

The Central Midwives Board.

A meeting of the Central Midwives' Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, on February 23rd, Sir Francis Champneys in the chair.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A letter was received from the Clerk of the Council stating that the proposals contained in Clause 7 of the Midwives (No. 2) Bill, 1910 (*i.e.*, that an annual payment of one shilling should be required from all certified midwives, failure to comply with this requirement involving removal from the Roll), will not reappear in any future Bill which may be introduced on the subject.

Letters were read from the Registrar of the Royal College of Physicians, the Secretary of the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Secretary of the Society of Apothecaries, announcing the re-election of Sir Francis Champneys, Mr. C. H. Golding-Bird, and Mr. Parker Young as their respective representatives for the year ensuing the first of April next.

A letter was read from the Home Office, enclosing a letter addressed to the Home Secretary by Ellen Peacock, an uncertified midwife, who was convicted and fined at Liverpool forty shillings and costs for acting as a midwife, asking for the observations of the Central Midwives' Board upon it. Mrs. Peacock, in her letter to the Home Secretary, detailed the teaching she had received, and said that she had applied to the Board to be enrolled, but had been refused. She appealed to the Home Secretary for the remission of the fine, which she stated that she was unable to pay, and also that she might be enrolled as a certified midwife, as otherwise she would be unable to earn her living, and be reduced to a state of destitution. The Secretary was directed to reply that the application of Mrs. Peacock had been the subject of careful inquiry, and that they had received a report from the Local Supervising Authority in connection with the application before arriving at a decision.

REPORT OF PENAL CASES COMMITTEE.

A letter was considered from the Clerk of the Council transmitting two letters addressed to the Home Secretary by Dinah Ann Peace (late No. 20958) with regard to the removal of her name from the Midwives' Roll on December 3rd, 1908, asking for the Board's observations thereon. The Secretary was directed to communicate to the Privy Council a statement of the circumstances under which the midwife was cited before the Board, and of the proceedings before the Board.

The Committee having considered the charges against 16 midwives, recommended that each of them be cited to appear before the Board, and a seventeenth subject to adequate evidence being furnished by the Local Supervising Authority.

It was agreed that the opinion of the Privy Council be sought as to whether a midwife guilty of a breach of the Rules when acting as a maternity nurse is amenable to the jurisdiction of the Board.

It was agreed that a Special Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday, March 30th, at 1.30

p.m. for dealing with all penal cases and applications then ready for hearing.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

A letter was considered from the Clerk of the Council in reply to the suggestion of the Board that Section 1 (2) of the Midwives Act, 1902, should be amended by the deletion of the words "habitually and for gain," pointing out that the proposed amendment might rise to more laxity of administration than it would prevent, as "emergency" would conceivably be more difficult to disprove than it would be to establish a practice which is habitual and for gain. The Chairman remarked that until a test case was carried through it was difficult to decide what the clause meant.

Letters were considered from the Medical Officer of Health for Manchester and the Medical Officer of Health for Ipswich in regard to cases in which the Local Supervising Authority had found *prima facie* cases of negligence and misconduct and negligence respectively in which the Board decided to take no action. The Board decided to reply (1) that it acts on the finding of the Local Supervising Authority of a *prima facie* case which it assumes would be adequately supported by evidence capable of proof at the hearing of the case, and (2) that the responsibility for the decision in any particular case must remain with the Board alone.

APPLICATIONS FOR REMOVAL OF NAME.

Application of nine midwives for removal from the Roll were received, and the Secretary was directed to remove their names and cancel their certificates.

SUGGESTED BADGE.

In regard to the suggestion that the Board should issue a badge as the distinguishing mark of a certified midwife, it was decided to postpone consideration of the matter *sine die*.

APPLICATION FOR RESTORATION TO ROLL.

The application of a midwife for restoration to the Roll after voluntary resignation was refused.

APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL.

The application of Dr. Edward Francis Herman Hardenberg for approval as a teacher was granted.

The applications of the following midwives for approval to sign Forms III. and IV. were granted:—

Ethel Maud Hansard (No. 32249), Elizabeth Louise Hill (No. 325), Mary Jane Mayes (No. 28087), Lillie Louisa Reeder (No. 11138), Edith Perpetua Rosier (No. 26276), Gladys Edith Tatham (No. 28208).

The date of the next ordinary meeting of the Board was fixed for March 23rd, in addition to the Penal Board on March 30th.

The next examination of the Central Midwives' Board will be held at the Examination Hall, Victoria Embankment, London, W.C., on April 25th, 1911. The Oral Examination follows a few days later.

At the Nottingham Summons Court, Eliza Ann Platts was recently convicted of practising as a midwife without being certified as such, and fined 20s.

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