

The Midwife.

A STATE MIDWIFERY SERVICE.

When the Bill for the establishment of a State Midwifery Service is presented to Parliament it is expected that the proposal to place the control of the work of the midwives in the hands of the London County Council will be strongly opposed by the Borough Councils.

The question of the supervision of midwives in London has always been a contentious one, but if it is desired to attract midwives to the proposed Service it is essential that their work should be professionally supervised under a Central Authority.

THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

At the Meeting of the Central Midwives Board, held on March 5th in the Board Room at 1, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Westminster, notifications were received of the appointment of the following representatives to serve on the Board for the year commencing April 1st.

By the Ministry of Health.—Miss Ada Davies, Dr. W. Allen Daley, Miss E. E. Greaves, and Mr. A. B. Maclachlan.

By the Midwives Institute.—Miss A. A. I. Pollard and Mrs. F. R. Mitchell. (The name of the third representative, who will be a medical practitioner, has not yet been submitted.)

By the County Councils Association.—Miss K. J. Stephenson.

By the Society of Medical Officers of Health.—Dr. J. J. Buchan.

A letter was received from the Ministry of Health stating that the Minister approved for the purpose of apportionment the balance against the Board, of £4,094 11s. 6d. for the year ended December 31st, 1935.

THE NEW SECRETARY.

Mr. Leslie Farrer Brown, B.Sc., Barrister-at-Law, assumed office as Secretary of the Board with the approval of the Minister of Health, on February 17th, at a salary of £1,000 per annum rising by annual increments of £25 to £1,200 per annum.

THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE BOARD.

The report on the work of the Central Midwives Board for the year ended 31st March, 1935, now published contains matters of much interest, both to the 15,885 women who were practising as midwives in England and Wales in 1934 and, in view of the importance of the midwives' work for the safety and well-being of mothers, to the general public.

The report contains statistics of the total number of women on the roll of certified midwives and of the number of these who are actually in practice. It is a remarkable fact that less than 30 per cent. of the total number of qualified midwives are actually engaged in the practice of their profession. A report on the examinations held during the year, both for pupil midwives and for midwives who wish to train pupils, is included, together with notes of various interesting decisions by the Board on midwives' training, etiquette and practice. During the year under review a revision of certain of the rules of the Central Midwives Board has taken place, including those regulating the proceedings of the Board on complaints relating to the conduct of midwives.

The main alteration is that those Local Supervising Authorities who so desire are permitted to undertake the conduct of those cases in which they are interested and

in which the Board has authorised the citation of the midwives concerned to appear before it.

This alteration of procedure is certainly to be commended.

The number of candidates entering for the examinations during the year under review was 3,965 as against 3,862 in the previous year, an increase of 103.

Of 3,922 candidates who completed their examination 2,936 passed.

Of these successful candidates 2,473 or 84.2 per cent. were admitted to examination on a reduced period of midwifery training by virtue of having undergone general training recognised by the Board.

During the year the fourth Midwife-Teachers' examination, conducted under the authority of the Board, was held.

Forty-two candidates presented themselves for the first part of the examination, of whom 28 were successful.

The 28 candidates who were successful at the first part of the examination, and four candidates who were excused that part of the examination as they had failed only in the teaching and demonstration part of the examination in the previous year, presented themselves for the second part of the examination and of these 24 were successful.

The publication is entitled "Report on the Work of the Central Midwives Board for the Year Ended 31st March, 1935" and can be obtained (price 3d.) direct from H.M. Stationery Office or through any bookseller.

THE MIDWIVES INSTITUTE SUPPLEMENT TO "NURSING NOTES."

The Midwives Institute issued in February last a Supplement to *Nursing Notes* as the organ of the Institute, which henceforward will be published quarterly in that Journal. It states that it will be only obtainable in *Nursing Notes* and will contain articles on policy and matters of urgent interest to members. The price is 3d. a copy from local newsagents, 4s. a year from Headquarters (57, Lower Belgrave Street, S.W. 1.) or 3s. 6d. through a Branch Secretary.

The Institute's views on a salaried service of Midwives are set out in a Memorandum which states that there are three basic principles upon which the Midwives Institute believes that a new scheme for a salaried service of Midwives can alone be successfully built. (1) Inclusion of existing experienced midwives; (2) Provision of generous compensation and pensions; (3) Limitation of the number of midwives trained and allowed to practise.

The Midwives Institute considers that the number of midwives to be trained and the length and content of the training and the conditions under which new midwives may be allowed to set up in practice must be considered in connection with the scheme.

Those who remember the publication of the first Midwives Roll with its large proportion of uncertified midwives on the Roll for that and many subsequent years, will learn, with pleasure, that the number of untrained practising midwives is only 3 per cent. The Roll has now become so unwieldy—containing over 55,000 names—that it is published in two portions, one containing the names of practising midwives, and the other the names of those who are State certified, but not practising.

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