

# The Midwife.

## CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The new Rules framed by the Central Midwives Board, under the Midwives Acts, 1902, 1918, and 1926, and published under its authority, and may be obtained from Messrs. Spottiswoode, Ballantyne and Co., Ltd., 1, New Street Square, London, E.C.4, price 6d., post free 7½d.

At the August Examination, 606 candidates were examined, and 514 passed the examiners. The percentage of failures was 15.2.

### IN AID OF QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

Lord and Lady Howard de Walden propose to hold an exhibition at Seaford House, Belgrave Square, next May of old English, Irish, and Scottish family plate (previous to 1739), in aid of Queen Charlotte's Hospital.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TWELVE-HOURLY VISIT.

"F. W." writing in the *Nursing Journal of India*, says:—

The following account emphasises the necessity for the "12 hourly visit." In India it is not always easy for the midwife to pay a visit within the twelve hours after delivery, but it should be considered as one of the most important of our duties. I well remember one of the leading questions put to me at the oral part of the C.M.B. examination. Namely, what questions do you ask upon your first visit after delivery?" I think the answer ought to be:—

- "Has the patient passed water?"
- "Has the patient had any sleep?"
- "Has the baby been to the breast?"
- "Has the baby passed water and motion?"

One question remains to be asked by the midwife of herself. "How is the baby's cord?"

I think one important thing to remember with regard to the cord is that it shrinks during the baby's bath. A second ligature should, therefore, be tied after the bath. But no matter how careful the midwife is, sometimes as in this case, it is not sufficient. Sometimes the gelatinous matter shrinks so quickly that the ligature is quite loose at the 12 hourly visit.

A young educated man came one afternoon to the bungalow and said that he had heard of several cases that we had attended, which had been most successful and he would like us to attend his wife who was expecting to be confined shortly. It was her fourth baby, the other three had all died on the fifth day after delivery. We booked the case and said we would like to make a preliminary visit and a day was arranged. However, a note came just before we were preparing to go to her, saying that for some reason it would not be convenient for us to go that day, and so "your visit has been postmanded!" (He was a clerk, hence the technical language!) So it happened that when we were next called, she was actually in labour. The case proceeded normally and easily. The placenta was expelled without difficulty, but the cord was short and very thick indeed, and was one mass of lumpy irregularities so that it was difficult to find a suitable place for the ligatures. After separation the cut end continued to bleed quite freely. Another ligature was applied as tightly as possible, but the blood still continued to ooze, and so yet another one was tied, and the cord dressed in the usual way. When we went back to dress the cord again, we saw that not even the third ligature had stopped the hæmorrhage completely.

The cord came off on the tenth day and left a nasty place which was treated twice with blue stone, and finally dried up after about a week. You can well believe how thankful we were when the fifth day passed uneventfully. The father came early to tell us the baby had "inside" fever, and I think he quite expected the child to die!

Though the father could give no striking details as to the death of the first three babies, we wondered whether there had been irregularities in the cord each time and the unusual hæmorrhage, for which the dais' only remedy was more, yet more ashes, and mud, and cow-dung, the application of which set up tetanus or septic poisoning.

### THE BABIES OF LAPLAND.

The nomadic Laplanders who inhabit the most northerly province of Sweden, and are also to be found in Norway and Finland, numbering some 9,000 all told, are a most interesting and picturesque people, and their babies are no exception to the rule. When the mothers are at work the little Lap babies are sewn snugly into a bag with only their heads protruding, and are slung on to the poles of the tents.

The chief food of the Laplanders is reindeer flesh, and occasionally fish in summer time. Concerning the Mongolian Laps, we read:—"You can't see a more impressive sight than these small people in their picturesque native costumes, and high-pointed blue caps finished off with bright red tassels, coming down the mountain slopes urging their herds of silvery-grey reindeer in front of them. The reindeer are the chief purveyors of food and clothing to the Laps. During the winter the Lap is dependent on them when travelling over the snowy wastes in the fiell-regions; the reindeer being hitched up to a boatlike sledge called 'akja.' The Laps live in encampments consisting of several round tent-shaped huts built of birch trees set closely together and covered by birch bark and turf. Sometimes several Lap-families live in such a hut. They receive the stranger kindly, and it is well worth while to visit them. Creep through their narrow door-opening, lay yourself down on the soft, exquisite reindeer furs, which cover the hard earthen floor, and watch the old Lap-wife in her dark blue dress, ornamented with red and yellow borders, make ready the coffee over the family hearth—an open fire always blazing in the middle of the hut—the smoke going out through an opening in the roof. You are put back centuries and centuries of time, and you feel that all the invisible bonds that link you to civilisation are momentarily cut off."

### SCHOOL CHILDREN'S ESSAY COMPETITION, 1928.

In connection with National Baby Week this year, the National Baby Week Council offered prizes to school children for the best essay dealing with the problem of how to preserve the health of babies. Under the regulations, the essays had to be written on Friday, July 6th, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and head teachers were asked to submit at least two essays considered to be the best from their schools. It is interesting to note that approximately 20,000 school children in the country were at the same time during National Baby Week writing an essay on child welfare.

The prescribed title of the essay was:—

"Give six good rules for managing a one-year-old baby and write not more than twenty lines on one of them."

The honour of winning the first prize was gained by Doris Tyrrell, aged 13 years, Eldon Road Girls' School, Edmonton, N.9.

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