

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

PENAL BOARD.

Special meetings of the Central Midwives Board were held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on July 26th and July 27th for the hearing of charges alleged against certified midwives, with the following results. Sir Francis Champneys presided.

JULY 26TH.

Struck off the Roll and Certificate Cancelled.—Blanche Alice Battershall (No. 35604), Christiana Jones (No. 5459), Mary Ann Golding (No. 212), Hannah Mincher (No. 16903), Kate Maria Pierce (No. 23176), Sarah Smith (No. 7992).

Cautioned.—Ada May Williams (No. 23739).

On Probation — Sentence Postponed. — Annie Lewis (No. 19616). Midwife Annie Lewis was defended by her solicitor, Mr. Allinson. She was charged with negligence on the count that the child, "suffering from inflammation of and discharge from the eyes, she did not explain that the case was one in which the attendance of a registered medical practitioner was required," also that she discontinued her visits while the child was still suffering in manner described. She was further charged with not being scrupulously clean, and with not taking and recording the pulse and temperature. The defence was, that she was clean, that there was no discharge when she left her patient. When she was passing the house shortly afterwards the mother called her in to look at the child's eyes.

The Inspector and Assistant Inspector of Midwives for the County were present and gave evidence. The finding of the Board was that the evidence was not sufficient to prove that the child's eyes were in the state alleged during the attendance of the midwife. Judgment was postponed for three months; should her conduct be unsatisfactory during that time, she would be struck off the roll; if fairly satisfactory, she would be put on probation for another period of three months.

Midwife Battershall was charged with "false and fraudulent misrepresentation" in respect of the boarding out of an illegitimate child, receiving ros. a week for its maintenance, and paying over to the woman in charge 8s. She was further charged with applying the sum of £10 solely to her own use, which was paid by the grandmother of the child for the purpose of having it permanently adopted and received by the Catholic Women's League. The midwife was unable to attend in person.

The case of Midwife Williams was an interesting one. The charge was that having been engaged as midwife to attend women in their confinements on eight different occasions, she employed an

uncertified woman as her substitute. The interest of the case centred in the fact of her health being so seriously impaired as to temporarily affect her mental condition. The midwife attended in person and defended herself, but Dr. Fagan, under whom she had worked and who knew her well, witnessing for her, said she was the best midwife he had ever known during his practice of 23 years. He then explained to the Board that Mrs. Williams had suffered from sciatica with increasing intensity for a considerable time; for many weeks she had been in a hospital. She had had sleepless nights, drugs had been administered to allay the intense pain, and in his opinion the combined effects had been that she was not in a condition to make accurate judgments of her conduct. The Chairman congratulated her in having so good a friend to witness for her. The sentence was in accordance with Dr. Fagan's medical opinion.

The case of Midwife Pierce was considered at some length. She was charged with being "guilty of negligence and misconduct in committing from time to time to the charge" of a woman "children under the age of two years without due enquiry as to her character and position; and further with aiding and abetting the same woman to contravene the provisions of the Children's Act, and also the Births, Deaths and Registration Acts, by notifying the birth of a child under a false name and address and by registering the birth of the same child under a false designation." The accused was defended by her solicitor, but the case went against her.

Final Reports.—Mary Ann Goodhind (No. 14843), Margaret Emery (No. 25875), Mary Frances Rhodes (No. 18242), Eleanor Steel (No. 28919). The case of the first was adjourned for another three months. The conduct of the other three being satisfactory, no further action was taken.

JULY 27TH.

On July 27th, charges were heard against five midwives with the following results:—

Struck off the Roll and Certificate cancelled.—Midwives Emma Loxham (No. 1417), Elizabeth Morgans (No. 40508) (C.M.B. Examination), Sarah Ann Wellington (No. 991), Alice Ann Wilkinson (No. 20311), Margaret Williams (No. 16053).

MONTHLY MEETING.

The monthly meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at Caxton House, on July 27th, Sir Francis Champneys presiding.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A letter was received from the Local Government Board, transmitting, for the information of the Central Midwives Board the copy of a letter addressed by the L.G.B. to the Lancashire County Council relative to the question of visits

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