

The Midwife.

An Embarrassment of Riches.

A lecture delivered by Dr. J. Force to the Alameda County Nurses' Association, and published in the *Nurses' Journal of the Pacific Coast* is of so much interest to midwives and nurses that we reprint the greater part.

In the early morning hours the stork stepped out into the veranda and looked about him. Before him spread broad, well-kept lawns, blooming flowers, and fine old trees. He glanced back into the house, which he had hardly noticed the night before when he had tapped on an upper window. He saw oaken floors, Oriental rugs, well-filled oaken book-cases, and comfortable furniture. "It is evident," he said, as he half spread his wings, "that my little charge will receive every attention. This is the home of culture, refinement, and wealth." A disquieting memory came to him; a memory of a hollow-eyed, pale-faced mother into whose waiting arms he had delivered his burden. All that a mother's love could give would be assured, but—"Oh, Dr. Stork, before you go have you any directions for feeding the baby. The mother never can nurse it." Dr. Stork lowered his wings and faced the nurse. Why should he be bothered with such matters? Was he not a great obstetrician? Did he not glory in the dark nights and fierce storms through which he must often buffet his way? Was he not always careful to protect the baby's eyes against the perils of the journey? Let the nurse attend to the feeding. That was only a minor detail. "Why, nurse," he demanded, "are you not familiar with infant feeding?" "Yes, doctor," she replied, "I have studied percentage feeding, and know all about making formulæ." "Ah, that is very gratifying. I am sure the baby will thrive in your care. Good morning." And the stork spread his wings and departed, flying a little heavily, for it had been a wearying night.

The nurse began the feeding of the newcomer with the calm assurance of knowledge. She was beyond reproach in her care of glassware and utensils. She knew that human milk had a certain percentage composition and reaction, therefore cow's milk should be moulded to that percentage. What could be simpler? She had been warned against the tough casein, with its indigestible curd appearing in the stools as a call to dilute the proteids. She knew about cereal mixtures, condensed milk, and proprietary foods. She was sure that advertisements always told the truth, for were not the fat babies shown in the pictures.

She got out her tables, for she never trusted her memory to important things like figures, and began on:—Fat, 1.00; sugar, 5.00; proteid, 0.30. At the second week she was feeding: Fat, 2.00; sugar, 6.00; proteid, 0.60. This formula furnished 0.457 calories per gram, and she was feeding 750 grams of milk a day, or 342.75 calories. But the baby weighed 3,500 grams, and each ten of these grams

was calling loudly for a calorie. Well, she was only eight calories a day short, and higher proteid would upset the digestion, so she kept to the table. The child gained weight, but very slowly. At six months she was feeding: Fat, 4.00; sugar, 7.00; proteid, 2.00 per cent., a mixture which gave 0.741 calories per gram. The baby took 1,500 grams a day, or 1,011.5 calories. His weight was 7,000 grams, but at that age each 10 grams only wanted 0.9 calorie, or 630 calories in all. So he was getting 400 calories too much, and began to suddenly gain weight to everyone's joy.

The nurse took no chances with summer complaint. She dipped the top milk from "certified" bottles with a sterile dipper, added her milk, sugar, lime water, gruel, or whatever she needed. Slowly a small cloud grew on the bright horizon of her success. The baby was constipated. Obedient to her conviction she raised the fat. This did not relieve as readily as she had expected, but, on the contrary, large "curds" began to appear in the stools. She again reduced the proteids, and again raised the fats. The constipation still continued, and she added magnesia to the feedings. The constipation was slightly relieved, but the baby began to refuse its bottles, to cry at night, to fret during the day. The urine stained the napkin, smelled strongly of ammonia, while the stools grew putty-like in colour and consistence. Worst of all began a steady loss of weight, a swollen look at the wrists, little knobs on the breast bone, and one night vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, and prostration.

Mrs. Stork answered the telephone. "The doctor has gone to far Cathay with Chinese triplets, and I am afraid that he will not be back until morning. Call up Dr. Owl. He is in your neighbourhood, and is sure to be awake."

Dr. Owl sat in the nursery adjoining the bedroom. The baby had fallen into a fretful sleep, and the mother had been sent to her room. The nurse came in and showed a napkin. The thin green stool was filled with yellowish-white, hard lumps. "This is what I spoke of, doctor," she said, "either these or an even white putty. I confess that I am beaten." Dr. Owl looked at her thoughtfully. Here he saw was a careful nurse, and one worth instructing.

"Were you ever on a farm, Miss Jones?" he asked. "Why, yes, doctor, I have a cousin who has a large dairy farm, and supplies most of the certified milk that is used in this town. I have often visited there. He has a beautiful, clean place." "Do you know anything about his herd?" "It is mixed Jersey and Holstein. He makes the milk run a constant four per cent. of butter fat." "Has he ever told you that he has trouble getting the Jersey calves to do well on Jersey milk?" "I have heard that. I suppose that the milk of a cow specialised for butter producing is too rich in fat." "Yet knowing that, you have been feeding five per cent. of fat to that poor baby?" "Why, I never

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