

The Midwife.

The Central Midwives' Board.

A meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, on Thursday, May 26th.

At the beginning of the proceedings Dr. Champness, Chairman of the Board, moved resolutions of sympathy with the King and the Queen Mother in the grievous loss which they, in common with the Empire, have sustained by the death of his late Majesty, and its humble congratulations to King George on his accession to the Throne.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

A letter was received from the Clerk of the London County Council stating that in the opinion of the Council there is no necessity for admitting to the Roll, within the County of London, anyone who does not possess a certificate of training in midwifery. A letter was also received from the Bolton Midwives' Association asking the Board not to admit to the Roll under Rule B 2 anyone resident in Bolton unless qualified by examination.

A letter was received from a certified midwife inquiring as to her obligation to undertake a case for which she had been engaged, but to which she was not summoned until four hours after the baby had been born. The Board decided that the midwife be informed that she infringed no rule of the Board in declining to undertake a case under the circumstances.

In connection with a complaint made by Dr. H. Scurfield, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Sheffield, as to the practice of unqualified male midwives, the Board decided to make representations to the Privy Council as to the desirability of amending the law so as to prevent the practice of midwifery by unqualified men.

The Chairman said that the present position was that it was illegal for an uncertified woman, but not for an unqualified man, to act as a midwife, a position which was quite absurd. It was quite unnecessary to call in a man other than a registered medical practitioner, but at present any male person could deliver any woman.

In reply to a question from Miss Paget, the Chairman said that the men referred to in Sheffield were an unqualified medical man and an unqualified dispenser. He considered the practice of midwifery should be restricted to doctors and certified midwives.

The applications of four women for removal from the Roll were granted.

In connection with alleged irregularities in training at the Royal Derby and Derbyshire Nursing Institution, it was decided to admit pupils who present schedules signed by a competent authority to the June examination, but that application by the lecturer and chief midwife for recognition must be made if the institution desires to train pupils in future.

Dr. Nettie Bell Turner was placed on the list of supernumerary examiners.

In connection with the new rule sanctioned by the Privy Council, under which the admission of midwives to the Roll without examination is sanctioned for a further period (up to September 30th, 1910), at the discretion of the Board, the following midwives were admitted to the Roll:—

APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES UNDER RULE B2.

The following applications for certificates, under Rule B 2, were granted:—

Sarah Catherine Abbott, Lettie Bailey, Susan Barnes, Ellen Best, Mary Jane Bishop, Ellen Blee, Mary Agnes Clayforth, Caroline Cook, Elizabeth Farn, Clara Godsell, Harriet Hallett, Emma Harrington, Annie Hughes, Margaret Hunter, Sarah Annie James, Elizabeth Jones, Mary Anna Jones, Florence Jordan, Annie Keegan, Ann Keogh, Sarah Leigh, Elizabeth Mellor, Sarah Meredith, Ida Jane Nicholson, Elizabeth Preece, Elizabeth Preston, Fanny Prince, Mary Ann Pugsley, Elizabeth Rackstraw, Elizabeth Redsell, Jane Ann Richardson, Mary Ann Roe, Caroline Rolfe, Mary Rolph, Alice Rose, Elizabeth Scragg, Elizabeth Seed, Eliza Shewring, Alice Shuttleworth, Jane Smith, Elizabeth Hamilton Speirs, Ellen Spooner, Maria Stewart, Fanny Varge, Catherine Watson, Hannah Whitfield, Catherine Beatrice Wood, Eliza Cheesman.

The applications of 33 were refused, and 11 adjourned for further inquiry.

The Standing Committee recommended that, unless under special circumstances, no application from a woman who had already failed to pass the Board's examination be submitted for consideration by the Board.

Miss Paget opposed this on the ground that they were recognising women with no training at all, and that candidates who presented themselves for the Board's examination had at least had some training.

The Chairman said that they had not tested the knowledge of the former applicants, but if the Board enrolled women whose knowledge had been tested in their examinations, and who had been rejected because they were incompetent, it would assume an indefensible position. Nevertheless, the Board decided to adopt this course.

It was decided after some discussion not to consider applications from women who had attained the age of 70.

The application of the authorities of the Leeds Maternity Hospital for its recognition as a training school was granted, as was that of the Lambeth Union Infirmary, subject to its being made clear that the 216 deliveries last year were intern and not extern.

The applications of the following doctors for approval as teachers were granted:—Dr. Robert Applegarth Hendry, Dr. Henry Moncrieff Macgill, Dr. Clifford White, F.R.C.S., Dr. Margaret Mitchell Ritchie.

The applications of the following midwives for approval to sign Forms III. and IV. were granted:—Maude Evelyn Farrar (No. 29826),

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