

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

MONTHLY MEETING.

At the meeting of the Central Midwives Board on December 2nd, held at 1, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Westminster, S.W.1, it was decided that the following be the dates of the Ordinary Meetings of the Board for the year 1927:—

January 6	June 2
February 3	July 14
March 3	October 6
April 7	November 3
May 5	December 1

The Secretary reported the death of Dr. W. E. Fothergill, one of the Examiners at the Manchester Liverpool Centre, and the following Resolution was passed:— That the Board records its appreciation of the valuable service rendered by the late W. E. Fothergill as an Examiner at the Manchester-Liverpool Centre.

Dr. Jarvis was appointed as a Delegate of the Board at the Conference of the Royal Sanitary Institute to be held at Hastings in July, 1927.

The New Rules.

The new Rules of the Central Midwives Board, containing several alterations and additions, will come into force on January 1st next, and all Certified Midwives should acquaint themselves with them. Copies may be obtained from Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., Ltd., 1, New Street Square, E.C.4, price 7½d. by post.

The December Examination.

The results of the December examination of the Central Midwives Board are now announced as follows:—Candidates examined, 674; passed, 521. The percentage of failures was 22.6.

Registers must not be destroyed.

The Central Midwives Board has recently ordered the subjoined note to be inserted in all Registers of cases issued by it:—

ON NO ACCOUNT MUST THIS REGISTER BE DESTROYED. IT MAY BE OF IMPORTANCE FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE MIDWIFE HERSELF.

It being important for the proper working of the Act that all documents should be available, all midwives should carefully preserve the Register; and if it should become impossible or inconvenient to a midwife to preserve an old Register, she should hand it over to the Local Supervising Authority or the Institution for which she works. If a midwife destroys her Register she may destroy evidence which may be of importance for her own protection.

Midwives cannot be too careful in preserving evidence which will prove their actions in regard to a case if these are called in question.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE TRAINING AND SUPPLY OF MIDWIVES.

Princess Beatrice, President of the Council of the Association for Promoting the Training and Supply of Midwives, presided at a meeting of the Council on December 9th, at Dacre House, Dean Farrar Street, Westminster.

Mrs. Ebdon, Chairman of the Executive Committee, reported that during the year 350 applications for training had been received. The accepted applicants would go into training for 12 months, instead of for six, as heretofore.

The Association has had an anxious time in regard to finances, but has now received assistance from some of the City Companies and the Corn, Coal and Finance Committee.

AN ADVENTURE IN MIDWIFERY.

We are glad to note that Mrs. Breckinridge, whose work as director of the Kentucky Committee for Mothers and Babies is well known, has gained the Quarterly Award of the Harmon Foundation for a paper printed in the *Survey Graphic* concerning this work. We are told that "this story of courageous service to mountaineer mothers from Hurricane Creek to Hell-fer-Sartin wins first place and an award of \$250 (£50) in the first of a series of awards for public achievement offered through Survey Associates by the Harmon Foundation. The contest was for an account of some experiment, invention or achievement in the field of public health.

The Nurses' work is carried forward on horseback. "As our staff has grown we have kept one horse ahead, because horses haven't the resistance of nurses and need more frequent relief. Each nurse saddles and feeds and grooms her own animal, and all the horses must be fed by seven in the morning so that we can get what our neighbours call a 'soon start.' The riding is always difficult and often dangerous. During the winter, when the cold spells come and the streams freeze over, the horses, shod with ice nails, slip and stumble and often crash through with bleeding hocks. Sometimes a way must be made for them out to the rapids, where one commonly finds the fords, by a chivalrous mountaineer with his axe. When the 'tides' come the fords of the unbridged river are impassable. But one night Miss Rockstroh swam the river on Lady Jane—saddle bags and all—to a confinement case, following the father on his white mule.

Our horses were all gallantly responsive to their obligations even when, as a colored mammy of my childhood used to say, 'it don't ease them none.' Teddy Bear leaps a five barred gate for the sheer joy of it. Sandy knew the tree Miss Caffin chose for hitching, by the precipice, wasn't safe, and demurred a bit, but stood by it so well that when Miss Caffin looked back, Sandy and the tree were disappearing over the precipice together. It took nearly an hour to revive him, for the breath was just naturally knocked out of his body. Then he quietly resumed the round of pre-natal and post partum-visits which his fall had interrupted."

Auld Reekie, re-christened from Rick, in honour of Miss Ireland of Scotland, whose person he carried faithfully on our initial survey of births and death, is affectionate and biddable to the point of obsession. He trumpets aloud his grief if left alone. He it was Miss Logan rode over the twenty-mile trail from the railroad to Hyden when she came in just before Christmas, crossing three mountains and many streams and the Middle Fork with its waters up to the girths—and she never to her knowledge having been on a horse before!

Like horses, like riders! In offering posts to its workers the Kentucky Committee for Mothers and Babies, Inc., could, with few changes, quote Garibaldi's speech to his Roman soldiers:—

"What I have to offer you is fatigue, danger, struggle, with risk of death; the chill of the cold night in the free air, and heat under the burning sun; no lodgings, uncertain provisions, forced marches, dangerous outposts—those who love humanity and their country may follow me."

To such an appeal the workers have responded more quickly than we could receive them.

We ask ourselves questions like this:—

Will our maternal and infant death-rate in rural sections of Kentucky be lowered by this system of nurse-midwives to figures comparable with those of the Old World?"

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