

The Midwife.

Midwives' Certificates.

The *British Medical Journal* reports that the English Branch Council of the General Medical Council, the authority constituted under the Midwives' Act, has dealt with a recommendation of the Midwives' Board that some distinction be made in the register of midwives between those entered upon it in virtue of having pursued their calling prior to the passing of the Act and those who entered in virtue of having passed the examination, the distinction being in the form of the addition of the words "by examination." This was agreed to, some precedent having been afforded by the procedure under the Medical Act of 1858, and under the Dentists' Act, the *Registers* in these cases enabling it to be seen whether a person was registered under the term of grace or as holding a recognised qualification.

But the point at issue in this matter was really whether midwives who possess the certificate of a maternity or other hospital should be allowed to notify it on their door-plates and professional cards. Thus "Mary Smith, certified midwife. Cert. St. John's House." The rules of the Central Midwives' Board state that the description of a Certified Midwife is "Certified Midwife," and she must not use such letters as C.M.B., L.O.S., or any other description of the qualification." This has recently been held by the Central Midwives' Board to mean that midwives must not announce the hospital at which they were trained on their name plates. Midwives, on the other hand, believe that "the qualification" which they may only describe in the terms prescribed by the Midwives' Board, is the one by which they gained admission to the Roll, *i.e.*, the certificate awarded them by the Board, and they think that they are entitled to let the public know at which hospital they were trained provided they obey the Board's direction not to use letters and abbreviations which may be mistaken for a medical qualification. It is to meet midwives half way that the Board proposes that they shall be allowed to add the words "by examination." The women who were placed on the Roll at the passing of the Act by virtue of having been working as midwives for at least twelve months previously are already distinguished on the Roll by the words "in practice."

St. Pancras School for Mothers

One of the saddest things with which midwives are confronted in the course of their work is the mortality and ill health amongst infants—infants who are born healthy, and who, in the course of the first twelve months of their existence, dwindle and die, or go to swell the number of the "marasmus babies" in our hospital wards, or develop rickets, that disease which so seriously handicaps them in after life, and which is known abroad as "the English disease." All efforts for the reduction of infantile mortality and sickness must, therefore, have the warm interest of midwives, and in this category is to be found the St. Pancras Scheme, instituted just a year ago, for the benefit of both mothers and infants, the first report of which has just been issued.

At the projection of the scheme at a representative meeting held at 11, Endsleigh Gardens, N.W., in May, 1907, Mrs. W. E. Gordon read a paper on the Chelsea dinners for Nursing Mothers, and the School for Mothers at Ghent was described by the Hon. Mrs. Bertrand Russell. The result was that it was decided to organise a scheme incorporating both of these features for the benefit of mothers and infants of the Somers Town District of East St. Pancras. Suitable premises were taken at 6 and 7, Chalton Street, Euston Road, N.W., consisting of a large well-lighted ground floor and basement, and "Mothers and Babies' Welcome" was painted across the building.

The work of the Welcome is divided into the following departments. (1) Infants' Consultation. (2) Dinners for Mothers. (3) Classes. (4) Provident Maternity Club. (5) Home Visiting. (6) Fathers' Evening Conferences.

The Hon. Medical Officer attends twice a week to examine babies and their mothers, and to give advice on their feeding, clothing, and general management; the babies are weighed periodically, and careful record is kept of their condition. Cases of illness are referred to doctors, dispensaries, or hospitals.

The dinners for underfed nursing and expectant mothers, provided with the special design of promoting natural feeding of infants, are a great feature of the work.

For the sum of 1½d. a day a mother can obtain a good meal each day for from two to three months before the birth of her child, and

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