

FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH.

The first case taken was that of Mrs. E. Townsend (6731), who appeared personally to answer to various charges. The Board having deliberated, Mrs. Townsend was informed by the Chairman that it was quite plain she had broken the rules, but the Board had taken a merciful view of the case and decided to censure her and to ask for a report in three months' time, as it was evident she was ill and over-worked.

Mrs. Eliza Woolley (21), was also severely censured for not visiting a patient until the fifth day after her confinement. The patient ultimately died.

Mrs. Locker (17495), appeared personally, and was also defended by a member of the Town Council of Warrington, to answer to charges as to her treatment of a patient who developed puerperal fever, and other offences against the rules. For the defence it was urged by the Town Councillor that he was surprised to hear Mrs. Locker was in trouble, and went to ask her about it, when she explained that it was "only a case of puerperal fever." On the Chairman explaining the gravity of this disease Mrs. Locker's defender proceeded to explain that he meant it was "not infectious like typhoid." Mrs. Locker told the Board that she did not take the patient's temperature because she was "going on so nicely." When she did take it it was 93 degs. Mrs. Locker was censured, and a report of her work asked for in three months' time.

Mrs. Isabella Dowdy (3177) was severely censured, and a report asked for in three months time, and the following midwives were struck off the Roll and their certificates cancelled:—Mrs. Sarah Lee (8983), Elizabeth Neal (6614), Jane B. Rimmer (2826), Ellen Thomas (5253), Jane Ward (16516), Maria Westwood (13767), Harriet Williams (19448), and Rose Williams (9809).

One of the midwives who asked to be allowed to retire, but was struck off the Roll, as she had been previously suspended, wrote that she did not intend to act as a midwife in future, but was "going to follow the doctor as a nurse."

In the case of another, the doctor who subsequently operated on a patient attended by her said he removed probably two-thirds of the placenta. The midwife was quite unable to recognise plain symptoms. The midwife wrote to the Board that the "doctor operated on the patient in a manner on which I offer no remarks." She desired to make no allegations but to "ask the Board to inquire into the doctor's character."

The defence of another midwife was that the inspector would have to prove her statements, as there had been some false swearing. She informed the Board that the inspector said she used her nail-brush for other purposes, and the doctor complained it had never been used at all. She invited the Board to explain how both of these statements could be true.

In the course of the proceedings the Chairman stated that up to the end of February last 118 midwives had been struck off the Roll. Of these, 115 were bonâ-fides, and three held certificates.

## A Midwife's Error.

At Brighton Police Court on the 24th ult., a decision was given in the adjourned case of Esther Holmes, a nurse, who, as reported in the BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING at the time, had been summoned for representing herself, and practising, as a midwife, when she was not registered by the Central Midwives' Board. Her defence was that she was a diplomatist of the London Obstetrical Society, that she had sent this certificate to the Central Midwives' Board, and had applied for registration within the period of the passing of the Act within which such persons were entitled to claim registration, and that all along she had thought and considered that she was registered. The case had been adjourned in order to ascertain what the Central Midwives' Board had to say to this, and Mr. George William Duncan, Secretary of that body, now appeared and stated that the defendant's application for registration was dated March 31st, 1905, and was received in London, as shown by the post mark on April 1st. The application for registration was unaccompanied by the necessary forms, viz., the application form and the certificate of identity. It was also, what, said the witness, was perhaps more important still, unaccompanied by the necessary fee, which was ten shillings. He accordingly sent her diplomas back with a letter telling her what to do, but he heard no more of her. Strictly speaking, the application was received a day too late, but if defendant had complied with the requirements of the Board within a reasonable time the application would have been granted. Defendant said she never received such a letter as that spoken of. She added that when she showed the circular from the Central Midwives' Board to a gentleman she knew he advised her that it did not refer to such persons as her. Mr. Jeffreys, Deputy Town Clerk, said as his was the first case that had been taken under the Act in Brighton the Corporation did not wish to press for a penalty. They merely wished it to be understood that uncertificated women must not call themselves "midwives." They would be satisfied if defendant would give an undertaking not to offend in that way again, and would consent to pay half the costs. Defendant expressed her readiness to give the undertaking, and the summons was dismissed on the payment of £1, towards the costs.

The article on "Antiseptic Midwifery for the District Nurse," published in our issue last week, should have been attributed to Miss S. C. McCall Knipe, who received honourable mention for it in connection with our recent prize competition.

The eight lectures recently delivered by Dr. Ralph Vincent at the Infants' Hospital, S.W., which have been appearing in this Journal, will be published in book form, in about a month's time, by Messrs. Ballière, Tindall, and Cox, under the title of "Lectures on Babies," price 2s. 6d. net.

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