

The Midwife.

The Central Midwives Board.

PENAL CASES.

A special meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, on Thursday, December 15th, for the purpose of hearing the charges alleged against twenty-one women, with the following results:—
STRUCK OFF THE ROLL AND CERTIFICATES CANCELLED

Sarah Chapman (No. 19065), Catherine Charlton (No. 17770), Mary Hannah Davies (No. 10277), Mary Jane Dickenson (No. 11553), Esther Green (No. 1589), Beatrix Inscoc (No. 19350), Emily Jones (No. 5131), Marian Phillis McCormac (No. 10230), Mary Ann Miles (No. 20569), Elizabeth Murray (No. 1170).

SEVERELY CENSURED AND REPORT TO BE ASKED FOR FROM LOCAL SUPERVISING AUTHORITY IN THREE MONTHS TIME.

Sarah Elizabeth Brown (No. 11622), Ellen Gentle (No. 27080, C.M.B. examination), Martha Howard (No. 23578), Alice Walters (No. 819), Barbara Young (No. 3195).

CENSURED.

Sarah Bath (No. 1867).

CAUTIONED AND REPORT TO BE ASKED FOR FROM LOCAL SUPERVISING AUTHORITY IN THREE MONTHS TIME.

Emma Gleeson (No. 19461, L.O.S. certificate).

SENTENCE POSTPONED.

Mary Anne Giles (No. 2244); sentence in this case was postponed until the next penal board after the expiration of three months.

EXONERATED.

Mary Brown (No. 17912), Bridget Killoran (No. 5210), Sarah Leonard (No. 9595).

In many of the cases the Inspector of Midwives, in the area concerned, attended and gave evidence on behalf of the Local Supervising Authority.

The majority of the cases were of much the same character as usual, neglect to advise that medical assistance should be sent for under circumstances required by the rules, such as inflammation of the eyes, abscess of the breast in the infant (which the midwife, Sarah Elizabeth Brown, treated by squeezing it on each visit), offensive lochia and high temperature, rigor and abdominal pain, premature and dangerous feebleness in the infant, bronchitis, ante-partum hæmorrhage, etc.

Other offences were failure to notify the Local Supervising Authority of intention to practice, or that the friends had not been advised to send for medical assistance, being in the habit of laying out dead bodies without the permission of the Local Supervising Authority, attending cases as a midwife while in attendance as a nurse on a case of uterine cancer, being under the influence of alcohol when delivering a patient.

The most interesting cases were of two midwives cited from Manchester, who, as members of the National Association of Midwives, were defended

by it, Mrs. Lawson, the President of the Association being present throughout the proceedings. Both midwives appeared before the Board, their defence being conducted by Mr. Randolph, instructed by Messrs. Pritchard Englefield and Co.

The first case was that of Mrs. Mary Brown (Manchester Maternity Hospital certificate), against whom the charge was made that "on June 1st, 1910, with intent to evade supervision by the Local Supervising Authority, you deliberately, and without reasonable excuse, failed to admit the Inspector of Midwives to your house, though you had seen her approaching and were well aware that she was desirous of interviewing you."

The charge was supported by a statutory declaration by Dr. Merry Smith, late Inspector of Midwives for Manchester.

Mr. Randolph said that the whole declaration, with the exception of one clause, was irrelevant.

The defence was an alibi.

Mr. Randolph called his client, who stated that on June 1st she visited a friend, Mrs. Mitchell, and went with her to the cemetery to put flowers on her little son's grave. She left home at ten o'clock and went and stayed to tea with her friend before returning home, about six o'clock. The date was fixed in her mind, although she did not hear of the charge until November, because of her visit to the cemetery and because on that day the fees for some music lessons for her daughter were due, and she paid the account.

In reply to the Chairman, Mr. Bertram, who read Dr. Merry Smith's declaration, said that the time of her visit was stated to be 11.30 a.m. Letters from Mrs. Mitchell and others having been read confirming Mrs. Brown's statement, the Board deliberated, and the Chairman subsequently informed Mrs. Brown that in the opinion of the Board the evidence did not bear out the accusation. There must have been some mistake, and her certificate would be returned to her.

The second case was that of Mrs. Killoran, who also appeared, in connection with a charge of negligence when in attendance as a midwife at the confinement of an Italian woman at Ancoats, who subsequently died.

Mr. Randolph said that his client was trained at St. Mary's Hospital, Manchester, where she was afterwards a staff midwife, selected by examination, and had to attend lectures to keep herself up-to-date.

The answer to the charge that the midwife did not advise medical assistance being summoned when the patient had a rigor was that no such rigor occurred. The history put in rested on the evidence of an Italian woman friend of the deceased, through an interpreter, to the medical man.

The case had been one of twins, and after the birth of the first child the midwife summoned the nearest medical man, Dr. Williams, and the second child, which lived about a quarter of an hour, was

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