

# The Midwife.

## THE NEW RULES OF THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD.

The new Rules of the Central Midwives Board, containing several alterations and additions, came into force on July 1st. Copies may be obtained from Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne and Co., Ltd., 1, New Street Square, E.C.4. Price 7½d. by post.

## A JUDGE ON THE LAW REGARDING INFANTICIDE.

In his charge to the Grand Jury at the opening of Liverpool Assizes recently, Mr. Justice Rowlatt, referring to the law in regard to infanticide and child murder, said:—

"The law upon the matter is unsatisfactory, and it is right that every appropriate opportunity should be taken to call public attention to it. It is a felony to procure abortion, and it is murder to take the life of a child when it is fully born, but to take the life of a child while it is being born, and before it is fully born, is no offence whatever.

"The legal description of what is meant by full, complete birth is that it must be proved the entire child has actually been born into the world in a living state. The fact that it has breathed is not conclusive proof of that. There must be an independent circulation in the child before it can be counted alive. The result of the law is that the newly-born child in many cases can be destroyed with impunity, and I do not think it very creditable to our Legislature that the defect in the law should have been left unremedied. What is undoubtedly wanted is a short Act of Parliament to make it an offence to destroy the life of the child when it is being delivered. That would remedy the defect and abolish the anomaly."

## DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE WORKING OF THE MIDWIVES ACTS.

The first meeting of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Health to consider the working of the Midwives Acts, 1902-1926, with particular reference to the training of midwives (including its relation to the education of medical students in midwifery) and the conditions under which midwives are employed, took place on Tuesday, June 5th, under the Chairmanship of Sir Robert Bolam, O.B.E. It was decided that the meetings of the Committee should be held in private, but that communications giving brief details of the meetings should be issued for the information of the Press from time to time.

Mr. Chamberlain, the Minister of Health, has appointed Mrs. Barton, J.P., as an additional member of the above Departmental Committee, on the urgent representation of the Women's Co-operative Guild.

## DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION TO MATERNAL MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY OF MEDICAL AND SURGICAL KNOWLEDGE.

A Departmental Committee has been appointed by the Minister of Health, of which Sir George Newman, K.C.B., M.D., F.R.C.P., Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health is Chairman "to advise on the application to maternal mortality and morbidity of the medical and surgical knowledge at present available, and to enquire into the needs and direction of further research work."

The members of the Committee, in addition to the Chairman, are:—Professor F. J. Browne, M.D., F.R.C.S.; Dame Janet M. Campbell, D.B.E., M.D., M.S.; Mrs. Ethel Cassie, M.D.; Mr. Leonard Colebrook, M.B.;

Professor Archibald Donald, M.D., F.R.C.P.; Mr. C. E. S. Flemming, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.; Sir Walter M. Fletcher, K.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.; Dr. Harold Kerr, O.B.E.; Mr. W. H. F. Oxley, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.; Professor Miles H. Phillips, M.D., F.R.C.S.; Dr. C. E. Tangye and Mr. O. L. V. S. de Wesselow, M.B., F.R.C.P.

The Secretary of the Committee is Dr. Margaret Hogarth, of the Ministry of Health. All communications regarding the work of the Committee should be addressed to Dr. Hogarth, at the Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W.1.

## DEATHS OF WOMEN IN CHILDBIRTH.

Mr. Tasker asked the Minister of Health in the House of Commons on June 14th the percentage of deaths of mothers at childbirth where doctors attended the birth of children with uncertificated midwives in attendance; and what was the percentage of deaths of mothers at childbirth when attended by certificated midwives only.

Mr. Chamberlain replied: No complete statistics are available on these points. As regards the last part of the question, I may refer the hon. Member to p. 42 of the recent report issued by my department on the "Protection of Motherhood," in which is a summary of the results of an analysis of the midwifery work of the Queen Victoria Jubilee Institute over a period of years.

## MATERNAL MORBIDITY.

Although the Maternal Mortality rate remains stationary it is satisfactory that so high an authority as Professor Louise McLroy recently stated that "though there might be no fewer deaths, there was a vast improvement in health after confinement. Post-natal care was closely linked with the welfare of the child, while ante-natal treatment, proper care and rest, was of the utmost importance, especially to expectant mothers suffering from heart trouble. Much suffering could be alleviated and the health of the child vastly improved by correct ante-natal treatment. Many of the leading hospitals were now publishing lists of those mothers who died but who had ante-natal treatment and those who had not. The difference was marked. The causes of the majority of so-called "diseases of women" were bad maternity conditions. To-day the majority of these diseases were diminishing rapidly, and some operations that used to be performed regularly were now forgotten."

The great thing to learn was to leave things alone and let Nature have her way.

## ALLENBURYS FOODS.

The essential importance of an adequate supply of Vitamin D in infancy has long been established; rickets and other infantile disorders are known to be direct results of its deficiency in the baby's dietary. In the manufacture of the "Allenburys" Milk Foods the greatest care has always been taken to conserve the natural Vitamin D of the cow's milk.

The recent discovery that Vitamin D can be produced synthetically by the exposure of certain substances to the action of ultra-violet light is being applied in the manufacture of the "Allenburys" Milk Foods, so that their natural Vitamin D content is now augmented by the addition of definite proportions of Vitamin D produced by this method of irradiation.

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