

The Midwife.

MIDWIFERY IN 1915.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The decision of the Central Midwives Board to raise the minimum term of training from three to six months, except in the case of candidates holding certificates of three years' training as nurses, is a move in the right direction. The new regulations which have been approved by the Privy Council come into force on July 1st, 1916,

LEGISLATION FOR SCOTLAND.

The Midwives (Scotland) Bill has passed its third reading in the House of Lords, and is expected to receive the Royal Assent immediately. The Bill differs from the English Act in providing for the appointment of two practising midwives on the Central Midwives Board for Scotland, to be appointed by the Lord President of the Council. Provision is also made for the payment to a midwife who has been suspended from practice, pending the decision of her case by the Board, of reasonable compensation for loss of practice if a charge against her has been decided in her favour. Permission is given for the Board to pay, in whole or in part, the expenses incurred by any midwife required to appear before them in her own defence. It may also prohibit a woman whose name is removed from the Roll from attending women in childbirth in any other capacity and may suspend a midwife in lieu of removing her from the Roll.

Provision is also made for the payment of the fees of a medical practitioner summoned to the assistance of a midwife, in an emergency.

The Bill also provides for the payment of the reasonable expenses of members of the Board in respect of their attendance.

It also gives an officer of the L.S.A. power of entry into premises which he has reason to believe are conducted for profit as a lying-in home.

L.C.C. GENERAL POWERS BILL.

The L.C.C. General Powers Bill, providing for the Registration of Lying-in Homes, gives the powers of supervision to the London County Council, but permits it to delegate these powers to the Borough Councils. It is sincerely to be hoped that the Council will retain these powers.

REGISTRATION OF LYING-IN HOMES.

The latest dates for receiving applications for the registration of existing lying-in homes and establishments for massage or special treatment by the London County Council are 28th and 23rd December, 1915 respectively. January 14th and the following day, if necessary, have been fixed for hearing such applications. After February 1st, 1916, it becomes illegal to carry on an unregistered home or establishment.

THE MIDWIVES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

On Tuesday, December 14th, the House of Lords went into Committee on the Midwives (Scotland) Bill, the Earl of Donoughmore being in the chair.

On Clause 1 the Lord President of the Council, the Marquess of Crewe, moved the substitution of the word "subsection" for "section" at the end of subsection (2), which was a drafting amendment.

CONSTITUTION OF BOARD.

The principal discussion took place on Clause 3, which defines the Constitution of the Central Midwives Board for Scotland set up under the Bill, the composition of which we have already notified.

Lord Strachie who intervened on this clause to put questions to the noble Marquess, the Leader of the House, said, according to the Official Report, that he did not for a moment object to the general principles of the Bill; quite the contrary, because in England a similar measure had worked very effectively and proved a great advantage. He intervened because old friends of his, Liberal Members of the House of Commons, were not at all satisfied with the provisions of the Bill. He asked them why they did not raise the matter in the House of Commons, and they replied that under present arrangements, and with a Coalition Government it was practically impossible for independent members to do anything there, and to his surprise these Radical members said they had to look to the House of Lords for freedom of debate for having matters threshed out.

The first question he wished to ask was why it was thought necessary to constitute another Board for Scotland? At the present time there were, he was informed, nineteen Boards established in Scotland; he was further informed that it would be easy for the whole of this work to be done by the Local Government Board for Scotland. That Board, he was told, had very little to do at present. He spoke under correction, but that was the view of a number of Scottish Members of the House of Commons. That would save a certain amount of expenditure, because, obviously you could not establish a new Board even in Scotland, where things are done much cheaper than in this country, without having officials and a certain amount of expenditure. Moreover, Clause 15 empowered the Lord President of the Council to appoint a paid secretary for the new Board which it was proposed to constitute.

The fees obtained from midwives registered under the Bill would not amount to a large sum, and he noticed that power was given to the new Board to make up any deficiency out of the local

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