

it is essential to the comprehension of the disease that the common conception that it belongs to the group of specific infectious diseases should be abandoned. *Zymotic enteritis is in no sense of the word an infectious disease, and it cannot be conveyed by contagion.*

This is the key note of the paper, and Dr. Vincent supports this hypothesis by the strong argument that at the Infants' Hospital where over 1,000 in-patients under twelve months of age have been treated, and where babies desperately ill with other diseases, lie side by side with those suffering from zymotic enteritis of an extremely severe type, and all are nursed by the same nurses, *no infant has ever contracted the disease in the hospital.*

Outside the hospital the same thing is seen. At a time when the disease is causing a mortality of some hundreds of infants per thousand in the course of a month or so, there are babies living in the most insanitary conditions who are immune. *They are the breast-fed babies.*

The poor Irish breast-fed babies in a London slum and the babies in the Infants' Hospital have this in common. They are fed on a pure raw milk. Dr. Vincent points out that the infants at the hospital are protected by something much more powerful than isolation, for it is a practical impossibility for the violent fatal disease known as zymotic enteritis to occur in an infant fed on fresh milk. It is essential for the development of the disease that the characteristic properties of the natural food of the infant should have been destroyed by heat, by preservatives, or by some other means. Dr. Vincent emphatically insists on the use of pure raw milk, as opposed to that which is sterilised or treated with preservatives, which destroy lactic acid bacilli or inhibit their action.

The author then proceeds to show how immunity is produced, and everyone interested in the question should secure this important paper, and study it carefully. Later, it is to form part of the fourteenth chapter of the third edition of the "Nutrition of the Infant."

Conference on Infant Mortality.

The Conference held in New Haven, U.S.A., in November determined, says the *American Journal of Nursing*, that all efforts for the betterment of social conditions must be carried forward. An association was formed for the scientific study of the causes of poverty and its attendant evils. Ignorance and dirt, alcoholism, the social evil, and artificial feeding are the most direct causes of the infant death rate.

How I Became Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

A TELEPATHIC TALE.

By ETHEL G. FENWICK.

(Concluded from page 86.)

One by one we went silently and alone into the Board Room, to be interviewed, weighed in the balance, and appraised. Sir Sydney Waterlow, courtly and impressive, was in the chair. I was invited to be seated on his left hand, facing the light. I was introduced, and the Almoners listened in respectful silence to a statement from the chair. I soon realised the situation. I was to be tried before a very dubious jury, and Sir Sydney was my counsel. *He believed in me.*

I believed in myself.

They must believe in me.

Together we were to gain the confidence of the Almoners.

With subtle acumen he presented my case. His line of argument was what might have been expected from a man who had himself conquered circumstance. Tradition—and all the conventions went by the board. Instinct—creative faculty—power of initiative and organisation—forceful personality—these he claimed for me. *Me*, as I was—not as I might be—or ought to be—he presented dextrously to them. He questioned me, and I replied. We two bold spirits pranced into the arena, tilted with courage, and unhorsed prejudice.

I realised with satisfaction that I was dealing with business men. They wanted very good value for the trust funds they administered. There was to be no sentiment in their selection. That was safe ground.

Suddenly a spruce little gentleman, as pretty as a pink, bent over the table, and asked in a subdued tone:

"Are you afraid of the old Sisters?"

That question broke a spell.

Dignity took unto itself wings. We laughed heartily, and I warmly defended our vigorous pioneers. I had good reason. Only a few months had passed away since the happy days with those wonderful old Sisters at the "M.R.I." (Manchester Royal Infirmary), all of whom I held in the most affectionate admiration, and regard.

My questioner breathed a gentle sigh of relief, and subsided,—but from that moment his vote was mine.

I gathered from further converse that these good men were most sincerely anxious for the welfare of the hospital, especially of the poor patients, and that they must have a Matron

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)