

so it was only possible to see a part. The first place to be visited was the babies' ward. This was a long room with about one-fourth partitioned off in the middle. This partition was wood the lower half, and glass above, forming an inner room where the babes of a few days to several weeks old were being washed, changed, and dressed, or rather swathed and rolled up into tight, stiff little bundles. The babies are bottle fed until they have been examined by the doctor, who then decides whether the bottle shall be continued or a wet nurse employed.

A certain number of wet nurses are constantly employed in the hospital, and their services retained just so long as their nourishment lasts. This is tested by weighing the babies both before and after feeding, and the records kept.

State babies are passed on as soon as possible to foster mothers. A group of about a dozen were waiting in the ward ready to take back their charges that evening. These women come from the country, and are medically examined before being permitted to take a baby. They must have suckled their own children for six months before they are given a State baby; they then take these children to their own homes, and bring them up as, and with their own, until they are 13 years of age, and can begin to earn for themselves. The foster mothers receive 30 francs a month so long as the child is breast fed, then 25 francs a month up to 13 years.

A system of inspection is carried out, so that the State knows of the care and well being of its numerous children. Clothes are supplied also by the State, and the number seemed liberal indeed, and chosen with an amount of common sense unusual in men governed institutions. Thick garments for winter and thin for summer, with weight and thickness varied according to the climate in which the child will be located.

Whilst we were gathering up some of these interesting details, at the other end of the ward three wee babes were being baptised, and very vigorously indeed did they object to the ceremony. How thankful one feels that there is a beneficent and all powerful God who can and does care for these poor, abandoned little ones. The care of the State for its adopted children does not end when they begin to earn but is continued until they reach the age of 18 years, and whenever they need a home, as for example between situations a home is given them, or should they need assistance of any other kind the State supplies their needs.

Those children who do not belong to the State are kept at the hospital; there they are as

babies breast fed by wet nurses; when beyond that stage, they are cared for by a staff of *infirmières*; when old enough to go to school then there is the schoolroom in the building with properly qualified teachers to teach them; and when they are old enough to work, situations are found for them.

Needless to say, children do not spend all their lives in the hospital; as a rule the stay is only temporary, but the hospital supplies all the needs of children of every age. The food supply seemed plentiful, and the clothing all that was necessary.

In the grounds is an isolation block for any case of infection; there is also an infirmary where the sick children are nursed; this is fitted with plate glass partitions, so that different diseases can be nursed separately but all be under observation at the same time.

In regard to the *infirmières*, they all wore the now familiar loose brown holland overall dress, which, to the English eye, appears so sloppy and untidy, but which doubtless will undergo some improvement when the French Matron comes into being.

We found the Director most keenly alive to the necessity for a better class of nurse, also for some modification or rearrangement in regard to hours off duty, also for recreation rooms, better sleeping accommodation, etc. So much so, in fact, that he has with the permission of M. Mesureur asked the Mother Superior of a neighbouring convent to find for him suitable young women of a better class suitable to train as children's nurses, and to keep them under her own supervision, sending them to the hospital in time for duty; when off duty they return to the convent for their recreation and rest. This is done with the ultimate object of staffing the hospital entirely with these young women who have not been brought up in the prevailing conditions. All honour to those who are endeavouring to raise the standard and conditions of nursing in France.

It seems to me that here in the arranging and management of this Foundling Hospital we have a very practical method of combating to a certain extent the terrible infant mortality which appears to exist everywhere.

It is true that many will promptly say that such an institution puts a premium on vice. But does it? Here in England (I believe I am correct, but I quote from memory) some 40,000 illegitimate children are born annually. Some few of these are adopted; some are maintained, often at the cost of much hardships by their mothers or their friends; many are brought into the world, and brought up in the benumbing atmosphere of our Unions;

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