

REPORT OF THE MIDWIVES ACT COMMITTEE OF THE L.C.C.

The Midwives Act Committee of the L.C.C. presented the following report, signed by the Acting Chairman, Mr. A. L. Leon, to the Council, at its meeting on Tuesday:—

CHARGES AGAINST CERTIFIED MIDWIVES.

1. On May 15th, 1912, the Central Midwives Board asked the Council to investigate, pursuant to the provisions of Section 8 (2) of the Midwives Act, 1902, charges of malpractice, negligence or misconduct against a certified midwife pursuing her calling in the County of London. This investigation has been made, and we are of opinion that the matter is not of sufficient gravity to warrant the finding by the Council that a *prima facie* case has been established against her. We recommend—

That, in the opinion of the Council, a *prima facie* case of malpractice, negligence or misconduct within the meaning of Section 8 (2) of the Midwives Act, 1902, has not been established against the certified midwife with respect to whom charges were remitted to the Council by the Central Midwives Board on May 15th, 1912; and that the Board be informed accordingly.

2. On December 12th, 1911, the Council, on our recommendation, decided to inform the Central Midwives Board that a *prima facie* case of negligence had been established against a certified midwife pursuing her calling within the County of London. The Board, in due course, considered the charge, and asked the Council to report at the end of three months, and again at the end of six months as to the midwife's conduct.

On May 14th, 1912, the Council authorised the sending to the Board of a favourable report of her conduct during three months, and we are now able to report that she has continued to be satisfactory since that day. We consider that this case is of special interest, in showing the value of action on the part of the Council and the Central Midwives Board, as when the Council first called the attention of the Central Midwives Board to the practice of the midwife, she had not only neglected her patients but there were strong grounds for suspecting that she kept one bag of appliances for inspection by the Council, while she used another set of apparatus in her practice. We recommend—

That, as the certified midwife against whom the Council decided on December 12th, 1911 (p. 1486), to report the establishment of a *prima facie* case of negligence continues to show improvement in her methods of practice, a communication to this effect be made to the Central Midwives Board.

3. On May 14th, 1912, the Council decided to inform the Central Midwives Board that a certified midwife against whom a *prima facie* case of negligence and misconduct had been established had, since the hearing of the charge by the Board, shown improvement in her methods of practice.

The Board has notified to the Council that, as this midwife's conduct now appears to be generally satisfactory, no further action will be taken in the matter.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

A Special Meeting of the Central Midwives Board, to consider charges brought against certified midwives, was held at the board room, Caxton House, S.W., on Tuesday last, with the following results:—

Struck off the Roll and Certificate Cancelled.—M. E. Boyce (No. 10320), E. Dixon (No. 15048), E. Donaghue (No. 1249), E. A. Jackson (No. 4929), M. McQuilling (No. 5979), J. M. A. Markham (No. 3714), A. Oates (No. 10734), J. Payne (No. 2190), M. A. Penketh (No. 16629), E. Poundall (No. 12970), C. Ridden (No. 1133), J. Roberts (No. 1842), S. Robinson (No. 19977), S. Saxe (No. 15946), E. A. Smith (No. 8133), E. Swyer (No. 12994), M. J. Wilson (No. 20703), S. Wolfenden (No. 2764).

Severely Censured.—E. Brearley (No. 3316), A. Swain (No. 2984).

Censured.—E. Fisher (No. 13012), L. Marsden (No. 15758).

Cautioned.—F. A. Preston (No. 1207).

Judgment Suspended.—In one case judgment was suspended.

Application for Restoration of Name to the Roll.—The application of Edith May Dalchow for the restoration of her name to the Roll was refused.

Cases Adjourned for Judgment, with option of Resignation.—Jane Cliffe (No. 10552) and Sarah Harrison (No. 18715), both resigned.

Cases Adjourned for Judgment on Report of L.S.A.—The names of Mary Ann Allen (No. 14224), Elizabeth Clasper (No. 18586), and Harriett Maria Davis (No. 3016), were struck off.

REGISTRATION OF MIDWIVES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The regulations issued by the Midwives Board under the Health Act in Western Australia, which came into force on January 1st, 1912, have specified certain certificates as exempting the holders from passing any examination under the Act, including the certificate of the Central Midwives Board in this country, and certificates of registration under the provisions of the Midwives Acts in Tasmania and New Zealand.

It seems very unfair on Australian nurses that while those trained in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide must, as the *Australian Nurses' Journal* points out, hold a *twelve months'* certificate before they can be registered or allowed to practise, even though they are trained in general nursing, yet overseas midwives with three and six months' certificates in midwifery only may practise in Western Australia on those qualifications alone, competing generally with Australian midwives who are required to undergo a training twice or four times as long. Surely, legislators in Western Australia should protect the standards they themselves enforce by demanding that overseas nurses shall either produce evidence of having attained standards as high as their own, or pass the examination in force in Western Australia. Any other policy is suicidal.

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