

WALES.

Cardiff, Q.V.J.N.I.—G. E. Griggs, A. M. Russell.

Merthyr Tydfil Union Infirmary.—S. A. Watkins.

SCOTLAND.

Aberdeen Maternity Hospital.—M. A. Paterson.

Edinburgh Royal Maternity Hospital.—M. Atchison, A. E. Landles.

IRELAND.

Belfast, Ulster Hospital.—M. Fleming.

Dublin, Rotunda Hospital.—R. D. Alder, L. A. Brown, E. Irvine, A. J. E. Kernahan, I. D. Lowndes, E. F. Stephens.

Lurgan Infirmary.—M. Shiels.

PRIVATE TUITION AND INSTITUTIONS.

G. H. F. Alexander-Parry, B. Barber, L. J. Bayly, N. M. R. Bell, E. A. Brown, E. A. Burton, S. H. Butcher, A. M. Carver, B. Coventry, M. F. Crowther, M. M. Dauncey, F. M. Drew, M. B. Elliott, M. F. Fancutt, B. L. Fenn, B. A. Giles, A. A. Grindrod, M. P. Ibbs, F. Jackson, E. F. Jones, S. Laing, E. Marshall (Paddington Workhouse Infirmary), M. Moody, C. Moore, E. L. Moore, F. Pibworth (General Lying-in Hospital), F. R. Pickard, L. Reading, L. Reidy, E. K. R. Richards (Edmonton Union Infirmary), F. E. Robinson, E. Small, E. H. Smith, M. A. Smith, D. Saines (General Lying-in Hospital) L. P. Steiner, C. M. Torr, F. M. Wiggins, A. I. Williams, E. Williams, J. Williams, M. J. Williams (Fulham Union Infirmary), E. T. Wood.

THE MIDWIFERY CONFERENCE.

THE LAW RELATING TO THE QUALIFICATIONS, RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE MIDWIFE.

The midwives who listened to Mr. Douglas Knocker's paper, and learnt that he was willing to answer questions, availed themselves of the opportunity.

Mrs. Lawson enquired whether, if a woman had taken part in a Suffrage demonstration, and happened to be convicted, the Central Midwives' Board had power to strike her off the Roll.

Mr. Knocker replied that the Central Midwives' Board had wide and arbitrary powers. If it struck a midwife off the Roll for the reason stated, he should advise her to appeal to the High Courts, and obtain a judicial decision.

Mrs. Lawson also enquired, in the event of a patient having right of action against a midwife for negligence, if she did not show the skill which might reasonably be expected of a person holding herself out in this capacity, who was to be the judge of her skill? Mr. Knocker replied: An ordinary British jury.

Mrs. Lawson then asked whether the bonâ-fide midwife would be expected to show the same skill as the one certified, after examination. Mr. Knocker thought that would to some extent depend upon whether she declared herself only a bonâ-fide at the time of her engagement. His questioner further asked why both were put on the

market as the same; and was told that the responsibility rested with Parliament.

She then wanted to know whether a midwife, attending out-door cases for a hospital, would be entitled to compensation, if she sustained illness or accident while on duty. Mr. Knocker considered these amongst the risks she undertook as a midwife. If receiving a salary, she might get compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act, but there must be a contract of service. The whole thing turned on the bargain between the particular midwife and the particular hospital.

A further question, asked by Mrs. Lawson, was whether, in the case of negligence being proved against a midwife, the action would lie against the hospital or against the midwife.

Mr. Knocker said it had been held in a court of law that hospital authorities were not responsible for the negligence of their servants.

Mrs. Parnell enquired whether a monthly nurse would be able to recover her fees, in the event of the patient having miscalculated the time of confinement. Mr. Knocker replied this depended on the agreement. Supposing a prospective patient engaged a midwife to attend her if she had a baby on the first day of the month, and the baby was born on the second day, the agreement was not binding. Mr. Knocker advised that a midwife should always write a letter to the patient, stating the terms of her arrangement, and ask the patient to acknowledge it. She should keep a copy of her own letter.

Miss Breay asked whether a contract could be sustained, if it were only verbal; and Mr. Knocker replied that there was no obligation to have the contract in writing; the bargain held good, whether it was verbal or not. The question was what the court believed.

Miss Mackenzie wished to know why a midwife only received 1s. when giving evidence in a coroner's court. Mr. Knocker was unable to account for it, except by suggesting that some of our legislation dates from the days of Noah.

Asked a further question, as to the right of a midwife to compensation, he said that this turned on the question as to whether her labour was casual or not. In the case of a man who was employed in cutting down trees, and nearly killed, it was held that his labour was casual, and he was, therefore, not entitled to compensation.

A midwife present cited a Battersea case, recently decided, in which the midwife cut her hand with a glass, and subsequently was obliged to have it amputated. She obtained compensation from the husband of the patient.

In reply to a question from Miss Elsie Hall, on the question of compensation, Mr. Knocker said that, assuming a midwife to have been careless, and the courts held she had broken her bargain and was not a skilled midwife, in awarding damages against her the pecuniary loss suffered would be taken into consideration. Supposing a wife were laid up for six months with white leg, and the husband had to pay some one to manage the household, he would be entitled to compensation.

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