

# The Midwife.

## MIDWIFERY IN 1916.

### REVISION OF RULES OF C.M.B.

In the midwifery world during 1916 important events have been the revision of the Rules by the Central Midwives Board, and the lengthening of the term of training to six months, exceptions being made in the case of a woman who 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 recognised by the Local Government Board as being a training school for nurses; (c) enrolment as a Queen's Nurse by the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, in which case four months is substituted for not less than six. The four months may further be reduced to three if the candidate produces evidence of not less than three months' training in a children's ward, or a gynaecological ward during her general training. The revised rules came into force on July 1st.

### THE MIDWIVES (SCOTLAND) ACT.

The Midwives (Scotland) Act received the Royal Assent on December 23rd, 1915, and the Rules framed by the Board were approved by the Privy Council on August 26th, 1916, for a period of five years. The Chairman of the Board is Sir John Halliday Croom, and two of the nominees of the Lord President of the Council are certified midwives—Miss Alice Helen Turnbull, Matron of the Deaconess Hospital, Edinburgh, and Miss Isabella L. Scrimgeour, Matron of the Cottage Nurses Training Home at Govan. The term of training is the same as that prescribed under the English Act in the amended rules, but it is noteworthy that the qualification for a nurse entitled to train for the shorter period of four months is not "three years' training in a hospital of not less than 100 beds," but "three years' training as a nurse in a general hospital approved by the Board"—a sounder qualification, both because it implies investigation and knowledge on the part of the Board before approving a school, and also because there is no magic in 100 beds, especially when they are unoccupied. Incidentally it is rather anomalous that a nursing school should be approved as a training school for nurses under the Midwives Act while no such approval is possible under a Nursing Act.

The qualifications of a Midwives Board for approving nurse training schools may also be criticised.

The first examination of midwives in Scotland has now been held with credit to those concerned.

Midwives in other parts of the United Kingdom who desire to be registered in Scotland, should

notice that within two years of the passing of the Act (one of which has elapsed) certain certificates are recognised as qualifying for registration in Scotland. Amongst them are the certificates of the Central Midwives Board for England, and that of the London Obstetrical Society. The present is therefore the opportunity of those holding such certificates who wish to register in Scotland, because at the expiration of that time, until the English Act is amended, permitting it to grant its certificate to a woman trained and certified as a midwife in any other part of His Majesty's Dominions which admits to its register midwives certified under the English Act, such midwives will only be able to obtain admission to the Scottish Roll by passing the examination of the Scottish Board as that Board is only entitled to grant its certificate to Midwives from countries which give reciprocity of treatment to Scottish midwives.

### IS IRELAND TO FOLLOW?

The President and Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, in June last, passed a resolution urging on the Government the necessity of passing a Midwives Act for Ireland. In that case let us hope we shall have a Consolidated Midwives Act for the three kingdoms, for to have to register under three different Boards would be very vexatious.

### COVERING UNCERTIFIED PRACTICE.

The passing of the Midwives Act in England has given the Central Midwives Board the power to protect the public from uncertified midwives, and the certified midwives from illegal competition, but, so long as "covering" of the uncertified by medical practitioners continues, the intention of the Act is frustrated. This is recognised by the General Medical Council, which has taken a serious view of cases of covering midwives which have been brought, and proved, before it. It has, moreover, issued a warning notice on the subject.

### SCOTTISH MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION.

The formation of a Scottish Midwives Association is a matter for congratulation, and we wish it a prosperous future.

### A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

At the close of this volume we wish all our readers "A Happy New Year." It will be so if, in the words of Abraham Lincoln, we "strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up this nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace."