

Mayor is offering War Saving Certificates to every baby born in the Borough during Baby Week.

Bath will have an exhibition and fête. Demonstrations at the Technical School of teaching mothercraft to elder school girls.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

PENAL CASES.

A Special Meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Westminster, on Tuesday, June 19th, to consider charges against nine midwives, with the following results:—

Struck off the Roll and Certificate cancelled.—Sarah Miller (No. 7336), Kezia Pierson (No. 19957), Sarah Hannal Taylor (No. 17421), Eliza Yeoman (No. 2080).

Cautioned.—Alice Louise Roadnight (No. 38391)
Judgment suspended, a report to be furnished in three and six months.—Margaret Dearlove (No. 23949), Mary Kelly (No. 15806), Ann Sands (No. 8319), Margaret Ann Waterhouse (No. 39255).

Adjourned for judgment, final report.—Elizabeth Wallington having notified her intention to cease practising, the Board desired that should she resume she should be put under probation.

Interim Report.—Mary Ellen Robinson (31909) was struck off.

There were two defended cases, Midwives Dearlove and Waterhouse. There were two charges of falsely certifying still births, when, in fact, the infants had lived.

Midwife Roadnight expressed her extreme regret for her action. She had made up her mind that it was impossible for the child to be born alive, but it lived fifteen minutes. The inspector of midwives, who was present, said she was sure that the midwife had no bad motive for her action, and the Board took the same view.

The second case, that of Midwife Yeoman, was of a serious nature. The midwife had delivered three children, two being twins, who lived about a fortnight, and the third stillborn. She caused all three to be buried in one box for a fee of 2s. 6d. falsely representing that the contents of the box were "a still born female child." She had received from the mother of the twins the sum of 15s. for their burial. Her defence was that she was put to for money.

ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE TRAINING AND SUPPLY OF MIDWIVES.

On behalf of this useful Association a Drawing-room Meeting was held (by the kind invitation of Mrs. McKinnon Wood), at 16, Portland Place, W., on June 14th. The guests were hospitably entertained to tea before the meeting. The key-note of the meeting and which all the speakers struck, was, naturally, the great importance of safeguarding the lives and health of the mothers and

babes of the country, because—as one of them remarked—"each baby is worth its weight in gold." Mrs. Ebden (Chairman of the Executive Committee), built her hope for the future on the declaration by Lord Rhondda that he intends to devote much of his official time to promoting schemes for the preservation of infant life.* The need for more and more midwives was very urgent, and—as the cost of their training had now risen from £18 to £30—a great increase in funds was also a pressing necessity. The increase in expenditure in this direction was due to the fact that the period of training had now increased from four months to six. This was a matter for congratulation—although the question of finance, through it, becomes more serious.

"The problem of the child is the problem of to-day," remarked Dr. Scharlieb, who went on to give alarming statistics. 800,000 babies are, she said, born every year; and one-eighth of that number die during the first year of life! In connection with the great importance of the work of midwives, which she strongly emphasised, she wisely and sympathetically drew attention to the conditions under which they live and work, which, she affirmed, were not good enough to attract the best sort of women. What was wanted was proper social status for midwives; their miserable pay of £1 per week—hardly sufficient to keep body and soul together—must be increased. They must have a higher social status, better pay and an adequate pension for old age. She spoke with great appreciation of the exhaustive report by Dr. Janet Campbell, recently published. In this book, the speaker said she learnt something that she did not know before, namely, that our trained midwives, out of their own pockets, had to supply all the requisites for their work, such as antiseptics, ointments, clinical thermometers, &c. Also that when a doctor had to be called in, the midwife made herself responsible for his fee of one guinea. No blame, she said, must be attached to the doctor; but it was an iniquity that the midwife should have to pay it. From every point of view, Dr. Scharlieb said, the midwife is of infinite value, and yet we treat her as a person of very little importance.

Miss Robinson (Chairman of the Training Sub-Committee), who was the last speaker, called attention to the bad housing conditions which still prevail in many places, and to the seriousness of such conditions in connection with maternity and infant life.

Mr. McKinnon Wood bore out her statements in an interesting speech from the chair, by relating that in one small district there were no less than 1,460 one-room tenements. He was in agreement with Mrs. Scharlieb that the status of midwives should be raised, and that the midwife should be just as much respected as the doctor.

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. McKinnon Wood. B. K.

*Lord Rhondda has now resigned the Presidency of the Local Government Board.

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