

offences against the rules. On the present occasion, one of the charges was "that, on Friday, August 20th, 1915, on the occasion of the visit of the Inspector of the Local Supervising Authority, you were drunk and incapable of attending a confinement." The Chairman, in giving judgment, referred to the point that technically she was not drunk on duty. The Board, however, were of opinion that she was not safe as a midwife, and she would be struck off the Roll.

*Judgment Suspended.*—Mrs. Elizabeth Read, who appeared before the Board, accompanied by her husband, was charged with not explaining in the case of a patient in her house that it was one in which the attendance of a registered medical practitioner was required, and did not hand to the nearest relative or friend the form for medical help. Also of attending other cases, after having been warned by the Inspector of Midwives, and the doctor called in, without disinfecting herself and her clothing and appliances to the satisfaction of the Local Supervising Authority. Her defence was that she *did* explain that the case was one in which a doctor was required; but the patient, who was a single woman, said she would rather die than have one. The nearest relative or friend was ten miles away. A medical man, in Diss, who wrote, giving the midwife an excellent character, stated that, if she were removed from the Roll, her duty would fall on the medical men in Diss, and assured the Board they could not do it with medical men away on war work.

The Chairman informed Mrs. Read that she was twenty-four hours' late in asking a medical practitioner to attend. She was over-ruled by the patient, and that should not be. She must realize the danger, and not endanger the lives of patients by her good nature. Judgment would be suspended and the Local Supervising Authority would be asked for a report of her work in three and six months' time.

The position of a midwife who explains to a patient to whom the medical man must look for his fee that his attendance is necessary, when the patient declares that she would rather die than have him, is somewhat a difficult one. Under the Scottish Bill, provision is made that, where the medical practitioner is called in in an emergency the Local Supervising Authority shall pay a sufficient fee, with power to recover from the husband, or guardian, except in cases of poverty.

In the case of Emily Dale, it was decided to ask the Local Supervising Authority for a report in three months' time, stating that she is able to record pulse and temperature correctly. Failing that, she will be struck off the Roll.

(To be concluded.)

#### ADJOURNED CASES.

Two final reports and one interim report from Local Supervising Authorities were read on cases adjourned for judgment, and no action was taken, as the reports were favourable.

#### MONTHLY MEETING.

The monthly meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at the offices of the Board, Caxton House, Westminster, S.W., on Thursday, December 16th, Sir Francis Champneys presiding.

#### REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

A letter was read from the Medical Officer of Health for Salford, asking whether a midwife in delivering a patient under the conditions specified comes within the provisions of the Midwives Act, 1902. Dr. Tattersall said he had been consulted as to a practice in Manchester of engaging a medical practitioner for a confinement, and also engaging a nurse whom he knew and had confidence in. If the case came off in the night the medical man was not called up except in an emergency, but he took full responsibility for it.

The Board replied that under the circumstances mentioned in Dr. Tattersall's letter he be informed the nurse is acting as a midwife, and therefore comes within the provisions of the Midwives Act, 1902.

The Medical Officer of Health of Lancashire wrote asking the opinion of the Board on a request made by one of the Lancashire non-county Boroughs that the Borough Health Visitor should be allowed to call at houses in which a confinement has recently taken place, and at which a certified midwife is in attendance, with a view to supervising the midwife at work. The Board replied that, generally speaking, the Inspector of Midwives was the only person who ought to visit the house of a lying-in patient during the attendance of the midwife.

The Clerks of two County Councils asked the opinion of the Board as to the signing of Maternity Benefit Forms by registered medical practitioners where the patient had been delivered by un-certified women. It was the opinion of the Board that representation should be made to the General Medical Council with a view to action being taken.

In view of the power given to the London County Council to delegate its powers and duties as to the registration of Lying-in Homes, the Board re-affirmed its Resolution of July 22nd strongly approving the administration of the Act by the Council, on the motion of Miss Rosalind Paget.

#### LAST WORDS FOR 1915.

What's Brave, What's Noble,  
Let's do it.

—Shakespeare.

Heaven over-arches you and me  
And all earth's garden and the grave.

—C. Rossetti.

Let my voice sing out and over the earth  
Through all the grief and strife,  
With a golden joy in a silver mirth—  
Thank God for life.