

The Midwife.

THE REVISED RULES OF THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The Revised Rules of the Central Midwives Board, which came into force on July 1st, should be read by all certified midwives who are bound by them and consequently should be acquainted with them. The term of six months' training is now in force, the only exceptions being if a woman produces a certificate of (a) three years' training as a nurse in a general hospital of not less than one hundred beds, or (b) three years' training as a nurse in a Poor Law Institution recognized by the Local Government Board as being a Training School for Nurses, or (c) enrolment as a Queen's Nurse by the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses. Candidates from general hospitals of not less than 100 beds, whose course of training provides systematic instruction in certain of the subjects required for the certificate of the Board and produce a certificate of having undergone a course of nursing of not less than three months in (a) a Children's Ward, or (b) a Gynaecological Ward, in which new born babies are received for treatment, are also exempted from a further month's training if this certificate is produced in conjunction with that of three years' general training.

Also a candidate producing a certificate of instruction in nursing from a public special hospital for women of not less than fifty beds is exempted from two of the six months' training.

SUBJECTS FOR EXAMINATION.

The examination of the Central Midwives Board will now include questions on the hygiene of pregnancy, both in relation to (a) the mother, (b) the unborn child, also on the signs of pemphigus and other skin eruptions, the venereal diseases (syphilis and gonorrhoea) in relation to their signs, symptoms, and dangers in women and children and to the risks of contagion to others, and candidates are also expected to have a knowledge of elementary physiology.

THE PRACTICE OF MIDWIVES.

A certain amount of ante-natal work is now required of midwives. When engaged to attend a labour a midwife must interview her patient at the earliest opportunity to inquire as to the course of the previous pregnancies, confinements and puerperia, as regards mother and child, and to advise as to personal and general arrangements for the confinement, and, with the consent of the patient, visit the house.

Whenever illness or abnormality has occurred in the previous pregnancy, and whenever the

previous pregnancy has ended in an abortion, a premature labour, or a still birth, the midwife, on being engaged to attend the patient in her next confinement, is instructed to explain that the case is one in which skilled medical advice is required and to urge the patient to seek advice from her medical attendant, or at a hospital or other suitable institution.

If after ceasing to attend a case the midwife is again called in to an illness of the mother or the child, connected with the confinement, certain duties in regard to explaining that medical help should be sent for, and as to notifying the Local Supervising Authority, are placed upon her. Thus in cases where the eyes are affected and there is a purulent discharge commencing within twenty-one days from the date of birth, and medical help has not been obtained for this discharge, the midwife must notify the Local Sanitary Authority.

It is stated as desirable that when a midwife ceases attendance on a patient she should advise her to avail herself of the help of Health Visitors, Maternity Centres, or Baby Welcomes.

In addition to the leaflets drawn up by Sir Francis Champneys on Ophthalmia Neonatorum and Cancer of the Womb, two new ones are included, on Gonorrhoea and Syphilis. Many generations of midwives have had no instructions as to the signs and symptoms of these diseases, or their duty when they are present, and we welcome the action of the Central Midwives Board in requiring evidence of such knowledge from candidates for its examination.

THE INFANT WELFARE CAMPAIGN.

At the annual meeting of Virol, Ltd., the chairman said that it was a striking tribute not only to the power of the British Navy, but also in an especial degree to the efficiency and courage of the Mercantile Marine, that in the circumstances of the times the business of the country, with all its vast requirements, had been carried on, and so large an export trade maintained.

The improvement in their own accounts had extended to all branches of their business, including hospitals and sanatoria, and Public Health authorities in connection with the Infant Welfare Movement.

With regard to the use of their preparation by the Public Health authorities in connection with the Infant Mortality crusade, there could be no question of the important part that proper feeding must play in the reduction of the Infant death rate. The universally acknowledged value of Virol, whether given to the child direct or through the agency of the mother, who, herself, feeds her child, confirmed the belief that in this connection, Virol stood in a unique position as a national asset.

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