

In announcing the decision of the Board to strike the midwife's name off the Roll, the Chairman stated that the Board is of opinion that when a midwife has not taken a pulse and temperature she cannot be held guiltless of the consequences which may ensue. He announced further that the Board will enforce the rule in relation to the taking of temperatures and pulses more strictly for the future.

We are glad the Chairman made this statement; for if a midwife is so indifferent, or so stupid, that in the ten years since the passing of the Act she has not learnt to take and record temperature and pulse, she is certainly unfit for the responsibilities of her office.

The facts elicited in one case illustrated a terrible condition. The first patient delivered by the midwife, a daughter living in her mother's house, was confined on the ground floor, and another daughter upstairs. A doctor called in ordered the second patient, who was in a room without a fireplace, to be kept warm, and the midwife brought her down to the same room as the first patient who was suffering from puerperal fever.

Mrs. Southern, who appeared before the Board in connection with not sending for medical assistance in the case of a child suffering from inflammation of the eyes, admitted she had never read the rules of the Board. She wrote, "I thank God for giving me such a rush of cases to enable me to come up to the Board"; and, indeed, she was able to impress the Board with her regret, and her desire to keep the rules in future.

The last case on the list was that of a midwife who handed her patient over to an uncertified woman. She wrote that if the Board forgave her, "I will never go anywhere again as long as I live." She was, however, struck off the Roll.

THE ADOPTION OF INFANTS.

The Public Control Committee of the London County Council, having had its attention called from time to time to cases in which infants have been adopted for lump sums and afterwards grossly neglected by the persons who adopted them, have suggested that representations be made to the Home Secretary as to the desirability of the Children Act, 1908, being amended so as to provide that no infant shall be adopted by a nurse-mother for payment of a lump sum of money without the written approval of the local authority.

THE ABERDEEN MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

It has been decided at a special meeting of the managers and subscribers of the Aberdeen Dispensary Maternity Hospital and Vaccine Institute to separate the Maternity Hospital from the Dispensary and Vaccine Institute, the resolution

to this effect being moved from the chair by the Lord Provost and seconded by the Rev. James Smith. The existing debts were divided in the proportion of two-thirds to the Maternity Hospital, and one-third to the other Institutions. Legacies already assigned to the united institution were divided in like proportions. We hope that under the new conditions both institutions will have a prosperous future. The Maternity Hospital is an important educational centre for both students and midwives, and as such, as well as for the skilled treatment and care it affords to maternity cases, merits greater support than it has hitherto received.

REGISTERED MIDWIVES IN AUSTRALIA.

An Act for the Registration of Midwives has been operative in West Australia under the provisions of the Health Act for nine months, and a report dealing with the six months ending December 31st, 1911, contains, the *Lancet's* correspondent points out, some interesting information. Registration was permitted under two sections—viz., those women holding certificates of training and others who could produce evidence of *bona fide* practice as a midwife during two years prior to the passing of the Act and satisfied the Board of their competence, cleanliness and repute. Under the first provision 105 were registered and under the second 528. From January 1st, 1912, only the certificate of the Central Midwives Board, England, has been accepted, and others, except those holding certificates under statutory authority, will be compelled to undergo 12 months' training and then satisfy the Board of their fitness.

NEW YORK TRAINING SCHOOL FOR MIDWIVES.

At the new training school for midwives in connection with Bellevue Hospital, New York, great attention is paid to teaching the pupil midwives practical housekeeping, simple cooking, cleaning, laundry work, sanitation and hygiene, in addition to the care of mother and babe, preparation for confinement, making dressings, sterilising, &c. The equipment approximates as nearly as possible the simple things to be found in the homes of the poor. The senior midwife has attended about sixty cases in the ward, delivered seven, and attended four in the district.

Seven nationalities are represented in these ten pupils, but the question of languages, which seemed as if it might present practical difficulties, has not proven a serious drawback, as the pupils all speak a little English, and are most anxious to learn everything in English. The pupils are required to provide and wear uniforms of gray gingham, with elbow sleeves and a round collar; white aprons without bibs. No allowance is given, the pupils also providing for their own laundry work.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)