

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

A meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held on November 3rd at 1, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, S.W.1.

A letter was considered from the House-Governor of the London Hospital, asking that the Rule as to the first five cases being intern cases may continue to be inoperative as regards the London Hospital.

It was resolved that the House-Governor of the London Hospital be informed that the Board has not received from any large Lying-in Hospital or large General Hospital with Maternity Wards any request for the waiving of the Rule in question, and sees nothing in the House-Governor's letter to justify exceptional treatment in the case of the London Hospital.

A letter was received from the Clerk to the Guardians of the Birmingham Union, asking for the approval of two Lecturers at the Guardians' Institutions.

It was resolved that the Clerk to the Guardians of the Birmingham Union be informed that: (a) Birmingham University, having arranged for the holding of the necessary Course of Lectures to pupil midwives in Birmingham, the Board has decided to approve that Course only. (b) Under the circumstances the Board can only approve the Courses at the Guardians' Institutions which are already in progress, and at the end of these Courses the pupils should go to Birmingham University for Lectures.

A letter was also received from the Secretary of University College, Leicester, stating that the College is prepared to be responsible for the Courses of Lectures to be delivered to pupil midwives in Leicester, and enclosing a provisional Scheme in connection with the Lectures for approval.

It was resolved that the Board thanks the Authorities of University College, Leicester, for undertaking the responsibility of the Courses of Lectures in Leicester and that the Scheme submitted be approved.

The Report on the work of the Board for the year ending March 31st, 1927, was considered, and it was resolved that the Report, as amended, be approved, signed by the Chairman and the Secretary, and forwarded to the Ministry of Health.

PEMPHIGUS IN THE NEW-BORN CHILD.

We are officially informed that the Central Midwives Board, after an experience of nearly a quarter of a century, in which attacks of Pemphigus have occurred in the practice of midwives, affecting several children, with a large percentage of fatal results, felt that the verbal description of the affection failed to carry a picture of the disease to those who read it, and that nothing but a definite coloured drawing was likely to be effectual.

It is therefore circulating a pamphlet, with the best drawing of the disease obtainable, to all practising midwives, and trusts that improved results will follow.

Upon inquiry we learn from the Secretary that this pamphlet can be obtained from the Board's Offices at 1, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Westminster, S.W.1, price 6d. or 6½d. post free. The pamphlet, with the very beautiful colour drawing (*Pemphigus acutus neonatorum*) would, we feel sure, be of interest and value to maternity nurses as well as midwives; and also to Sister-Tutors for teaching purposes. In view of the very infectious and fatal character of the disease, it is important that it should be recognised and reported at the earliest possible moment.

AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE.

I was night sister at an Infirmary. The maternity block was separate from the main block, and a junior nurse was on duty there during the night.

It was my duty to take charge of all maternity cases occurring during the night, calling the midwifery pupil just in time to deliver the child, and, of course, calling the doctor, whenever necessary.

I also had to do my last round after six a.m., when I took the night report, and to take the day nurses' breakfast at 6.30 a.m.

One morning at 5.50 a.m. a maternity patient arrived, multipara, who said she had had three pains since 5 a.m., but none since she left home. It had taken her 25 minutes to walk to the Infirmary.

Calling a probationer, I asked her to take the patient to the maternity block, and ask the nurse on duty there to give her a bath and an enema. In the meantime I proceeded to do my last round with what speed I could.

Barely had I arrived in the second ward when the lift bell rang. "Sister, come to Maternity quickly," was the request. "The baby has been born."

I went, and as I climbed the stairs, a sound of smacking guided me to the bathroom.

What a sight greeted me! Blood! Blood was all over the place, over nurse, over the child (which she was smacking, as she had seen me do a few times) all over the floor, walls, and up to the ceiling. The mother apparently in a bath of blood.

"Nurse," I cried, "whatever made you cut the cord? You are not a midwife. Get me the ligatures quick."

Taking the child, I next pulled the plug out of the bath, wondering how much was blood, and how much was water, and marvelling that the mother was not collapsed. Next tied the baby's cord and wrapped it up warmly.

Nurse and I then got the mother to bed, the after-birth came normally and baby revived.

When time allowed I asked nurse what had happened. She had prepared the bath, and the mother had just stepped into it, not yet sat down, when, with one pain, the child was born and precipitated into the water. Its weight broke the cord.

Not knowing what else to do, nurse rescued it, and proceeded to smack it to revive it. In her flurry forgetting, or not realising that the cord must be tied.

"All's well that ends well."

Mother and child "progressed favourably!" An unwanted child. Truly, as Matron remarked, "Angels themselves seem to specially look after such as these, at times."

ALOSIA.

LAST WORDS FOR 1927.

"With cheerful steps the path of duty run.
God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,
But thou thyself wouldst do it, couldst thou see
The end of all events as well as He."

"Thundering and bursting
In torrents, in waves—
Carolling and shouting
Over tombs, amid graves—
See! on the cumber'd plain
Clearing a stage,
Scattering the past about,
Comes the New Age."