

Courses in preparation for the examination were held in London and in Birmingham. Owing to the large increase in the number of candidates who wish to take these courses, an additional three courses have been approved, one at Sheffield, one at Manchester, and one at Liverpool. This development is an encouraging one, in view of the declared policy of the Board, that as soon as the supply is adequate, all approved teachers will be required to hold the Midwife-Teachers' Certificate.

*Use of Analgesics by Midwives.*—During the year, 12 institutions were approved for the purpose of giving instruction to midwives in the use of a recognised apparatus for the giving of nitrous oxide and air analgesia. The total number of institutions so approved on March 31st, 1943, was 83, three being jointly approved. All but two are approved training schools for pupil-midwives. Nine of these institutions have temporarily suspended their courses of instruction as a result of the war.

The Board asked the guidance of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists as to the necessity of persisting in the requirement that when a midwife gives gas and air analgesia on her own responsibility, to a woman in labour, a second person must be present. The reply of the College was to the effect that the presence of a second person was necessary in order to minimise the risk of infection. The College recommended, however, that the class of persons allowed to be present be enlarged. Accordingly, the amended section of the Board's ruling provides that the second person who is present, in addition to the midwife in charge of the case, shall be one or other of the following:—

- (a) a State certified midwife, or
- (b) a State Registered nurse, or
- (c) a senior medical student, or
- (d) a pupil-midwife, or
- (e) a retired midwife who has surrendered her certificate in accordance with Section 5 (1) of the Midwives Act, 1936, or
- (f) a woman who is over 21 years of age, and who is, and has been for at least a year—
  - (1) a V.A.D. or ordinary member of the British Red Cross Society or the Order of St. John, or
  - (2) any duly enrolled member of the Civil Nursing Reserve.

The Board also decided to take steps to compile a register of midwives qualified to administer gas or air analgesia.

*Apportionment of Contributions between the County Councils and County Borough Councils under Section 5 of the Midwives Act, 1902, and Section 2 of the Midwives Act, 1918.*—The levies on the County Councils and County Borough Councils of England and Wales to meet the deficiency in the Board's revenue for the year 1942, collected by apportionment between the various councils on the basis of population, amounted to £9,177 17s. 11d., as compared with £8,895 3s. 8d. for 1941.

Comparing the Board's accounts for 1942 with those for 1941, the total income was higher by £1,081 and total expenditure was higher by £1,364. These increases were due mainly to examination receipts and expenditure, the former being £900 more and the latter £823 more. The balance of the increased expenditure is attributable to the general increase in war-time costs, particularly of paper and printing. The cost of conducting penal proceedings under section D of the Board's rules was £57 more than for the previous year.

*Conclusion.*—The Board is fully aware of the great difficulties under which the training of pupil-midwives has been continued, in view particularly of a shortage of trained medical and nursing staff, and increased pressure on beds. It desires to convey to the training schools, lecturers, teachers and examiners its appreciation of their

continued co-operation in maintaining the standard of training.

Thanks are due also to all practising midwives, who by maintaining the high tradition of their profession, often in the face of considerable difficulties and dangers, have played a vital part in the national war effort.

The report is signed by—

COMYNS BERKELEY, *Chairman*,  
and L. FARRER BROWN, *Secretary*.

#### CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD EXAMINATION.

AUGUST 11TH, 1943.

The following questions were submitted at the recent examination of pupil midwives.

1. Describe the musculature of the uterus, and the part it plays in the various stages of labour.

2. What advice should be given at the ante-natal clinic to promote the nutrition of the mother and child?

What social services are available to assist an expectant mother to follow this advice?

3. What are the commoner causes of delay in the second stage of labour?

How would you recognize them, and what action would you take?

4. How would you manage breast-feeding in the first week of the puerperium, with special reference to the prevention of complications in the breasts?

5. What are the signs of intracranial injury in the newborn baby?

Describe the nursing care and treatment of a baby with this condition.

6. State the rules of the Central Midwives Board which control the use of drugs by a midwife.

What drugs other than aperients may a midwife, in the course of her practice, be called upon to administer to the mother?

Give the reasons for their use, and the dosage.

#### £5,000,000 TO TRAIN MIDWIVES.

A scheme for training midwives which it was estimated would cost the nation £5,000,000 and would entail the building of 12 colleges for midwives and one for midwifery teachers was put forward by Miss G. L. Reed, midwifery tutor of St. Mary's College, Manchester, at a session of the Oxford Summer school of the College of Midwives.

The acute shortage of midwives in relation to the nation's need for an increasing number of healthy babies, she said, was a very real problem. The midwife's position and function were established by law, and the Rushcliffe Report would, it was hoped, assure her future so far as pay and conditions of work went, but her education still fell short of what it should be.

Five million pounds, spread over a period of years, was, after all, a very small amount to pay for the provision of first-class attention for mothers and babies.

#### BIRTHS HIGHEST FOR 17 YEARS.

More births were registered in England and Wales during the first three months of this year than in any quarter for 17 years. The total given in the Registrar-General's Return for the Quarter ended March 31st last (issued by H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, W.C.2, price 6d., post-free, 7d.) was 171,819. This represents a birth-rate of 16.8 per 1,000 of the population—the highest first quarter rate since 1928.

The infant mortality rate—deaths of babies under one year—was 60 per 1,000 live births, or 14 below the average of the 10 preceding first quarters.

Births registered during the quarter exceeded deaths by 34,251. In the corresponding period of last year the excess was 6,963, but in 1940 and 1941 deaths exceeded births by 50,838 and 31,610, respectively.

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