

OBSTETRIC NURSING.

— BY OBSTETRICA, M.R.B.N.A. —

PART II.—INFANTILE.

CHAPTER V.—HAND FEEDING.

(Continued from page 317.)

WITH respect to the other cereals, barley and oatmeal, they are for the most given to the newly-born in the form of thin gruel or barley-water by the bottle. With respect to the latter, it is serviceable on occasions, as I shall point out to you in my next paper. With respect to the former, I do not advise it. I find it too heating and apt to act too much on the kidneys. Before leaving the subject of "additions" to our baby's food, I may mention that their name is legion; time would fail me even to enumerate them. For the most part, we may infer from their taste and appearance that they are composed of farinas, of some one, or many sorts combined, and for this reason I do earnestly exhort all Nurses (Obstetric) and mothers to leave it alone as food for infants *in lieu of cow's milk or mixed with it*. My young readers may ask why? and as this question comes before us every day of our lives in our portion of Nursing work, we will give a little attention to the matter. All the farinaceous substances I have just mentioned contain albumen, and so does casein; but they also contain, amongst other elements of gluten or starch, which casein does *not*, any more than flour contains sugar, therefore we may feel perfectly assured that Nature has no need for starch in the food of the infant mammalia; no milk contains it. When with heedless hand we interfere with her Divine adjustments, and throw upon the infant frame a substance for which it has no need, and for which it has no provision, Nemesis ensues that appals us to dwell upon, and holocausts of innocent lives are sacrificed to appease it!

Amongst the *purely starchy* substances that are given to infants, the lethal arrowroot holds the foremost rank as the *destroying* angel (?) of infancy; it is used not only as an addition to milk, but as *substitute* for it, mixed with water and any quantity of sugar. I have known and seen tender infants fed (?) by the bottle upon this *criminal diet*, with just perhaps a "*colourable pretext*" of milk; and wretched are the lives they live, and cruel are the deaths they die, and all this misery brought about by the crass ignorance of mothers!

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Sago and tapioca are not often given to infants, but the former used to be in some favour as a spoon food, but we know they are both utterly bad.

The only form, then, in which *solid* food can be assimilated by the infant system is in the curd or *casein* of milk. It is so hard to persuade women that milk contains one *solid*, hence there is no need to *add* another, that I frequently *decompose* some milk to try and convince them of it, and point out to them that baby is continually doing the same thing in his stomach. The most *perfect* form of infant aliment is normal breast-milk, but our task at present is to deal with cow's-milk for baby's food.

(To be continued.)

HOME OF REST FOR NURSES.

WE have been favoured with a copy of the Report of the Committee:—

"It will be remembered that in June, 1890, Her Royal Highness Princess Christian wrote a letter to the *Times*, suggesting that a Home of Rest should be established for Trained Nurses. From this the Committee cannot do better than quote the following:—

"It is well known that skilled Nursing has, within the last few years, made great strides in efficiency and usefulness. But it is not generally realised that the work has coincidentally become so arduous and so responsible, so trying both to body and mind, that it is very common for Nurses to break down in health, though it needs no argument to prove that it is essential to the sick that their attendants should be healthy and strong. Consequently any measure which tends to improve the health of Nurses, to render them more fit for their work, or to make them less prone to suffer from its efficient performance, is surely deserving of public sympathy and support. At present, however overtaxed Nurses may be by a prolonged attendance upon a serious case, they are often obliged to go straight from one to watch over another patient, and so work on until their regular holiday comes, or their health or strength gives way. Most Nurses can save sufficient to pay for their annual holiday, but very few can afford a short rest now and then, which would enable many to work with less detriment to their own health, and therefore with greater benefit to their patients. Many Nurses, again, when convalescent from illness

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