

The Midwife.

THE NEW RULES OF (SECTION B) OF THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The new Rules of Training and Examination (New Section B of the Central Midwives Board) which have been approved by the Minister of Health, as provided by the appropriate Statutes, raise questions of considerable importance to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, to the Central Midwives Board, and to nurses who desire to undertake maternity nursing, which provides for private nurses a substantial amount of work, and that work some of the most remunerative open to private nurses.

SECTION B OF THE NEW RULES.

The Midwives Act of 1936, Section 6 (Prohibition of unqualified persons acting as Maternity Nurses for gain) provides :—

(1) If, on and after the date on which this section is applied to the area of any authority or to any county district contained therein, any person, being a woman neither certified under the principal Act nor registered in the general part of the Register of Nurses required to be kept under the Nurses' Registration Act, 1919, or a male person, receives any remuneration for attending in that area or district as a nurse on a woman in childbirth or at any time during the ten days immediately after childbirth, that person shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten pounds.

The exceptions to this provision are :—

(a) Any person who, while undergoing training with a view to becoming a duly qualified medical practitioner or a certified midwife, attends on a woman as aforesaid as part of a course of practical instruction in midwifery recognised by the General Medical Council or by the Board ;

(b) any person who attends on a woman as aforesaid in any nursing home which is registered under the Nursing Homes Registration Act, 1927, or exempt from the operation of that Act under section six thereof, or in any hospital or other premises or institution which is not included in the definition of the expression "nursing home" in subsection (1) of section ten of that Act by virtue of paragraphs (i), (ii) and (iii) thereof (presumably Christian Science adherents) or

(c) A woman who before the first day of January, nineteen hundred and thirty seven, has been certified by the authorities of a hospital or other institution to which the Minister has by order applied this proviso, to have been trained in obstetric nursing and who has given notice in writing to the authority of the area that she has been so certified.

It would appear therefore that, with the above exceptions, no woman employed by local authorities may on or after the date on which section 6 (i) is applied to the area of any authority, or to any county district contained therein, may receive any remuneration for attending as a nurse on a woman in childbirth, or at any time during the 10 days immediately after childbirth, without being liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten pounds.

But that this provision is restricted to midwives employed by local supervising authorities is evident, otherwise the new Rules of Training, and the issue of certificates and the conditions of admission to the Roll of Midwives drawn up by the Central Midwives Board and which are now in force, would not have been approved by the Minister of Health.

The New Rules of Training and Examination.

The new Rules of Training and Examination (New Section B) regulating the course of training, the conduct of examinations, the remuneration of examiners, the issue of certificates and the condition of admission to the Roll of Midwives include the following provisions :—

REGISTRATION OF PUPILS.

4. A woman proposing to become a pupil shall apply through the approved training institution at which she proposes to take the first period of her training to the Board, on the prescribed form and in her own handwriting, to have her name entered upon the Register of Pupils maintained by the Board, and shall at the same time produce—

(a) (i) if her name appears on the general part of the Register of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, the General Nursing Council for Scotland, the Joint Nursing and Midwives Council for Northern Ireland, or the General Nursing Council for the Irish Free State, by virtue of having passed the Examination of one of those Bodies or some other Examination recognised by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, and she has had at least three years' general training, or any equivalent thereof which may from time to time be recognised by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, *evidence, satisfactory to the Board, that she has fulfilled the foregoing requirements.*

(ii) in any other case, *evidence, satisfactory to the Board, as to the general education which she has had.*

7. A report from the approved training institution shall be made to the Board within six calendar months from the beginning of a pupil's first period of training if the general education of the pupil is inadequate or she is otherwise unsuited to be a midwife. On consideration of such a report the Board may remove the name of the pupil from the Register of Pupils.

COURSE OF TRAINING.

8. (a) The training of a pupil shall comprise theoretical, practical and clinical instruction and attendance on, and nursing of, cases. Such training shall be at approved training institutions and under lecturers and teachers and shall be in two periods : (i) a first period which the pupil shall complete before presenting herself for the First Examination, and (ii) a second period which the pupil shall complete before presenting herself for the Second Examination.

(b) All practical instruction shall be carried out under the supervision of a teacher.

9. A pupil must, except during such holidays as may be permitted by the Board, devote the whole of both periods of her training to preparation for her examinations, and must not be engaged on any other work of whatsoever nature.

10. A pupil shall not begin her training until she has been notified by the Secretary that her name has been entered on the Register of Pupils, and immediately she begins the first period of training she shall forward to the Board a certificate signed by a teacher as to the date of the beginning of training. The Board may, however, waive compliance with this Rule in such cases as it thinks proper.

11. The first period of training shall extend over six consecutive calendar months in the case of pupils to whom Rule B. 4 (a) (i) applies and over 18 consecutive calendar months in all other cases.

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