

The Midwife.

Midwives Act Committee.

The fifth meeting of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Lord President of the Council to consider the working of the Midwives Act was held on Wednesday, 24th February, at the Privy Council Office, Mr. Almeric FitzRoy presiding.

The following witnesses attended and gave evidence:—Dr. Hugh Woods, on behalf of the London and Counties Medical Protection Society; Miss Amy Hughes, on behalf of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses; and Sir William J. Sinclair, M.D.

ACTION OF BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Edmund Owen, F.R.C.S., Chairman of the Council British Medical Association, on behalf of that body recently submitted to the Lord President of the Council that it is desirable that representatives of general medical practitioners and midwives should be added to the Departmental Committee of the Privy Council now sitting to consider the working of the Midwives Act. Mr. Owen stated that it would be of material assistance to the Committee to have not only the evidence of medical and other bodies, but also the presence at its deliberations of general medical practitioners and midwives, who possess practical experience of the difficulties calling for attention. The Lord President has replied, through Mr. A. W. FitzRoy, that in his opinion the Committee as constituted is sufficiently large for the practical objects of the inquiry, which would not be served by the addition to its members of representatives of special interests, whose views will be properly considered in any evidence that may be given.

The Central Midwives' Board.

A meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, S.W., on Thursday, February 25th, Dr. F. H. Champneys presiding.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Letters were read from the Registrar of the Royal College of Physicians, reporting that Dr. F. H. Champneys had been appointed to represent the College on the Board for one year from April 1st next, and a similar letter from the Clerk of the Society of Apothecaries in reference to Mr. E. Parker Young.

Also a letter from the Clerk of the Council, informing the Board that the Lord President had been pleased to appoint the Honble. Mrs. Charles Egerton a member of the Board in the place of Miss Jane Wilson, and a letter from Miss Wilson thanking the Board for its resolution of January 21st with regard to her retirement.

REPORT OF PENAL CASES COMMITTEE.

The Committee reported a letter from Dr.

Mostyn, Medical Officer for South Shields, reporting that Dorothy Hudson, No. 12776, had been convicted and fined 10s. and costs for stealing and receiving a number of children's frocks. It was agreed to cite the midwife to appear before the Board. Charges against other midwives were reported, and a course of action decided upon. It was agreed to cite seventeen midwives to appear before the Board.

It was further agreed that a medical man who had given a certificate of good character to a midwife after she had been convicted for drunkenness and other offences should be asked for an explanation.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

On the recommendation of the Standing Committee, Dr. Frederick Edge, F.R.C.S., and Dr. William Gough, F.R.C.S., were approved as teachers, and Dr. George Raymond approved *pro hac vice*.

The following midwives were approved for the purpose of signing Forms III. and IV.:—Margaret A. Dolling, No. 22629, Henrietta Alderson Hird, No. 14285, and Martina Taylor, No. 2053.

The Committee reported a letter from the Clerk of the Council, stating that, in the Lord President's opinion, the practical objects of the Midwives Act Committee would not be served by the addition to its members of representatives of special interests.

Mr. Parker Young moved that "the Board regret that the Lord President of the Council could not accede to the recommendation of the Central Midwives' Board."

This was seconded by Dr. Stanley Atkinson, who observed that the decision of the Lord President was rather curious after the addition to the Midwives Act Committee of a representative of the Medical Officers of Health.

The resolution was carried *nem. con.*, as the Chairman did not vote.

A letter was read from Mrs. C. E. Hobhouse, convener of a Conference of Voluntary Nursing Associations, held in London in July, 1908, requesting the Board to consider the following resolution, unanimously passed by the Conference.

"That all Registrars of Births should add in a new column the name, status, and address of the person who delivered the child."

The Chairman said the suggestion was an important one, and it was agreed that it be approved and that the Registrar-General be asked to issue the necessary instructions.

We should say the resolution would have been more accurately worded if it had asked for these particulars in reference to the person who delivered the mother, not the child.

A letter was reported from the solicitor of a midwife, inquiring whether it would be deemed misconduct for a midwife to keep a shop for the sale of patent medicines. It was agreed to inform him that such a procedure was highly undesirable.

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