

alone, £14 13s. Finally, Court 19 commenced the year with thirteen members, and ended it with only six. It received 12s. in the year, for all benefits, and paid out 12s. for sick pay alone. It received for management expenses £1 13s. 8d., and on this head it expended £1 16s. 3d. Here, then, are at least three Courts out of the twenty-four, which must be a source of weakness rather than strength to the whole body corporate; which, if they do not cease to exist, will probably need the assistance of other Courts, which may, in this present year, fall into equal straits themselves. We should not have discussed this subject, at this length, had it not been for the manner in which our previous remarks were met. This is not a matter of theory, but of practice. In theory, we wish the United Sisters' Society every success. In practice, we think their scheme far too ambitious, and too risky to be likely to prosper. And, speaking broadly, we feel confident that no sick-pay fund for women will ever succeed unless it is joined by very large numbers of very carefully-selected healthy persons, nor unless it is therefore backed by large funds—to provide for initial losses until the Society has grown sufficiently strong to be able to accumulate a considerable reserve fund. The Rev. Mr. WILKINSON does not see the force of our remarks, any more than he has apparently realised the result of the valuation of his Society. But within the next five years he will do so, and he will then understand that we were doing no more than our duty to our readers in advising them as we have done upon this matter.

PREMATURE PREVENTION.

THAT prevention is better than cure is a well-worn adage, but the important question may be raised as to the particular juncture at which prevention is useful. It is conceivable that preventive precautions might be prematurely taken. Take, for example, the statement made recently in a contemporary, that infants of two days old are vaccinated as a matter of routine at Queen Charlotte's Hospital. If it is untrue, the authorities of that institution should publicly, and at once, deny the fact. If it is true, then we have no hesitation in saying that the practice cannot be commended either for safety or convenience, and that it is one which must prejudice people against the most beneficent measure of prophylactic medicine. To give an infant—before its eyes have been well opened—one disease in order to save it from the remote chance of catching another, is surely an excellent example of premature prevention, which might have disastrous results.

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Obstetric Nursing.

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PART II.—INFANTILE.

CHAPTER VII.—SPECIAL DUTIES.

(Continued from page 456.)

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ONE of the best authenticated cases of early prematurity, resulting in the rearing of the infant, that ever came to the knowledge of the writer, was one of much interest. A country lady was delivered before the completion of her seven months of pregnancy of what is commonly called a six-months male infant—so small, so frail, that with a feeling almost akin to despair, the attendants had him sewn up in *lambskin*, wool inwards, and left, as all thought, to die. But lo! snugly wrapped in his warm soft coat (?) of Nature's make, the babe *lived*, and with infinite care and tenderness was *reared*, and not only grew to man's estate, but to six feet high as well, and became a right stalwart English country gentleman, and in due time went through a by no means undistinguished academic career. So much for mother wit and lambskin.

To return to our duty (and in the absence of lambskin) let us consider how we shall treat these untimely little patients. Should they be washed and bathed, or only washed? I incline to the latter plan, for the extreme tenderness of the cuticle—that has not even the vernix to protect it—and the feebleness of the circulation, render the double process too much for them. The head must always be washed; the back and buttocks, the upper and lower extremities, the *axillæ* and the *groin* can be sufficiently cleansed by lubrication, vaseline or cold cream being used for that purpose, and a *very soft napkin* to wipe the parts with. Should these infants be dressed? In my judgment, not. The navel must, of course, be dressed as usual, and the binder applied and a napkin put on, and the infant wrapped in cotton wool or wadding from head to foot—over this a flannel square made quite warm. These wraps must be put on loosely, so as in no wise to impede the freedom of the limbs, the infant must then be placed in the cot, the temperature of which must be raised to ninety-eight degrees (blood heat), by artificial heat, hot-water tins or bottles constantly renewed. In full-term infants the head is the hottest part

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