

The Midwife.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

A special meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, S.W., on Thursday, November 6th, Sir Francis Champneys presiding, for the purpose of hearing the charges against eleven midwives, in addition to cases adjourned for judgment on the report of the Local Supervising Authority. The latter were first dealt with, and the name of Anne Harrison (No. 15862) directed to be removed from the Roll and her certificate cancelled.

The result of the hearing of the new charges was:—

Struck off the Roll and Certificate Cancelled.—Midwives Sarah Bates (No. 2144), Elizabeth Brookes (No. 9301), Eliza Heighton (No. 16322), Georgina Jeffery (No. 20915), Susannah Morgan (No. 4832), Jane Pickard (No. 15078), Julia Jemima Saxby (No. 17433), Elizabeth Anne Telfer (No. 20065).

Severely Censured.—Midwife Mary Turney (No. 3573).

Sentence Postponed.—Midwives Mary Ann Baum (No. 5457), Mary Plant (No. 15).

In the majority of cases the charges were of the usual kind, *i.e.*, not advising that medical assistance should be sent for when necessary, not recording pulse or temperature, neglect of inflammation in the baby's eyes, not using antiseptic precautions, not keeping a register of cases, neglecting to wash the patient, want of cleanliness, &c. One midwife who was directed by the medical practitioner called in to give a hot pack, charged with not faithfully carrying out his instructions, put in as her defence that she could get neither fire nor blankets. When she informed the doctor, his reply was that if the blankets were not there he could not make them. On a later visit he stormed because his orders had not been carried out.

The doctor complained that the midwife called on him, and said she would never send for him to another case.

Another midwife gave as her reason for not sending for the doctor, in the case of a feeble and premature child, that she thought it would not live because the mother had not been able to keep any children alive.

One woman, cited to appear, wrote that she considered it a downright shame. She had been a midwife thirty-five years, and had never lost mother or child. She had only had a doctor twice, and then he was not needed.

In response to the application of the Board for her certificate she wrote that she sent a copy. The original had cost her 10s. 6d., and she had had it framed, and it was the last thing she should think of parting with.

In another case, the midwife, charged with not filling in the form advising that medical assistance should be sent for, wrote that she had worked as nurse and midwife for forty-six years. She would never listen to a mother's pleadings again, neither would she study mother or child or doctor again, but study herself.

"NURSE BETTY."

By far the most important case was that of "Nurse Betty" (otherwise Elizabeth Anne Telfer, No. 20065). It will be remembered that Nurse Betty, dressed in nurses' uniform, opened the door of the notorious Piccadilly flat run by Queenie Gerald, when raided by the police in June last.

THE QUEENIE GERALD CASE.

It will be remembered that when Queenie Gerald was brought before Mr. Mead on June 16th at the Marlborough Street Police Court she was charged with "living on the immoral earnings of young girls." That when the case was resumed on June 19th the same magistrate cleared the Court, only representatives of the Press and a few women interested in the case being allowed to remain. Nor would he allow the publication of Mme. Gerald's real name, mentioned by a witness—who said she was a married woman—to be published, remarking to the Press representatives "You fully understand you are here as a privilege."

Mr. G. Beyfus, who represented the defendant, who was remanded, stated that his client would plead "Not Guilty," would reserve her defence, and would call her witnesses at the trial.

The case came on for trial at the London Sessions on July 10th, Mr. John Allan Lawrie, Deputy Chairman, presiding. The Court was again cleared, and Queenie Gerald pleaded "Guilty," and this change of front, whether rightly or wrongly, is widely attributed to the belief that had the defendant pleaded "not guilty" her defence would have been that she was an agent acting for principals, and the names of those principals would have been mentioned.

It will further be remembered that in opening the case Mr. Travers Humphreys stated, according to the report in the *Daily Telegraph*, "There were a large number of letters which made it quite clear that, apart from the prisoner's earnings herself, and apart from what she received through the girls, she was carrying on the trade of a procuress." And the Chairman of the Sessions, in sentencing her, said:—

"If I thought I was justified in punishing you for carrying on the trade of a procuress, of which there is some evidence, I should have had to deal more severely with you, but that is not charged in the indictment."

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