

# The Midwife.

## THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD.

### Applications of Certified Midwives for Approval as Teacher.

The applications of the following Certified Midwives for approval as Teacher have been granted subject to conditions:—Sarah Austin, No. 57721, Smithdown Road Hospital, Liverpool; Mildred Bowen, No. 69857, Hackney Hospital; Sarah Jane Clarke, No. 46757, Crumpsall Hospital, Manchester; Olive Mary Leal, No. 78254, Southampton Borough Hospital; Sarah Owen, No. 49364, The Abel Colin Trust Maternity Hospital, Nottingham; Lucy Stella Rayner, No. 76572, Paddington Hospital; Rachel Edith Wright, No. 63179, Gulson Road Municipal Hospital, Coventry.

## THE EAST END MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

Dr. W. H. F. Oxley, Lecturer and Medical Officer of the East End Maternity Hospital, 384 to 398, Commercial Road, London, E.1., writes:

It may be of interest to look back upon the work of the hospital during the past five years and to place on record figures showing the degree of success attained in the saving of mothers' lives. Those mothers who decided during pregnancy that they would like us to attend them during their confinement, the "booked cases," numbered 10,366, and of these only one healthy mother died as the result of child-birth. The other six who died during the five years were seriously ill before labour commenced with some disease quite apart from pregnancy, which either entirely caused or contributed to the fatal result. It would therefore appear that, given a healthy mother, who avails herself of the organisation provided by the hospital, the risk of child-birth is practically nil, and that further development of the work should lie in encouraging those mothers who are not in good health to submit themselves to us for guidance or treatment both earlier in pregnancy and for a longer period after the child is born than they do at present. Apart from that any further improvement in our results seems to depend upon improvement in the state of the public health, a matter which falls outside the activities of a Maternity Hospital.

The Lady Superintendent, Miss Margaret Anderson, states that the Post-natal clinics have been well attended, and very few patients have needed attention.

This Clinic is principally for the mothers, but the babies are brought too, and it is most noticeable that the number of breast fed babies increases owing to the co-operation of the excellent Welfare Centres.

## LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION.

The 17th Annual Meeting took place on March 11th in St. George's Hall, Leicester.

Dr. Cahns presided, and moved the adoption of the Report, which was seconded by Dr. Cooper.

Mrs. Tarleton Hodgson spoke on "The Privilege of Service."

Dr. Davies proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker, which was seconded by Mrs. George Rudd.

Dr. H. Millard and Dr. Fairer, M.O.H. for the County were present. The continued sympathetic interest shown by the Medical Profession in the aims and work of the Association is greatly appreciated by the officials and members.

That Mrs. Marguerite Bigg, whose devoted and never-failing interest and work for the members has done so much to consolidate the Association, has been elected President, gave unbounded satisfaction to all, but to none more than to Miss Elinor Pell Smith, the retiring President, who has had opportunities of knowing more than anyone else of what Mrs. Bigg has done in matters affecting the Midwives which do not appear in the limelight.

The resignation of Miss Pell Smith of the Presidency of the Association which she has held since its foundation is deeply regretted, but we may be sure she will still retain her keen interest in it, and as Hon. President, to which position she has been elected, she will no doubt be able to help it in many ways.

There was a good attendance of members, also friends, and a delicious tea brought to a close a very successful and happy meeting.

The summary of Receipts and Expenditure for 1930 showed a balance at the close of the year of £18 6s. 4d.

## LACK OF TELEPHONES BLAMED FOR HIGH INFANTILE MORTALITY.

### Area where Death-rate is 50 per cent. above Average.

An infantile death-rate of 94 per thousand in the Machynlleth district of Wales, as compared with the general rate for Great Britain of just over 60, is, we are informed, attributed by the Montgomeryshire Insurance Committee to scarcity of telephone facilities in the district.

In June, 1930, the Committee applied to the Post Office for 49 more call-boxes in the district, but were granted only eight. It was pointed out at the last meeting of the Committee that all the doctors in the district now had telephones, but that on the patients' side it was impossible to take advantage of these facilities, owing to the shortage of rural call offices.

The Chairman of the Committee, Major W. J. Burdon Evans, who was not present at the meeting, sent a letter in which he described the situation as most unsatisfactory.

"I have not," he wrote, "advocated the extension of the telephone services at the expense of Exchequer funds, but if a profit is being made on telephone services, a portion of it, at least, should be used for the increase of services in rural areas and not for the reduction of expenses in urban areas. . . . If the telephone service is not to be truly national, the sooner it is transferred to a private company the better."

It is most important that both doctors and midwives should be readily accessible by telephone, and that means of conveying them quickly to maternity patients should be at hand. The telephone at police stations is, and always should be, available for this purpose, as well as a car or cycle. The days are, we hope, numbered when an anxious husband tramps for miles for a midwife who accompanies him on the return journey, and is tired before she reaches the case, to find, maybe, that the baby is born, or that there are complications which should never have occurred. It is principally a question of organisation from a centre. The chief causes of the unpopularity of a midwife's life have been its loneliness and irregularity, and by efficient central organisation and reasonable means of transport these are largely avoidable.

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