

forwarded to the Norfolk County Council, with a request that they will favour the Board with their observations thereon.

(b) That the attention of an Inspector of Midwives be called to her circular on "Migratory Midwives," and that she be asked to explain the use of the letters, "C.M.B.," in relation to Rule E 27.

The Chairman explained that the circular appeared with various letters after the name of the midwife, including C.M.B.; and that their use is forbidden by the rules of the Midwives' Board.

*N.B.*—In the report, which is before us, the Inspector places the letters M.R.B.N.A., and then enumerates her certificates: *Certs. Obs. Soc. Lond., C.M.B., M.P. Assoc., &c., &c.*

The rule of the Central Midwives Board referred to states that: "The proper designation of a certified midwife is 'Certified Midwife'. No abbreviation in the form of initial letters is permitted, nor any other description of the qualification."

It is a nice point for the legal experts to decide, whether a midwife who enumerates her certificates, thereby gives herself an improper designation. Our opinion is she is just within the pale.

A meeting of the Penal Board was fixed for Thursday, February 26th.

The meeting then terminated.

### "MIGRATORY MIDWIVES."

Miss F. M. Bernard-Boyce, Inspector and County Superintendent of Midwives, under the Norfolk County Council, and Hon. Lady Consul for Norfolk for the Royal British Nurses Association, was asked by the Public Health Committee of the Council, which at its meeting in September last discussed the continual changes in the midwives in the County, to make a brief report on the subject. In the report which she submitted, headed "Migratory Midwives," Miss Bernard-Boyce attributes the migration of midwives to the following causes:—

1. The enforcement of the Midwives Act which has caused an entire change in the class of woman practising and the method of working. As modern training is now requisite, only the younger and fairly educated women are now available, consequently, in order to obtain a remunerative living she has become migratory in character and turns to those places which offer the best return for her work.

2. Norfolk being largely an Agricultural County it is generally admitted that the scale of payment in the majority of occupations is somewhat lower than that obtained in other counties. Miss Bernard-Boyce, on information received from midwives, considers this the chief reason for the women leaving the County after a short period of settlement.

3. She analyses the 32 midwives who have ceased to practise in the county during 1912-1913, as follows:—

- 4 have died,
- 3 resigned practise entirely of their own accord,
- 1 was removed from the Midwives Roll by the Central Midwives Board for non-compliance with their rules,
- 19 have left the County to take up work in other Counties,
- 5 have gone abroad

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4. Out of the 24 women who have taken up more attractive and better paid work elsewhere, 12, including the 5 who have gone abroad, were trained by and at the cost of the Council.

5. Miss Bernard-Boyce points out lastly that no financial powers are conferred on the County Council to pay salaries to women beyond the training given as a Scholarship Grant, and therefore the women must look for a salary either through small local committees which are formed as Nursing Associations, or must support themselves by their own efforts.

It was this report which gave umbrage to Mr. Lee-Warner, Chairman of the Norfolk Nursing Federation, who as we reported last week endeavoured to explain away, in the local press, Miss Bernard-Boyce's figures, and to Mr. Evans-Lombe, Chairman of the Higher Education Sub-Committee, who in a letter to the press wrote, "I think it is a pity that a misleading report, opened to such misconception, should have been issued, and that the facts, as stated by Mr. Lee-Warner should not have been given."

The charge of supplying the public authority under which she works with misleading reports is a grave one, which should not be made unless the accuser is prepared to substantiate it fully.

The inspector evidently appreciated its gravity, for she immediately replied that her report on "Migratory Midwives" was "simply a statement of positive facts, and these could all have been produced simply at a few minutes' notice, if I had been informed that my facts would be challenged in any way, and they are even now open to the inspection of any one who will give me reasonable notice beforehand."

This is the best reply Miss Bernard-Boyce could make as, in an official report, accuracy is of the first importance, and, unless she could disprove the statement that her report was misleading, the accusation if brought up against her when applying for a post at any future time would be sufficient to rule her out of any selected list of candidates on the ground that she was a person not to be relied upon.

The fact is that midwives receiving scholarships from County Councils, and bound, in consequence, to work in that County for three years or to pay a fine are, for the most part paid so exceedingly

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