

## The Ending of Midwives.

BY MISS MARGARET BREAY,

Formerly Superintendent of St. John's Maternity Home,  
Battersea. L. O. S. Diplômée.

(Continued from page 54.)

11. PENALTY FOR OBTAINING A LICENCE BY FALSE REPRESENTATION, OR ACTING WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE.—(a) Any woman who procures or attempts to procure a licence by making or producing, or causing to be made or produced, any false or fraudulent declaration, certificate, or representation, either in writing or otherwise, and any person assisting her therein, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, and shall on conviction thereof be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds, or to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding two months.

(b) Any woman who, after the first day of January one thousand nine hundred, shall hold herself out as a practising midwife or shall practise in any administrative county without having previously obtained from the local supervising authority a certificate enabling her to practise therein shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, and shall, on conviction thereof, be liable to a fine not exceeding two pounds or to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding one month.

(c) But a midwife shall not be guilty of a misdemeanour under this section by attending, on an emergency, a woman in childbirth in a county other than that for which she holds a certificate, provided she has within a reasonable time given notice of having so acted to the local supervising authority of that county.

It will be seen from the foregoing regulations that it is proposed to strictly enforce the penal regulations with respect to midwives, and that no midwife must even attend a woman in childbirth in an emergency, in a county outside that in which she holds a licence, without giving notice to the local supervising authority. Any midwife who performs this humane act, and omits to give such notice is subject to a fine of £5, and to imprisonment with hard labour.

12. PENALTY FOR WILFUL FALSIFICATION OF THE ROLL.—Any person appointed to keep the roll of midwives, wilfully making or causing to be made any falsification in any matter relating to the roll of midwives shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, and shall be liable to a fine not exceeding ten pounds, or to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding three months.

13. PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES.—Any offences under this Act punishable on summary conviction may be prosecuted, and any fine under this Act recoverable on summary conviction may be recovered in manner provided by the Summary Jurisdiction Acts.

The expenses of any prosecution shall be defrayed out of the funds of the county in which the prosecution takes place.

14. APPEAL.—(1) An appeal shall be allowed to the Privy Council should any disagreement arise between the General Medical Council and the Midwives Board respecting the carrying out of the provisions of the Act, or of any of them.

It will be noted that the Midwives Board has the right of appeal to the Privy Council should any disagreement occur between it and the General Medical Council; but, as the order of procedure in business with the Privy Council necessitates the employment of Counsel, it is not likely that the Midwives Board will often avail itself of this right.

(2) Where any woman deems herself aggrieved by any order, conviction, judgment, or determination of or by any court of summary jurisdiction, such woman may appeal therefrom to the court of quarter sessions.

15. ACT NOT TO APPLY TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.—Nothing in this Act respecting midwives shall apply to legally-qualified medical practitioners.

16. EXTENT OF ACT.—This Act shall not extend to Scotland or Ireland.

[Copies of the Draft Bill, price 2d. post free, can be obtained from Messrs. J. F. Howell and Co., 87, Malden Road, Kentish Town, London, N.W.]

It is important that Midwives should carefully study the provisions of this Bill, and decide for themselves whether or not they are content to subscribe to, and be bound, by them. If not they should, without loss of time, publicly express their dissatisfaction with them, otherwise they may awake to find themselves bound hand and foot. Will women never learn the lesson taught them by men, that they must co-operate for their own protection? When will the day come when sinking all petty jealousies, and unworthy self-interest, they make common cause to protect the interests which they have at stake? When it does come they will then be able to take the same self-respecting position as men before the law.

## Womanhood Honoured.

THE United States Senate has adopted a resolution expressing its thanks for the service rendered by Miss Clara Barton, President of the Red Cross Society, during the war. This gives her the right of admission to the floor of the Senate during its sessions. Miss Barton is the first woman to whom the privilege has ever been conceded, and her long life spent in the public service of her country justly entitles her to the privilege.

A NUN attached to the Naval Hospital at Cherbourg has been decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honour by the Minister of Marine. She is the 68th woman who has received this honour since the order was instituted in 1802, and the list shows how female valour has been recognized as well as charity and devotion, and talent also has been rewarded.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)