

The Midwife.

THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND MIDWIFERY.

THE C.M.B. RULES.

The Midwives' Act Committee has reported to the London County Council that the Central Midwives Board has intimated that it proposes to revise the existing code of rules which will expire on June 30th, 1916, and has asked to be informed of any alteration in the rules which the Council may consider desirable. The Committee has, accordingly, drafted a series of amendments. Some of these are, we consider, an improvement; but we think undesirable the amendment proposed to the clause of Rule E1, which at present runs, "When attending to her patients, she must wear a clean dress of washable material that can be boiled, such as linen, cotton, &c., and over it a clean washable apron or overall." Under this rule, the duty is laid upon the midwife of attending her patients in a clean washing dress.

The paragraph which the Midwives' Committee propose to substitute for the foregoing is: "The midwife shall be provided with at least one clean dress of washable material that can be boiled, such as linen, cotton, &c., with a clean washable apron or overall, and when attending her patients must wear such dress and apron or overall." The Committee give no indication of how this rule is to be complied with, when the one washable dress which it suggests as the minimum is in the washtub.

PRACTICE OF MIDWIFERY BY UNCERTIFIED PERSON.

The Committee further reported that they recently instituted proceedings against a woman (1) for unlawfully using a description implying that she was certified under the Midwives Act; and (2) for practising as a midwife contrary to the provisions of the Act. The magistrate imposed a fine of £5 on the first count and £10 on the second, or in default one month's imprisonment on each summons. The evidence disclosed the following facts:—In October last the defendant told one of the Council's inspectors that she had a working arrangement with two doctors that they should attend confinements should their services be required for a fee of half a guinea in each case. One of these doctors, in cross examination, made the following admissions:—That he had a working agreement with the woman, which was made by word of mouth, that he should be called in when his services were required; that his fee was 10s. 6d. for one visit; that he signed the notification of birth for the Registrar; that his ordinary fee for attending confinements was one guinea or two guineas when he visited eight to ten times; that he had accepted the woman's word as to the child being that of the alleged mother;

that he knew the woman was not a certified midwife; that he seldom arrived until after the birth of the child; that he kept no books and could not say how many fees of 10s. 6d. he had received, neither had he any particulars as to the cases he attended; and that he could not give the names of any cases in which he had arrived before the birth of the child, although he lived near the defendant's house. The Committee are of opinion that the matter is one to which the attention of the General Medical Council should be directed, and recommended that the attention of the General Medical Council be directed to the evidence given by a medical practitioner at the hearing of a case against an uncertified woman practising midwifery in the County of London.

INSPECTION OF LYING-IN HOMES.

The Public Control Committee of the L.C.C. have made the following recommendations:—

That Dr. Elizabeth Macrory, Dr. Mary A. Pilliet and Mr. H. A. Jury, inspectors in the public health department, Mr. E. C. Browne, Mr. J. Court, Miss I. G. Smith, Miss F. E. H. Marshall, Miss A. M. Bell, Miss M. D. Drieselman, Miss M. J. Phillips, Miss E. O'Donnell, Miss M. M. Keohane, Miss M. E. Lockington, Miss E. A. Addison, and Miss E. S. Stone, inspectors in the public control departments, be authorised in pursuance of section 18 of the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1915, to enter and inspect any premises used or believed to be used for the purposes of a lying-in home.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

At Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, over 1,800 poor women are admitted to the Wards every year, and over 2,200 others are attended and nursed in their own homes. Since the outbreak of War, the wives of soldiers and sailors and of Belgian and other refugees have been admitted to the benefits of the Hospital free of cost. Over 500 of such patients have been granted admission to the wards, and more than 900 have had the services of the Hospital Midwives and Nurses in their own homes. The income of the Hospital has suffered considerably during the War. Last year there was a deficiency of £1,497; and this year, unless further support can be obtained, it is feared that the deficiency will be even larger.

The Committee, therefore, make an earnest appeal for generous contributions, to enable them to continue the benefits of the Hospital to the large number of poor women needing its help. Subscriptions and donations may be sent to the Secretary, Mr. Arthur Watts, at the Hospital, Marylebone Road, N.W.

The work done by Queen Charlotte's Hospital,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)