

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

MONTHLY MEETING.

The monthly meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at the Board's Offices, Caxton House, S.W., on Thursday, November 9th, Sir Francis Champneys presiding.

A letter was received from the Local Government Board transmitting a letter addressed to it by the Board of Education on the subject of certain proposed grants in aid of the training of midwives.

A letter was also received from the Board of Education transmitting a draft form of regulations for grants for the training of midwives. The chairman's action in regard to this matter was approved.

In regard to a letter from the Local Government Board for Scotland, suggesting that the Board might consider the reduction of the term of training from six to four months in favour of nurses who had obtained the certificate in fewer training of that body, it was decided: "That the Local Government Board for Scotland be informed that the rules of the Central Midwives Board have only just been revised by the Board and approved by the Privy Council, and that the next revision will take place in 1921."

Dr. Hugh Powell, of Cheltenham, was approved as a lecturer until the return of Dr. Longridge from his military duties.

The action of the Chairman in regard to a letter from Sir Donald MacAlister, enquiring as to the co-ordination of midwifery training between England and Scotland, was approved.

The appointment of Dr. Lily Anita Baker, F.R.C.S.I., as an additional examiner at the Bristol centre was approved.

Eight midwives were removed from the roll at their own request.

The following applications of certified midwives for approval to undertake the practical training of pupil midwives were granted: Midwife Sarah Ann Perkins (No. 1,752) *pro tem.*, and Midwife Emily Stephens (No. 26,939) *pro hac vice.*

PENAL CASES.

A special meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at Caxton Hall, Caxton Street, Westminster, on Wednesday, November 8th, to consider charges against seven midwives, with the following results:—

Struck off the Roll and Certificate Cancelled.—Kate Belben (No. 13269), Annie Burton (No. 27904, C.M.B. exam.), Mary Ann Ellen House (No. 3568), Harriet Lane (No. 4872), and Sarah Ann Wilson (No. 20704).

Adjourned.—Harriet Mary Gaines (No. 17127). In the seventh case the charges were not proved and no action was taken.

Final Reports.—The reports asked for from the Local Supervising Authorities in the following cases were considered: Teresa Agnes Duckett

(No. 26708), Mary Ann Goodhind (No. 14843), Elizabeth Plummer (No. 590), Frances Louisa Bracey (No. 31514); no action was taken in these four cases. Bertha Flemming (No. 30137), adjourned for next meeting of the Central Midwives Board.

The charge against Midwife Burton was that she had been sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour for stealing furniture.

In the seventh case above referred to, the midwife was charged with neglecting to send at once for medical assistance for an infant with discharging eyes. The midwife was present, as were also the mother of the infant and a neighbour, both supporting the charge.

One of many charges against Midwife House was that she allowed two patients to occupy one bed during the lying-in period. The defence as to this charge was that a second woman had been taken ill whilst visiting the first patient. Other serious charges were proved.

MATERNITY AND INFANT WELFARE.

Miss Rosalind Paget, commenting in the *Times* on the Local Government Board's scheme for maternity and infant welfare, writes:—

"The quiet work, ante-natal as well as post-natal, that has been done by the certified midwife for so many years was ignored by the promoters of the present campaign, but they are just beginning to realise, especially in regard to ante-natal matters, that unless they enlist the co-operation of the midwife their efforts are doomed to failure: the reason being that 75 per cent. of working mothers are attended by midwives, who are, and always will be, the confidants and advisers of their patients, and are in possession of the field, as they have the entry into the patients' homes by invitation. We midwives are well aware of the waste of ante-natal lives; we are also aware of a good many of the causes, amongst which are drug-taking, certain constitutional diseases, and certain unhygienic conditions, including the abuse of alcohol. As it is essential for the future combating of these conditions that patients should engage their attendant as early as possible, we strongly deprecate any form of notification of pregnancy. The mothers of England object to it, and the way they will avoid it will be by only sending for their midwifery attendant at the very last minute, when it is too late to take any useful measures. We, by the nature of our work, have more opportunity than others of combating these evils early, and we, the certified midwives of England, ask you through your valuable and widely-read paper to offer our trained services to the nation in this crusade to improve the health of the mothers and infants."

As we go to press we have received the list of successful candidates at the October examination of the Central Midwives Board. The number of candidates examined was 325, and 263 passed the examiners. The percentage of failures was 19.

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