

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

A meeting of the Central Midwives Board was held at its Offices on Thursday, March 4th:—

Membership of Board.

Letters received:

(a) From the Ministry of Health, notifying the reappointment of Miss Ada Davies, Miss Edith Greaves, Dr. W. Allen Daley and Mr. A. B. Maclachlan as the representatives of the Ministry on the Board for the year commencing April 1st, 1937.

(b) From the Association of Municipal Corporations, notifying the reappointment of Councillor R. W. Brosch as the representative of the Association on the Board as from April 1st next.

(c) From the Society of Medical Officers of Health, notifying the reappointment of Dr. J. J. Buchan as the representative of the Society on the Board as from April 1st next.

The Secretary reported that he has received a letter from the Home Secretary conveying to the Board His Majesty's deep appreciation of the sentiments of loyalty and devotion to which it gave expression.

New Training and Examination Rules.

The Secretary reported:

(1) That he has been informed that the Minister of Health has approved the new Section B. of the Board's Rules, and that, in accordance with the request of the Board, a date has not at present been named for the coming into operation of these new rules.

(2) That copies of the new Rules, together with the approved instructions regarding applications for approval of institutions, lecturers and teachers and the necessary application forms were circulated to the existing training schools on February 24th, and that the schools were requested to return the application forms by not later than April 24th.

EXAMINATION No. 159, FEBRUARY 1937.

Candidates are advised to answer all the questions.

1. On making a vaginal examination at term what maternal (not foetal) parts are felt and what organs are near the examining finger?

2. State how you would estimate, by physical signs and otherwise, the probable date of confinement.

How would you know when labour had commenced?

3. A woman about 34 weeks pregnant has slight vaginal bleeding. To what may this be due?

How could you recognise the cause and what would you do?

4. What is meant by involution of the uterus?

How can you recognise its progress?

What may help and what may delay it?

5. What may be the effects of severe pressure on the child's head during delivery?

How would you recognise such effects?

6. What notifications must a midwife send to her Local Supervising Authority?

When must such notifications be sent?

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD EXAMINATION, FEBRUARY, 1937.

At the February Examination the Central Midwives Board examined 990 candidates, of which number only 697 candidates passed and earned the Certificate; the percentage of failures was 29.6.

MUNICIPAL MIDWIVES.

The Midwives Act, 1936, is causing activity among local authorities who are preparing schemes in conformity with the Act for its due administration.

In London.

In London the tentative proposals contemplate the setting up of five areas, two south and three north of the river, the midwifery and maternity and child welfare services being co-ordinated within each area. Any consultations which may be necessary are to be carried out through the Standing Joint Committee's Advisory Body of Medical Officers of Health.

In Liverpool.

In Liverpool the scheme for the provision of a salaried service of midwives for the City of Liverpool has been prepared by Dr. W. M. Frazer, the City Medical Officer of Health. It is estimated to cost about £17,000 a year, but having regard to the fees payable by the patients, as well as to Exchequer grants, it is estimated that the final cost to the Corporation will be about £5,000 a year.

During 1936 the birthrate, Dr. Frazer points out, has fallen to 20.8 per 1,000 of the population from 24.5 in 1926, the number of births being respectively 18,096 in 1936 compared with 20,457 in 1926.

In regard to age limit, Dr. Frazer suggests that at the commencement of the scheme the midwives to be taken over should not be over 55 years of age, and that when the scheme is in full operation the entrance age should not be more than 35. This is a wise provision, as midwifery is strenuous work, demanding full health and vigour if the patients are to be best served.

The midwives who have notified the authorities of their intention to practise in the city number 270. There would, however, be a considerable number of independent midwives. Dr. Frazer estimates that the Corporation would require to employ 70 full-time midwives, in addition to the eight employed at the Liverpool Maternity Hospital and the two employed by the Woolton Nursing Society, making a total of 80.

The suggestion of the Ministry of Health that midwives should be paid on the same scale as health visitors would mean, if carried out in Liverpool, that the midwives employed by the Corporation would receive from £200 to £250 per annum, with travelling expenses and uniform allowances. Dr. Frazer is of opinion that when the scheme is first brought into operation it will not be possible to exclude married women, and in the early stages it will probably not be possible to appoint a sufficient number of qualified midwives who are also trained nurses, but in making later appointments he is of opinion that training in general nursing should be regarded as a highly desirable additional qualification. This is unquestionably the ideal to be aimed at, and if the terms of employment and working conditions are made sufficiently attractive no doubt a certain proportion of Registered Nurses will be prepared to take up midwifery work.

In Hull.

In Hull the establishment of a service of municipal midwives in accordance with the provisions of the Midwives Act, 1936, appears to be in an advanced stage. At the request of the Maternity and Children Sub-Committee of the Hull Health and Public Assistance Committee, Dr. Nicolas Gebbie, the Medical Officer of Health, has submitted a report embodying the outline of the scheme. The

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