

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

A meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at the Board Room, Caxton House, S.W., on Thursday, April 15th.

The first business was the election of the Chairman, and Sir Francis Champneys vacated the chair, and on his motion Mr. Parker Young acted as Chairman while the ballot was taken. In announcing the unanimous election of Sir Francis Champneys Mr. Parker Young expressed to him the very best thanks of the Board for the way in which he had conducted the business during the past year, and Sir Francis in resuming the chair said that every time he was elected he had a sense of increased gratitude.

The Secretary announced that Mr. Cuthbert Hilton Golding-Bird, M.B., F.R.C.S., had been re-elected as the representative of the Royal College of Surgeons for the ensuing year, and Mr. Leonard Henry West, LL.D., J.P., as the representative of the County Councils Association for three years ensuing April 1st.

The Finance Committee consisting of the six male members of the Board was reappointed.

The Penal Cases Committee, consisting of Miss Rosalind Paget and five male members of the Board, was reappointed with the addition of Dr. West.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

A letter was received from the Hon. Treasurer of the Rugby District Nursing Association forwarding the baptismal and marriage certificates of a candidate for examination who had previously tendered a marriage certificate which had been found to have been tampered with, and asking the Board to admit her to examination. It was agreed that the candidate be admitted to examination, satisfactory certificates having now been produced.

In another case it was agreed to ask for an explanation of the alteration in the birth certificate of a candidate for examination which had apparently been tampered with.

In another similar case it was agreed that the pupil be not admitted to examination, and that the attention of the Committee of the Nursing Association concerned be called to the conduct of the Lady Superintendent in the matter.

A letter was received from the Clerk of the Brighton Hospital for Women asking the Board to receive a deputation from the Committee of the Hospital on the subject of the continuation of the recognition of the Hospital as a Training School for Midwives. It was agreed to receive the deputation at 2 p.m. on Thursday, May 27th.

A communication was received from the County Medical Officer of Health of Warwickshire as to an apparent case of "covering" of an uncertified woman by a registered medical practitioner in the county, and another respecting a case of a similar nature from Southend. It was agreed in both cases that the correspondence be forwarded to the General Medical Council.

APPLICATIONS.

For Removal from the Roll.—The applications of thirteen midwives for removal from the Roll were granted, and the Secretary was directed to remove the names.

For Recognition as a Teacher.—The application of Dr. Thomas Noy Leah was granted; and of Mr. John R. Hill, L.R.C.S.I., L.A.H. Dub.; and Mr. Roderic MacGill, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (*pro tem*).

For Approval to Undertake the Practical Training of Pupils.—The following applications were granted: Midwives Charlotte Scarfe (No. 556), Rosa Noble Wilkinson (No. 8511), Eleanor Insley (No. 7721), and Emily Eugenie Cox (No. 38549).

JURY CENSURES MIDWIFE.

At Rochester, on April 13th, an inquest was held by the City Coroner on a young married woman, wife of Mr. A. E. Willmott, attended by a midwife named Hearn. Miss Harrison, Inspector of Midwives, under the Kent County Council, was present, and put questions to the midwife. After hearing the evidence, the jury returned the following verdict:—

"Death from puerperal septicæmia following child-birth, due to gross neglect on the part of the midwife during her attendance; and we recommend that the evidence be placed before the Central Midwives' Board."

Referring to the verdict, the Coroner asked whether the jury meant manslaughter.

The Foreman: I don't think we wish to bring that word in.

The Coroner: The verdict is rather strong otherwise.

The Foreman: We feel that it is very serious neglect. I don't know whether the word "gross" is wrong, but we felt that "neglect" was hardly sufficiently strong.

The Coroner: Will you say, "Not amounting to manslaughter?"

The Foreman: I think we would like to add that.

The jury gave their assent.

In addressing and cautioning the midwife, the Coroner informed her she had had a narrow escape of being committed for manslaughter.

WHY THE BABY WAS SMALL.

Sister (to mother with a very small baby in the out-patient room): "How old is the baby, mother?"

Mother: "A month."

Sister: "Oh, what a small baby for a month old" (To a colleague) "Look, nurse!"

Mother: "Yes, it is small, but you see I only had a nurse. I've always had a doctor for the others."

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