

First comes to my mind one who without ever a thought of self, toiled unceasingly for the sick poor. All her gifts, and they were many, were at their service. A nurse of the very first rank; behind her the traditions of a family which has helped to make our country great, of gentle and winning personality, in her heart was the love of her kind, and she radiated a personal goodness as unobtrusive as it was intense, so that one could only admire her "afar off." I have never met anyone with a higher ideal of work, or whose practice more nearly approached her ideals. No trouble was too great for her, and extra work a pleasure, if, day or night, she could do anything for the benefit or comfort of the patients entrusted to her care. It was perhaps inevitable that the foreign mission field should claim her, and that when at length the work she loved passed from the hands worn out in the service of others, she was laid to rest with every mark of respect and affection which the European community and her devoted and heartbroken native friends could show. That is one midwife I have known.

Another is, I am glad to say, at present holding a position of responsibility affording scope for her many gifts. When I knew her as a district midwife it was a pleasure to watch her at work, so resourceful, competent, and methodical was she, so wise in her management of any "difficult" patients, so straight and courageous in her dealings with all with whom she came in contact. And if evidence of unselfishness is wanting, one instance, which must appeal to all midwives, will suffice. At that time she was working on the staff of a Home of which I was Superintendent, and more than once after a hard day's work on the district, I have known her come and offer to be called up to do duty for a tired colleague, by no means civil to her. What that meant to a midwife never certain of a night's rest others who know the weariness of the life can estimate.

And these are but types of many who, up and down through the country, are, with the greatest devotion giving their skilled services night as well as day to the mothers and infants of this country. And their reward? Well, the less said about it the better. The "prizes" will never induce women to take up midwifery. To their honour be it said they do not measure the work given against its reward in cash. But that is no reason why those responsible for providing their salaries should not blush with shame when they think of their own easy lives, and of the financial value they place on such skill and devotion. M. B.

The Central Midwives' Board.

A special meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at the Offices of the Board, Caxton House, Westminster, S.W., on Thursday, November 12th. Dr. Champneys presided.

The report of the Penal Cases Committee of October 22nd was received.

On the recommendation of the Committee it was agreed to refuse the applications of three midwives, whose names had been removed, for restoration to the Roll.

The reports of various Local Supervising Authorities as to the conduct of midwives previously censured or cautioned for offences against the rules were received, and as they were of a generally favourable character, in nine instances it was decided to take no further action in regard to these cases. In another case the report of the Local Supervising Authority having been considered, it was decided that the Local Supervising Authority should be asked to report further on the conduct and methods of practice of this midwife in three months' time.

The Board, on the recommendation of the Committee, decided to cite 35 midwives to appear before it at a Penal Session to be held on December 3rd, the Session to begin at 9 a.m.

The following letter from the Clerk of the Council, in reply to a communication from the Board, was then considered:—

"Referring to your letter giving the particulars of the case in which a medical practitioner issued a false certificate to a woman, I am directed to state for your information that this appears to be a case in which it is the duty of the Central Midwives' Board to bring the facts under the notice of the Public Prosecutor."

After some discussion a resolution was moved by Mr. Fordham, seconded by Dr. Stanley Atkinson, and carried, that the facts of the case be laid before the Public Prosecutor.

The Board meeting then terminated, and the business of the Penal Cases Committee was resumed.

THE INSANITY OF THE PUERPERAL PERIOD.

In view of the fact that the degree of responsibility of a recently delivered mother for the destruction of her child is just now receiving considerable attention, it is instructive to note that Dr. Galabin, in his *Manual on Midwifery*, states that insanity of the puerperal period is the most common form of puerperal insanity.

"Besides the general causes, the chief causes operating in the production of this variety are the effect upon the nervous system produced by the shock of labour, and the subsequent exhaustion. Some mental impression, such as grief at the loss of a child, is present in a large proportion of cases, the shame resulting from seduction has an important influence.

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