

# The Midwife.

## THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The Central Midwives Board has been informed that the Minister of Health approves the balance against the Board of £4,574 15s. 1d. in respect of the year ended December 31st, 1929, for the purpose of the apportionment provided for under Section 5 of the Midwives Act, 1902, and Section 2 of the Midwives Act, 1918.

## USE OF LYSOL AS A DISINFECTANT BY MIDWIVES.

We are informed by Mr. H. G. Westley, M.A., LL.B., Secretary to the Central Midwives Board, that, referring to a letter sent by him on February 13th last to the various Local Supervising Authorities and Training Institutions, enclosing a copy of a letter from the London County Council on the above subject, and intimating the desire of the Board that the use of "Lysol" by midwives should be discontinued, he has now, by the direction of the Board, issued a further letter, dated March 18th, to the same authorities, intimating that the Board hopes that a standard of "Lysol," suitable for use by midwives, may in the near future be fixed, and that, pending the fixing of such a standard, the Board is of opinion that midwives may use a solution corresponding in strength to the B.P. Liquor Cresol Saponatus, containing 50 per cent. of Cresols.

## THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF ASSOCIATIONS TO PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF MOTHERS AND MIDWIVES.

We referred in our January issue to the Joint Committee of Associations to promote the interests of Mothers and Midwives, of which Miss Edith M. Pye, S.R.N., President of the Incorporated Midwives Institute, is Chairman.

This Committee has formulated the following aims and objects.

1. To support all schemes which in the opinion of this committee will genuinely promote the welfare of Mothers and Midwives.
2. To oppose any legislation involving transference of the control of the profession of Midwifery from an independent body to a Government Department.
3. To formulate proposals for the re-organisation of the special body which should have control over Midwives and their training.
4. To endeavour to arouse public opinion in support of the above objects.

The committee is in entire agreement with the report of the Departmental Committee on the Training and Supply of Midwives, in so far as it relates to a comprehensive and national maternity scheme, provided that the legislation introduced is in accordance with the proposals outlined which are briefly as follows:—

- (a) Medical examinations during antenatal period.
- (b) The mother to retain a cash maternity benefit and in addition to be given the full services of a certified midwife or, alternatively, a doctor and a midwife acting as a maternity nurse.
- (c) The services of a doctor when required.
- (d) The services of a specialist on the doctor's request.

(e) Institutional provision for the confinement of abnormal cases, patients with unsuitable home conditions, and also for those who desire such arrangements.

(f) Further medical examination six weeks after the confinement.

(g) The midwife to be responsible for antenatal and post-natal care and nursing to cover a period of 14 days with increased number of visits.

## Opposition to Legislation Transferring Control of the Profession of Midwifery from an Independent Body to a Government Department.

In the interests of midwives in England and Wales the Joint Committee as represented by its constituent bodies, protests in the strongest possible terms against any attempt to transfer the training and conditions of entry into their profession from an independent statutory body to a Government Department. They regard the maintenance of an independent body on which they themselves are represented as essential to their professional development, and to any efficient National Maternity Scheme.

Shortly their reasons are:—

1. That to separate the approval and control of the Training Schools, Teachers and the Curriculum from the Examinations and Penal Board would result in stereotyping the work and would hinder a progressive rise in the level of obstetric education: losing the long experience of the Central Midwives' Board and the help of those who are interested and experienced in the teaching of midwives and are able to keep in touch with up-to-date methods.

2. That all questions connected with midwives, their conduct or training should be in the hands of a specialized body whose main interest is the improvement of the service given by midwives to the community, and that care of these matters should not become one of the minor functions of a Government Department liable to be affected by political changes.

3. A strong independent statutory Body is in fairness to them the only equitable means of holding the balance between those responsible for their supervision and the midwives who are actually engaged in the duty of attendance on the mothers. A Government Department which is concerned with local Government and the Local Supervising Authorities cannot be regarded as a disinterested Body with reference to this matter.

4. The withdrawal from midwives of any share in what is the right accorded to other professions, e.g., Legal, Medical, Nursing, namely, that of determining its own standards and preparation of entry into it, will lower the status and discourage the better educated women from becoming midwives and thus be detrimental to the Mothers of the Country. They should be given representation on their Governing Body at least equal to that accorded to the Nursing profession.

The Committee understand that the Central Midwives Board is taking steps to inspect all new Training Centres on application for approval before granting permission to train pupil midwives. The Committee hopes that this inspection will soon be extended to all training schools, teachers and systems of teaching.

In our opinion this should be an invariable rule.

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