris's certificate, but to caution her. He pointed out to her that two classes of midwives were dangerous—the wilfully negligent and the ill educated. They were not at all sure that she was not dangerous for the latter reason. They would ask the inspector to instruct her, and to report to the Board in three months' time. Other midwives whose cases were considered were Eliza Ashton, Mary Ann Ashton, Georgina March, who were struck off the Roll, and their certificates cancelled, and Elizabeth Forrest, Hannah Hall, Ellen Holmes, Elizabeth Langston, Sarah London, Georgina March, Mary Muffitt, Elizabeth Peat, Louisa Salmon, and Martha Schofield, who, being summoned to appear before the Board, stated that they did not intend to practice further, and asked to be removed from the Roll. Mrs. Forrest's reason for not wearing a washable dress was that it was in pawn. It was stated that she alleged that she drew the line at using the goose oil with which she lubricated her hands, and which she was in the habit of applying to children's sores, if it had been used in scarlet fever cases. She, however, did not believe in infection, and thought that "Providence sends these things." Another of the women, removed at her own request, was, the medical inspector said, regarded as the most dangerous woman in the county. She was known as an abortionist, but it could not be proved against her.

Correspondence.

MIDWIVES' DEFENCE LEAGUES.

To the Editor of "The Midwife."

DEAR MADAM,—I think, like many of your readers, that a Defence League is what the midwives should have in every town. I should like to call the attention of the St. Helen's midwives to this time for action, but I do not know how to begin; there are many older trained midwives than myself in the town. If this should meet the eye of any of them, I hope they will take the matter up at once, and, as common sense says, let us have a Defence League at once, and be loyal to it, and work for it. That is the wish of

Yours truly,

ANN TEMPLE,

A Trained Midwife.

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