

# The Midwife.

## THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

### THE MIDWIFERY SERVICE.

The Annual Report of the Central Midwives Board for the year ended March 31st, 1938, was signed by the Chairman (Sir Comyns Berkeley) and the Secretary of the Board (Mr. L. Farrer Brown), on December 8th, 1938, and published under the authority of the Ministry of Health on March 14th, 1939, by His Majesty's Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway; London, W.C.2.

During the year under review, the Board, of necessity, had to devote a great deal of its time and attention to two matters, one of which emanated from the Midwives Act, 1936, and the other of which is closely associated with the developments inaugurated by that Act. The first of these matters is the scheme for compulsory post-certificate courses for midwives; the second is the new scheme for the training and examination of pupil-midwives.

#### Midwives' Roll.

On March 31st, 1938, the Midwives' Roll contained the names of 67,089 women, a net increase of 2,043 on the total number appearing on the Roll last year. There was an increase of 174 in the new names added to the Roll after examination as compared with the corresponding figures for last year.

Of the numbers on the Midwives' Roll, 61,750 have passed the Board's examination and 2,214 trained women have been admitted in virtue of prior certification under Section 2 of the Midwives Act, 1902.

The names of certain other Midwives admitted under Section 10 of the Midwives Act, 1918, as well as Midwives holding the certificate of the Central Midwives Board for Scotland, or for Northern Ireland, or for the Central Midwives Board, Eire, appear on the Midwives' Roll. The trained women for the period under review are 65,773 in number, and the untrained 1,316, the respective percentages being 98.0 and 2.0.

Before the close of the year to which this report relates the Board had reached decisions on most of the applications for the approval of training institutions.

Having been informed by the Minister of Health that he had not any observations to offer, the Board, in March, 1938, approved the following programme for the introduction of the new Section B of the rules:—

(a) The "First Examination" under the new rules to be held for the first time in May, 1939, and the "Second Examination" to be held for the first time in December, 1939.

(b) Examinations under the existing rules of the Board to continue to be held every three months until December, 1939, and the following classes of candidates to be admitted to such examinations:—

(i) Pupils required to complete a 12 months' course of midwifery training if they begin such training on or before May 1st, 1938;

(ii) Pupils entitled under Rule C 1 (2) to enter after a six months' course of midwifery training if they begin such training on or before September 1st, 1938.

The new rules provide for the division of the course of training into two periods, each of which is concluded by an appropriate examination. For State Registered nurses the first period of training is similar, apart from district training, to the complete course of training prescribed by the old rules of the Board and the period occupied by the training is the same. The standard of the examination held at the

end of the first period of training will be as high as the standard adopted, under the old rules, at the examination qualifying for enrolment as a midwife. State Registered nurses who are successful at the examination taken at the end of the first period of training will be awarded a certificate which will be known as the "First Certificate." The possession of this certificate will be evidence that the holder has received a thorough grounding in the various aspects of midwifery work under the best available conditions and that she has attained a satisfactory standard of proficiency in such work. The Board is of the opinion that this certificate will adequately meet the needs of State Registered nurses who require a sound knowledge of midwifery although they do not intend to practise as midwives and who under the old rules took the whole course of training prescribed for a pupil-midwife.

The Board has been glad to note that the Minister of Health has approved the amendment by the Royal Sanitary Institute of the regulations for the Health Visitors' Certificate so as to provide that, in future, candidates for such certificates need, so far as their midwifery qualifications are concerned, only hold the "First Certificate" of the Board. The Board hopes that other authorities will follow the lead of the Minister of Health and will accept the "First Certificate" of the Board as an adequate midwifery qualification for senior posts which demand a knowledge of midwifery, but which do not involve the practice of midwifery.

The Board also considers that this certificate will be a most suitable qualification for State Registered nurses who intend to practise as maternity nurses.

We have already drawn attention to the effect of this arrangement by which (1) State Registered nurses who only take the first part of the new midwifery training pass as regards their midwifery work under the supervision of the Central Midwives Board; and (2) that the General Nursing Council for England and Wales has allowed to slip from their jurisdiction the supervision of State Registered nurses who intend to practise as maternity nurses.

#### MEETING OF THE BOARD.

At a Meeting of the Board held on March 30th applications of State Certified Midwives for approval as Teacher were received.

The Committee recommended

(a) That the following applications be granted under the old and new training and examination rules of the Board:—

Charlotte Eveline Thomas, No. 91792, Bristol Training Centre. (Second period—district.)

Margaret Lucy Hopkins, No. 71043, Jean McCaull, No. 49841, Ethel Annie Ritchie, No. 69226, Leicester Training Centre. (Second period—district.)

Hilda Hesse, No. 71034, Mill Road Infirmary, Liverpool. (First period—intern.)

Ada Maisie Wormell, No. 84910, Queen Charlotte's Maternity Hospital. (Second period—district.)

Winifred Briggs, No. 76236, Thorpe Coombe Maternity Hospital, Walthamstow. (First period—intern.)

(b) That the following application be granted under the new training and examination rules of the Board:—  
Annie Isabel Knight, No. 81720, Birkenhead Maternity Hospital. (Second period—district.)

(c) That the following applicant be granted temporary approval:—

Clara Lilian Hesmondhalgh, No. 90683, Sheffield City General Hospital. (First period—intern.)

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