

The Midwife.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD.

At the recent examination of the Central Midwives' Board, the number of candidates examined was 794, and the number who satisfied the examiners 680. The percentage of failures was 14.4.

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL.

The following notice has been issued by the General Medical Council:—

It is provided in the Midwives Act, 1902, the Midwives (Scotland) Act, 1915, and the Midwives (Ireland) Act, 1918, respectively, that "no woman shall habitually and for gain attend women in childbirth otherwise than under the direction of a qualified medical practitioner, unless she be certified under this Act."

And whereas it has been made to appear to the Council that certain registered medical practitioners have, from time to time, by their countenance or assistance or by issuing certificates, notifications, or other documents of a kindred character, knowingly enabled uncertified women, on pretence that such women were under their direction, to attend women in childbirth, contrary to law.

And whereas such conduct is in the opinion of the Council discreditable to the profession of medicine, and calculated to defeat the purpose of the Statutes made in the public interest for the protection of mothers and infants:

Notice is hereby given that any registered practitioner who is proved to have so offended will be liable to have his name erased from the Medical Register.

BLOCK GRANTS IN AID OF MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The National Baby Week Council, 117, Piccadilly, London, W., asks us to say that it views with alarm the proposals at present before Parliament to substitute "block" for "percentage" grants in support of the Maternity and Child Welfare Service. This service is a young and growing one that has not yet developed so as to secure to the children of the country as a whole the benefits made possible by the Maternity and Child Welfare Act. Hitherto 50 per cent. of the net approved expenditure on maternity and child welfare work has been borne by the State. Under the new Local Government Bill a block grant in respect of social and other services (maternity and child welfare, public health, roads, etc.) will be made to the appropriate Local Authority which will, except for minor safeguards in the Bill, itself decide how much of it is to be spent on maternity and child welfare. The question is—will maternity and child welfare receive an adequate proportion of the block grant to allow for much needed expansion, or will local factors operate to restrict expenditure on and hinder the progress of this vital work? The National Baby Week Council at its last meeting passed a resolution expressing its apprehension of the proposed change.

REPRESENTATION ON IRISH BOARD.

The Irish Nurses' Union, 29, South Anne Street, Dublin, having been consulted by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health in the Irish Free State as to "who are fit and proper persons to be appointed"

as midwives' representatives on the Central Midwives' Board, have forwarded the following names:—

Miss Ellen Healy, R.G.N. and C.M.B., Asst. Supt. Child Welfare, Dublin City.

Mrs. Cann, 14, Dargle Road, Drumcondra, C.M.B., engaged in private practice in Dublin.

Mrs. Margaret Price, C.M.B., Finglas Dispensary, Midwife.

Mrs. McMahan, C.M.B., Limerick Dispensary, Midwife.

The Union has again explained that they are of opinion that the intention of the Act was that the positions of "midwives' representatives" should be filled by persons with actual knowledge and experience of a working midwife's practice, and also suggested that the Maternity Hospitals might be asked to agree together on one representative, as their interests in regard to the midwifery profession are identical. Hitherto two of the four midwives' representatives were Matrons of Maternity Hospitals.

Following the intervention of the Labour Party in Ireland in April last, on behalf of the Union's claim for representation when a vacancy which had arisen on the Board was being filled, the Minister gave a promise that when the new Board was being constituted in 1929, the Nurses' Union, as the only organisation representing midwives as well as general trained nurses in Ireland would be given full representation.

THE CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF STILLBIRTH.

An interesting Lecture at the Kent Post Graduate School of Midwives, delivered by Dr. Mary Blair is published in *Maternity and Child Welfare*. Dr. Blair said that in the modern practice of midwifery we set ourselves two main objects: first, that with our help, the mother may pass safely through childbirth, without risk to life and without any resulting physical defect or disease; and, secondly, that the child shall be born alive and shall be healthy and not damaged in the process of being born. The same efforts that are taken for the welfare of the mother usually serve also for the safety of the baby. In this work, skilful and conscientious ante-natal care plays a most important part. Many of the conditions that may result in a stillbirth can be successfully dealt with before parturition. For example, in certain toxæmic conditions cure can be effected by treatment, and in some cases where conditions such as toxæmia or postmaturity are endangering the child, its life may be saved by its removal from its surroundings, by the induction of premature or full-time labour.

Failure to achieve a living child may be due to many causes operating at all stages of the pregnancy.

MOTHER "KIND-O'-WANTED" TO RAISE THE BABY.

Health News, the organ of the New York State Department of Health, relates that one of the State nurses, returning from her annual vacation, found a note from a mother asking her to come and see her. The nurse made the visit as requested and found that the mother had lost her baby two weeks before. The nurse asked a number of questions as to the care given the mother and the baby, hoping to find out what she could do for the mother. To one of the questions the reply was, "Well, yes, I did kind-o'-want to raise him, seeing as how he was a boy."

How best to show such mothers how "to raise 'em" is one of the things in which the Department is most interested.

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