

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD.

The monthly meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at the new offices, Queen Anne's Gate Mansions, Dartmouth Street, S.W., on January 18th, Sir Francis Champneys presiding.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE.

A letter was considered from a midwife formerly approved for the training of pupils with reference to the circumstances and conditions under which certain certificates signed on behalf of a candidate for Examination, and purporting to bear the midwife's signature, had, in fact, without notice to the Board, been signed by another person not qualified to sign them.

It was agreed that the midwife be informed that the Board highly disapproves of her action in allowing anyone but herself to sign her name without an accompanying explanation to the Board.

That the candidate be informed that the Board has taken notice of her statement to the secretary that the midwife "ought to know better than allowing her daughter to sign on her behalf"; whereas, the candidate was present at the time this was done, and done at least without her protest; and also of her having signed a statement in her schedule that "the above certificates are in all respects correct and true." The Board highly disapproves of her conduct, and will make a note of the occurrence. Meanwhile, it permits her to enter for the February Examination.

Correspondence was considered with a candidate of Netherlands nationality desirous of entering for the Board's Examination. A letter was read on the same subject from the Consul-General of the Netherlands. A letter was also read on the same subject from the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

It was agreed that in view of the communication received from the Commissioner of Police, Anna Schut, alias Smidt, be admitted to Examination.

Correspondence was considered with a candidate for Examination, who had tendered a certificate of marriage which had been tampered with. It was agreed that, having furnished the Board with a fresh and unaltered copy of her certificate of marriage, the candidate be admitted to Examination.

Correspondence was also considered with a candidate for Examination, who had tendered a certificate of birth which had been tampered with. It was resolved that the candidate be not admitted to Examination until she has explained to the satisfaction of the Board the circumstances attending the alteration of her birth certificate.

Correspondence was considered with the Matron of an Institution recognised by the Board as a Training School for midwives, with reference to

the Examination Schedules of two candidates on whose behalf she had signed the certificates of training certifying that on January 1, 1917, they had undergone a course of training in midwifery extending over a period of six months, when, in fact, their training had then extended over a period of less than five months as she well knew.

It was agreed that the Institution be informed that the Board takes a very serious view of the signing of untruthful certificates; that in the present case there is no question that the action of the Matron was due to an "oversight," or that "it was unintentional": that the Act of Parliament (Sec. XII) provides penalties of twelve months' hard labour for this offence: that the offence is aggravated by the fact that the Institution is one from which the Board might have expected a high standard of honour: that the Board, in view of the gravity of the offence, postpones judgment until its next Session.

A letter was read from the Colonial Office transmitting a transcript of an Ordinance passed by the legislature of the Straits Settlements, entitled: "An Ordinance to amend the Midwives Ordinance, 1915," and requesting the observations of the Board thereon. It was resolved that the Colonial Secretary be thanked for his communication, and that he be informed that the Board notes that the New Ordinance incorporates most of the amendments suggested by its letter of October 15th, 1915; it observes however that the legislature of the Straits Settlements has not thought it desirable to omit the words "habitually and for gain" occurring in Section 14 (2) of the Ordinance of 1915. The presence of these words in Section 1 (2) of the Midwives Act, 1902, has been found productive of much difficulty in enforcing the provisions of the Act; it is hoped that an early opportunity may be found of amending the Midwives Act by the omission of these words.

A letter was considered from the Town Clerk of Middlesbrough enclosing a copy of a communication addressed by the Coroner of Middlesbrough to the Medical Officer of Health, stating that at an inquest held by him on October 12th, 1916, on the body of a new-born child, the Jury had added a rider to their verdict expressing the view that a midwife should not be allowed to notify as stillborn a child born before her arrival at the case where no registered medical practitioner has been in attendance at the time of birth. It was resolved that the Town Clerk of Middlesbrough be thanked for his letter, and that he be informed that the Board has noted the suggestion conveyed in the rider of the Coroner's Jury for consideration on the next revision of the Rules.

A letter was considered from the London County Council, transmitting for the information of the Board, a copy of their scheme for the diagnosis of venereal diseases.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)