

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

A Special Meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, Westminster, on Thursday, February 26th, Sir Francis Champneys presiding, for the hearing of the charges alleged against thirteen certified women with the following results:

STRUCK OFF THE ROLL AND CERTIFICATES CANCELLED.

Ann Cooper (No. 11394), Elizabeth Elliman (No. 17707), Mary Jane Emmett (No. 7539), Jane Evans (No. 19549), Mary Ann Gregory (No. 17324), Lilian Hallsworth (No. 20435, Cert. Manchester Maternity Hospital), Anna Mary Presley (No. 11863), Lilian Margaret Richards (No. 31822 C.M.B. Examination), Jane Steer (No. 20588), Hannah Summerfield (No. 20809), Sarah Swann (No. 2684), Elizabeth Swindell (No. 5675).

SENTENCE POSTPONED FOR SIX MONTHS.

Mary Snape (No. 5251)

The charges were for the most part of the usual character, *i.e.*, not wearing a clean dress of washable material, not possessing the required appliances or antiseptics, being unable to use a clinical thermometer, not sending for medical aid when required by the rules, not keeping a register of cases.

In the case of one midwife, the inspector, Miss Booker, who was present, said that she had been in practice since 1905, but had never notified her intention to practise. She had a blue serge dress, which she probably never wore except at funerals. She had also a skin disease of the hands.

One of the charges against Lilian Hallsworth, which the Board considered proved, was that with intent to avoid inspection she gave an undertaking to the Local Supervising Authority that she would not attend further cases during the year, and failed to observe this undertaking. The Chairman asked the inspector, Dr. Douglas, who was present, why the Local Supervising Authority had required this undertaking, and was informed that the midwife had attended a still-birth, at which the body of the child was given to her to dispose of. She did not notify the still-birth, and the body of the child was never traced.

The offence with which Lilian Margaret Richards was charged was that at the City of Cardiff Petty Sessions on December 17th she was summarily convicted on three charges of larceny, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment in the second division on each charge, the sentences to run concurrently.

Mrs. Snape, who appeared before the Board, and was ably defended by her solicitor, Mr. Judson, of Manchester, was charged with not explaining in

a case of abortion that the attendance of a registered medical practitioner was required, and with having endeavoured to prevent witnesses of the facts forming the basis of the charges against her from giving evidence to the Local Supervising Authority, and to the Central Midwives Board; also of not advising that medical help should be sent for in the case of inflammation of and discharge from an infant's eyes.

In informing the midwife that the Board considered the charges proved, but had decided to postpone sentence for six months, the Chairman further informed the midwife that her conduct was very reprehensible. She must understand that cases of abortion had to be notified, also, it was disgraceful in a midwife to run the risk of blinding a child for life for the sake of upholding her own dignity.

In the case of Sarah Swann, the friend who came up to speak on her behalf said that she would be eighty next birthday, her sight was bad, her hearing bad, and she was completely broken up. We consider that it would be to the advantage of the lying-in woman if midwives were compulsorily retired over a certain age. The age of seventy when they are entitled to an old age pension might serve for a beginning.

Dr. Dixey, Chairman of the Midwives Committee in the County of Worcester, who attended in connection with one of the cases, enquired of the Chairman whether the Board had any fund from which it could assist them in connection with the training of midwives. They had a grant from the higher education authority, which used to be £200 per annum, but now was £100. The Chairman said that the Board could do nothing in its corporate capacity, but that individually various members of the Board helped forward schemes for the training of midwives. He himself had repeatedly gone down to various parts of the country to speak for County Associations.

THE EXAMINATION.

At the examination of the Central Midwives Board, held in London and the Provinces, on February 12th, 1914, 504 Candidates were examined and 409 passed the examiners. The percentage of failures was 18.8.

LIST OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES.

LONDON.

City of London Lying-in Hospital.—R. Alefs, L. Burnell, N. Grave, H. A. W. Matthews, C. E. Milne, A. Ratcliffe, M. A. Webster.

Clapham Maternity Hospital.—R. H. Arditti, J. P. Fairbrother, A. F. K. Hodge, N. G. Postance, J. E. Walker.

East End Mothers' Home.—A. L. Barnes, G. C. Bullock, M. E. Burdett, D. K. Conder, E. Corlett, M. L. E. Stevens.

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