

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES' BOARD.

We have received the Annual Report of the Central Midwives' Board to March 31st, 1946, in which progress in most directions is indicated.

Upon the death of the Chairman, Sir Comyns Berkeley, Mr. Arnold Walker was elected Chairman, and Mr. S. P. Healey, Vice-Chairman.

Roll of Midwives.

On March 31st, 1946, the Roll of Midwives contained the names of 72,248 women, being 1,653 more than at the end of March, 1945.

Training of Pupil Midwives.

There has been an increase of 815 in the number of pupil-midwives entering first period training schools during the year; the number of pupil-midwives who will eventually qualify as midwives shows a small but steady increase, from the information in the possession of the Board, it appears that this trend is being maintained.

The Board, with the approval of the Ministry of Health, has amended the Rules to enable Sick Children's Nurses to be admitted to the shortened period of training.

The practice of inviting a number of midwife-teachers to act in collaboration with their medical colleagues as Examiners in the First Examination, was continued.

The Board has decided, for an experimental period, to dispense with the clinical part of the First Examination, but candidates for the Second Examination will continue to be examined in this way.

Midwife Teachers' Certificate Examination.

The number of candidates presenting themselves for this examination shows a slight decrease compared with last year.

Use of Analgesics by Midwives.

Arising out of the report of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists referred to in the Board's Annual Report for the year ending March 31st, 1945, the regulation requiring the presence of a second person with specified qualifications when analgesia is administered by a midwife has been amended and the second person may now be anyone acceptable to the patient, who, in the opinion of the midwife, is suitable for the purpose and who is present at the time of the administration in addition to the midwife in charge of the case.

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 1945, collected by apportionment between the various councils on the basis of population, amounted to £8,914 10s. 9d., as compared with £9,229 15s. 1d. for 1944.

Comparing the Board's accounts for 1945 with those for 1944, the total income was higher by £781 and total expenditure was higher by £330. These increases were due mainly to examination receipts and expenditure and to increases in the sale of documents and expenditure on printing.

Staff.

Mr. Leslie Farrer-Brown, who was appointed Secretary to the Board in February, 1936, relinquished his post on

July 31st, 1945, and was succeeded by Mr. A. J. Bennett on his return from service with the Royal Navy. At its meeting in July the Board resolved to place on record its high appreciation of the services of Mr. Farrer-Brown, particularly in connection with the improvement of the status of midwives and the midwifery practice of the country.

FIRST EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER.

We have pleasure in publishing the questions set by the Central Midwives' Board for the First Examination candidates, on August 14th:—

Candidates are advised to attempt to answer all the questions:—

(1) What maternal structures may be damaged during labour, and how is this damage caused? What may be the symptoms and signs of such damage afterwards?

(2) What would lead you to suspect that a patient has a placenta praevia? What treatment would you give to the patient while awaiting the arrival of the doctor?

(3) Discuss the causes of early rupture of the membranes. What special points should be observed, and what action would you take in such a case?

(4) In a case which is progressing normally, what daily observations do you make of the mother and baby during the lying-in period and why do you make them?

(5) What is the Central Midwives' Board, and what are its functions?

(6) What are the essential differences between the foetal and adult circulations? Give the changes which take place in the circulation during the first 5 minutes after birth.

V.D. CASES MORE THAN DOUBLE PRE-WAR TOTAL.

The Ministry of Health report an increase in the number of cases of venereal disease. Last year 10,706 new cases of syphilis were treated at local authorities' clinics in England and Wales. This is 1,388 more than in 1944, and more than double the pre-war total.

During the War the annual total rose steadily from 4,986 in 1939 to 9,642 in 1943. There was a slight improvement in 1944, when the figure was 9,318: but the 1945 total is the highest recorded for at least 14 years.

The campaign of public education on the venereal diseases, carried out since 1942 by means of Press advertisements, posters, films and exhibitions, is to be continued.

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