

in this respect. They did not understand how they had to deal with these uncertified midwives, and the Council ought to put clearly before them the risks which they run.

Dr. Norman Walker (Edinburgh) was also of opinion that it was ignorance that was responsible for the non-observance of the rules by practitioners in the great majority of cases. He therefore thought that the warning notice should be in plain unmistakable terms, in order that they might have in mind what constituted the "covering" to which the Council took objection.

Sir Donald MacAlister (Glasgow), the President, pointed out that the Midwives' Act for Scotland had come into operation. It contained amendments which were thought desirable in view of the experience of the English Act. It gave great powers for the subsidy of midwives in country districts. The Notification of Births' Act was also made compulsory. So far as the Government was concerned there was no question of a lack of assistance in improving the midwifery service in the country and in rural districts.

Sir Francis Champneys, in reply, stated that in England many of the supervising authorities and local benches of Justices had not done their part in administering the Act. The words in the statute which brought under its ban only those women who "habitually for gain" attended cases of child-birth, were ridiculous and mischievous; and when the Scottish Act was before Parliament he had done his best to have them eliminated from it. His efforts were stopped by a member of Parliament, who seemed to take charge of vested interests. The result was that unfortunately these words were in the Scottish Act. He looked forward to the time when they would be eliminated from both statutes.

The motion was agreed to.

### MIDWIFERY AND NURSING IN WALES.

Mrs. Crowther, Superintendent of the South Wales Nursing Association, writes in the *Western Mail* :—

"A critical era has come in the history of nursing in the Principality, and I agree with Mr. Stephens that the question of a sufficient supply of midwives, all important as that is, is merged in a much larger one, the question of the training of Welsh-speaking district nurse-midwives, who by this time have become a necessity to the land, and in view of the increasing death-rate amongst new-born babies, and also of children under one year, it is to be hoped that Wales will now realise that she has to train her own nurses—lest the supply will run short—and that a National Association, broad-based upon the people's will, shall do this in the near future."

Mr. Arbour Stephens says in reply :—

"Mrs. Crowther's letter may mislead your readers on the subject of nurse-training, for the only institutions where nurses are properly trained

are the hospitals and infirmaries of Swansea, Cardiff, Newport, Merthyr and Pontypridd. Each of these institutions trains and gives certificates to young women after a residence of three years, but what is the value of these certificates? How do they compare with one another in value? Is it possible to standardise them? Would not a Welsh Nursing Board, affiliated to the University of Wales, meet the case, for then the examinations would be held by University examiners, and the diplomas bear the stamp of the University?"

### HIGHER EDUCATION OF MIDWIVES.

The London County Council at its meeting on Tuesday, received a report from the Higher Education Committee, who stated that they have considered a request from the Midwives Act Committee that classes may be opened for the instruction of midwives on the Roll of the Central Midwives Board. The Midwives Act Committee state that the responsibilities of midwives have greatly increased owing to the large number of medical practitioners absent on war service, and that the question is one of considerable urgency in view of the paramount necessity in the present crisis of conserving infant and maternal life. The Committee concur in the proposal of the Midwives Act Committee, and reported that they are arranging for the opening of two classes, one north and one south of the Thames. The classes will be restricted to midwives whose names are on the Roll of the Central Midwives Board. The cost will probably amount to about £175. This expenditure is not provided for in the maintenance votes, 1916-17, and a special estimate is accordingly necessary. The Committee recommended—

(a) That the following recommendation (b) be deemed to be a matter of urgency within the meaning of standing order No. 239 (b).

(b) That the special estimate (No. 131) of expenditure on maintenance account of £175, submitted by the Finance Committee in respect of the provision of classes for the instruction of midwives, be approved as an estimate of costs, debt, or liability, under section 80 (3) of the Local Government Act, 1888. The Finance Committee, having considered in its financial bearings the above-mentioned estimate, submitted the same as chargeable to maintenance account.

### INHERITED DISEASE IN CHILDREN.

Mrs. Scharlieb, M.D., is giving a course of lectures on "Inherited Disease in Children," on Wednesdays, June 21st and 28th, and July 5th, at 8 p.m., in the Robert Barnes Hall, 1, Wimpole Street, W., by the kind permission of the Royal Society of Medicine. The lectures will be illustrated by the epidiascope, and there is no charge for admission.

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