

The Midwife.

Substitute Feeding.

HOME MODIFICATION.

Dr. Ralph Vincent took for the subject of the third lecture of the course of Lectures on Babies, which he is at present delivering at the Infants' Hospital, Vincent Square, S.W., "Substitute Feeding: Home Modification." He pointed out the essential properties of milk—fat, whey, proteins, and caseinogen. The *kind* of fat is of great importance, and that is a thing quite ignored by some inventors of patent foods. The first function of fat is to maintain animal heat, and is of the first importance in relation to the brain, teeth, and epiphyses. Marked rickets, with its attendant nervous conditions—screaming, convulsions, etc.—could always be traced to the fact that the fat in milk had been deficient over a considerable period.

Lactose is a form of sugar quite by itself, and not to be found anywhere else but in milk; it is incapable of alcoholic fermentation.

Streptococci are present in all natural milk-ducts. The cleaner the milk the greater number are to be found. A great part of the lactose is converted by their action into lactic acid; this acid protects the milk from those organisms associated with putrefactive changes, but in dirty milk these organisms overcome the delicate streptococci.

Many patent foods contain a large amount of carbohydrates, the presence of which can be detected by the addition of a little iodine, which will stain them a deep blue. It is quite a fallacy to suppose that whole cows' milk is a suitable food for infants, and it has been proved by experience that boiled milk is more indigestible than raw. By the ordinary method of dilution the fat is reduced to an insufficient amount; this is supplemented where it can be obtained by the addition of cream, which may contain anything between 20 per cent. and 50 per cent. of fat. The difficulty in consequence arises that it is impossible to estimate by this means the amount of fat, and infants have from this manner of feeding developed fat intoxication.

Dr. Vincent showed that the only rational method of substitute feeding was the separation of the essential properties of the milk. He acknowledged that the prescriptions given to the little in-patients were very delicate and complicated, and could not be carried out outside the hospital. But the treatment of out-

patients is not on this account abandoned, for there is given to each mother a paper with a valuable prescription for making whey, to which she is directed to add milk in the proportion ordered by the doctor, suited to the need of each individual infant.

Dr. Vincent showed a specimen of whey produced by following this recipe, which had a thick layer of cream lying on the top. The secret of this result was the stirring of the mixture so that the fat should not be entangled by the curd. Out of one pint of milk the waste is only one and a half ounces.

THE RECIPE.

Add four drops of special rennin supplied, to one quart of milk. N.B.: The milk must be quite fresh. It must not be boiled, sterilised, or pasteurised, and must not have any preservative in it. After adding the rennin, warm the milk in a clean jug surrounded by water in a saucepan. When the milk is at blood temperature (100 degs. Fahr), remove the saucepan from the fire. Stir the milk in the jug till the curds are well formed. At the same time press them to the bottom of the jug with a spoon. When the curds are formed into a solid mass at the bottom of the jug, place the saucepan again on the fire, and boil the water round the jug for one minute. Pour off the whey for use.

Schools of Midwifery.

THE LEICESTER MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

At the annual meeting of the Leicester and Leicestershire Maternity Hospital, the report of the Council of Management stated that until June 30th the hospital was carried on as a branch of the Provident Dispensary; since that date it had been established as a separate institution. It had been fully occupied during the year, 314 patients having been admitted. The additions of new wards, etc., to the hospital were completed in August, and 23 patients could now be received instead of 17 as formerly. Twelve pupils were trained during 1910, and eleven of these passed the examination of the Central Midwives' Board. In order that pupils might attend a certain number of cases in the homes of patients, Nurse Fisher had been engaged as a district midwife. An appeal for £500 in donations had met with a gratifying response, but the request for an annual subscription list of £500 for general purposes had not received so satisfactory a reception.

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