

The Nursing and Midwifery Conference and Exhibition.

The following are the arrangements so far as have been settled for the opening day, Wednesday, April 27th:—

Her Royal Highness Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein will open the Conference at 12.30, and District Nursing and Midwifery questions will be dealt with on this day, when the following papers will be read—(Chairman, Dr. Champneys):—

“The Combined Duties of District Nurses and Midwives,” Miss Macqueen (Nursing Superintendent for England, Q.V.J.I.). Discussion opened by the Hon. Lady Acland.

“The Prevention of Infantile Blindness,” A. Nimmo Walker, Esq., M.B. Discussion opened by Miss Blomfield, Matron of Queen Charlotte’s Hospital.

“The Report of the Departmental Committee on the Midwives’ Act,” Francis E. Fremantle, Esq., F.R.C.S. (member of the late Departmental Committee). Discussion opened by Miss Alice Gregory.

Mrs. Lawson, of the National Association of Midwives, and Mrs. Stephen Glanville will speak on the important question of “Direct Representation on the Midwives’ Board,” and it is hoped that there will be full discussion. The question of the “Registration of Nurses” will also claim attention, on which subject Miss Annie Hobbs has promised to prepare a paper. Miss Lucy Robinson will speak on “The Living Wage for Midwives in Rural Districts” and “The Poor Mother.” Among others who have consented to speak are Muriel Viscountess Helmsley, on “Creches”; Miss Gibson, Matron of Birmingham Workhouse Infirmary, on “Poor-Law Nursing”; Miss Wilson, on “Nursing in Small Un-separated Poor-Law Infirmarys”; Dr. Bernard Hollander, on “Mental Nursing”; Miss Manley, on “Massage”; Miss Barton, on “Territorial Nursing”; Miss P. Douglas Townsend, on “The Care of the Feeble-Minded”; and Miss Eden has arranged to give a lantern lecture on “The History of Nursing” on Friday evening, April 29th.

The Midwives’ Act Amendment Bill.

One of the points most clearly demonstrated in the Bill to amend the Midwives’ Act, 1902, is the value of societies through which midwives can express their needs. Thus Mrs. Lawson, President of the National Association of Midwives, urged upon the Departmental Committee appointed to consider the working of the Midwives’ Act, that any amendment of the Act should recognise the claim of midwives on the Central Midwives’ Board. While we have not got that in the Lord President’s Bill we have come appreciably nearer to it by the amending clause which provides that henceforth two of the members of the Board must be certified midwives, by which the right of midwives to representation on their Governing Body is recognised.

Mrs. Lawson also asked “that in all cases of compulsory notification of sending for medical help, stamped forms should be supplied, as it is often difficult for the poor midwife to pay these charges, and this is therefore sometimes a temptation to her to evade notifying the Local Supervising Authority. The Lord President’s Bill provides (1) that “All forms required to be filled up and returned to the Central Midwives’ Board shall be supplied gratis by the Board to certified midwives. (2) All other forms and books which certified midwives are required to fill up or use shall be supplied to them gratis by the local supervising authority, and (3) where any such form is required to be returned by post to the Board or the authority either the form shall be supplied duly stamped or a duly stamped envelope shall be supplied with the form.”

Other points which have been emphasised by the National Association of Midwives are that midwives cited to appear before the Board are often too poor to defray the expense of a journey to London, and that any criminal has the right to be conveyed free to the place of trial in Black Maria to be tried. Provision is now made that the Central Midwives’ Board may, if they think fit, pay all or any part of the expenses of any midwife who may be required to appear before them in her own defence.

Another point in which consideration is given to midwives in the new Bill is that midwives who are suspended from practice, in the public interest, *i.e.*, to prevent the spread of infection, may be compensated for loss of practice.

It will be seen, therefore, that in all these directions the position of the midwife will be improved by the new Bill.

The Central Midwives’ Board.

The next examination of the Central Midwives’ Board will be held on April 28th, at the Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, W.C. The oral examination follows a few days later. Subsequent examinations during the year will be held in London on June 15th, August 3rd, October 24th, and December 16th, and on June 15th and October 24th at Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, and Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The Union of Midwives.

On Thursday, April 28th, a musical entertainment will be held at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, W., the profits of which will be devoted to the fund for defraying the initial expenses of the Union of Midwives. Tickets can be obtained from the Secretary, Union of Midwives, 7, Delamere Terrace, Westbourne Square, W., from Messrs. Bailey, 38, Oxford Street, W., and from E. A. Wilkins and Son, 57, Crouch End Hill, N., or at the door. Reserved seats, 2s.; unreserved seats, 1s. The entertainment will begin at 7.30 p.m.; doors open at 7 p.m.

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