

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The Eighty-ninth Examination of the Central Midwives Board was held in London and the Provinces on October 4th. 634 candidates were examined, and 507 passed the examiners. The percentage of failures was 20.

APPLICATION FOR RESTORATION OF NAME TO THE ROLL.

On the recommendation of the Penal Cases Committee, the application of Midwife Rosa Hollings (late No. 17945) for the restoration of her name to the Roll has been granted.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD FOR IRELAND.

The Central Midwives Board for Ireland held a meeting on Thursday, 20th ult., at the Offices of the Minister of Health, 33, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. There were present: Sir E. Coey Bigger (in the Chair), Sir A. J. Horne, Professor Corby, Dr. H. J. Warnock, Mrs. Blunden, Miss Michie, Miss J. H. Kelly, and Miss O'Carroll. The Secretary, Mr. J. E. Devlin, was in attendance.

The Secretary reported that at the recent examination for Midwives the answering of the candidates showed a distinct improvement on previous examinations, several scoring as much as 95 per cent. of the total marks. It was decided to hold the next examination on February 7th and 8th, 1922.

The Board made some further amendments in the Rules and directed that they be submitted to the Privy Council for approval.

THE TECHNIQUE OF BREAST FEEDING.

One of the most hopeful aspects of preaching the gospel of correct infant feeding is that the taught become teachers in their turn. Miss Jentie Paterson writes:—

"Each mother convinced forms a new circle, whether in the East or the West End. The West End mother lacks the continuous expert advice offered free to her East End sister. Just lately I have come across the results of some terrible dietetic errors in the West End of Glasgow, errors and results which could have been entirely obviated if the children's attendants had had a working knowledge of breast-feeding and realised its importance, and known how to modify supplementary food to the human standard."

Mothers who have proved the value for themselves, and their infants, of the instruction they have received, are the most convincing missionaries.

THE HARVEIAN ORATION.

Dr. Herbert Spencer, F.R.C.P. (Lond.), who delivered the Harveian Oration at the Royal College of Physicians last month, gave some interesting quotations from the writings of Harvey. He tells us that: "Harvey was the first to describe accurately the foetal circulation and the great development of vessels in the pregnant uterus. He also had observed, as Ambroise Paré had done before him, the softening and loosening of the sacro-iliac and pubic articulations before labour. He gives a careful description of the lie and posture of the foetus in utero, states that it executes the somersault ('dives down') a little before labour and that it sometimes changes its presentation from time to time. 'For he swimmeth in a water and moveth himself to and fro, he stretcheth himself now this way and now that, and so is variously inflected and tumbled up and down, in so much that sometimes, being entangled in his own navel-string, he is strangely ensnared'; and the Great-bellied women know full well that he doth sometimes acquire a different scituation when they find the Child kick sometimes above, sometimes below, and now on this side and at other times on that.' . . . 'It must not be denied that there are many crafty and fraudulent women which for lucre sake, or for fear of punishment or infamy will feign and swear they are with child. And likewise it is well known that others are easily deceived and do conceive themselves to be with child when it is no such thing.' . . . He alludes to cases in which the foetus is born completely enclosed in the unruptured membranes, and cases of adherent placenta 'oftentimes hardly divided from the uterus which doth induce evil symptoms, noisome smells, and sometimes gangreen whereby the mother is brought into imminent danger.'

"Fortunately we are able to judge of the high esteem in which Harvey was held as an obstetric physician by the writings of his contemporary Percivall Willughby (1596-1685), who was the son of Sir Percival Willughby, of Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire. . . . Willughby quotes his honoured friend Dr. Harvey on no less than sixteen occasions, attributes all his knowledge to him and recommends his work in the following words, with which I will conclude: 'I know none but Dr. Harvey's directions and method, the which I wish all midwives to observe and follow, and oft to read over and over again; and, in so doing, they will better observe, understand and remember the sayings and doings of that most worthy, good and learned Dr., whose memory ought to be had for ever in great esteem with midwives and child-bearing women.'"

Midwives and nurses will find the whole of this Oration published in the *Lancet* of October 22nd, of great interest and profit.

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