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The Rules of the Central Midwives Board.

DEPUTATION TO THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

A Deputation from the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives and others was received by the Lord President of the Council at the Privy Council Office on Friday last. Its purpose was "to direct attention to the importance of maintaining at its present high standard a uniform and trustworthy training of midwives in this country."

The Deputation was introduced by Sir Dyce Duckworth, the other speakers being Dr. C. J. Cullingworth, representing the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives; Dr. Francis Freemantle, Medical Officer of Health for Hertfordshire; Miss Brodie Hall, Poor Law Guardian, Eastbourne; and Miss Alexander, Poor Law Guardian, Kensington. Miss E. S. Haldane LL.D., represented the Workhouse Nursing Association. Two midwives were amongst the other ladies and gentlemen who took part in the Deputation, Miss Alice Gregory, representing the Midwives' Institute, and Miss Lucy Robinson.

SIR DYCE DUCKWORTH.

Sir Dyce Duckworth, on introducing the Deputation, said that he represented the Queen's Jubilee Institute, on which he sat by the Queen's appointment as the representative of the Royal College of Physicians, and the Chairman of the Midwives' Committee of the Institute. He said further, "We are moved to address your Lordship by reason of reports which have reached us to the effect that the Local Government Board has it in contemplation to organise a system of training for midwives of its own, one which, so far as we can foresee, is not likely to prove adequate or satisfactory, and not in accordance with the requirements of the Central Midwives' Board. We are naturally apprehensive of great disturbance arising in this country from a dual standard of training, which would press hardly on those who have received that demanded by the Board already empowered to carry out this work; and would not in the case of a less satisfactory training secure the confidence of other bodies and the public, who regard the Central Midwives' Board as the only one authorised by the State to lay down the essential requirements in this matter."

The speaker said further that the College of Physicians would unhesitatingly defer to the

opinions of a body of experts such as the Central Midwives' Board, rather than to those of the Local Government Board. The Queen's Jubilee Nursing Institute could not recognise any midwives who had had an inferior training to that required by the Central Midwives' Board.

He also said that her Royal Highness Princess Christian, President of the Workhouse Nursing Association, fully endorsed this view, and regarded the dual system of training as entirely impossible.

DR. CULLINGWORTH.

Speaking for the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives, Dr. C. J. Cullingworth said: The practical effect of the proposed exemptions would be that all midwives who are being trained or who are holding appointments under the Poor Law Authorities, would be, to a certain extent, removed from the jurisdiction of the Central Midwives' Board. The Central Midwives' Board, for instance, whilst still retaining in its own hands the duty of *examining* all candidates for admission to the Midwives' Roll, would not any longer have complete control over the details of their education and practical training, which the Association regard as being of even greater importance than the examination itself.

The Association desires, in the first place, to call your Lordship's attention to the provisions of the Midwives' Act. That Act places the entire responsibility for the training and certification of the midwives of this country, without exception, upon a specially constituted Board, largely consisting of experts, that is, upon the Central Midwives' Board. The Association is advised that, whatever rules and bye-laws it may make to the contrary, the Central Midwives' Board would continue to be legally responsible for the education and training of the candidates admitted to its examinations, and for the regulation of their future practice.

DR. FRANCIS FREEMANTLE.

Dr. Freemantle, Medical Officer of Health for Hertfordshire, endorsed the objections of the previous speakers to the amendments by the Privy Council to the rules of the Central Midwives' Board, now under consideration.

Pupil midwives in Poor Law institutions, especially in the larger towns, are, he said, hoping to earn their certificates from the Central Midwives' Board and to settle down in private practice. They will then come under the direct control of the Local Authorities and their officers, who are, therefore, concerned in the efficiency of their

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)