

The Midwife.

Boiled Milk and its Effects on Infants.

The fifth and last lecture of the course of Lectures on Babies was delivered at the Infants' Hospital, S.W., by Dr. Ralph Vincent, the subject being, "Boiled Milk and the Means by which its Fatal Effects on Infants are Produced."

The disease, said the lecturer, commonly known as epidemic diarrhoea, had not been so serious for the past few years, the reason for this being that it always appears when the summer months are hot and dry, which has not latterly been the case. The point to emphasise was that it is *not* epidemic, contagious, or infectious. In a hot, dry summer it would appear all over the country at once, instead of spreading from centre to centre as in true epidemics. The last serious outbreak occurred in 1904, and in Great Britain half of the infant population died from this disease. If the breast-fed infants were excluded, it would be found that the *great majority* of babies had succumbed.

The Infants' Hospital, started in 1903, had from the first used raw milk, and no case of zymotic enteritis had ever been contracted within its walls, though infants suffering from the disease were admitted without any attempt at isolation.

At the Foundling Hospital, on account of the enormous mortality, the authorities had found it necessary to board out all their infants, and at another institution in Melbourne they had been unable to succeed in keeping them alive. When you boil milk, said Dr. Vincent, you kill the organisms the child requires, and leave those that kill it, as the putrefactive organisms cannot be destroyed by boiling. These putrefactive organisms cannot grow in raw milk, one thing that prevents their doing so is the *Bacillus Lacticus*, which makes a certain amount of lactic acid from the lactose; it is this acid medium which prevents their development, and which is destroyed by boiling.

The lactic bacillus lives only about fourteen days, and if a fresh supply is not given, the alimentary canal will become alkaline. The sudden onset of the disease in an infant that has been fed for some weeks on boiled milk without ill effects is accounted for in that so long as the lactic organism is present in the

infant so long will it resist, but the moment the supply is exhausted it succumbs.

The poison produced by the putrefactive organisms belongs to the same group as hyoscine, and it is as deadly and as sudden in its effects.

Infants therefore die from the effects of alkaloids derived from the activity of putrefactive organisms, which when absorbed kill, and which can only be grown in boiled milk. They multiply at an enormous pace. Zymotic enteritis, when once really started, is practically hopeless, the infant rapidly becomes unconscious and moribund.

Dr. Vincent concluded his most interesting and instructive course of lectures by an epidiascopic demonstration of the various organisms producing this, and other diseases not connected with his subject—sleeping sickness, elephantiasis, and leucocythæmia.

A MATERNITY NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

As nurses devote themselves more especially to one branch of their work the need for association with others doing the same work appeals to them, and a movement is now on foot to form a Trained Maternity Nurses' Association, the inaugural meeting of which will, by the courtesy of the Union of Midwives, be held on Wednesday, April 5th, at two o'clock precisely, at the offices of the Union, 33, Strand, W.C. Representatives of the press will be admitted, but, with this exception, admission will be restricted to Maternity Nurses.

A CASE OF CÆSARIAN SECTION.

Miss Leilah Gordon, in *Kai Tiaki*, reports an interesting case of Cæsarian section, subsequent complications being post operative hæmatemesis, phlebitis, and thrombosis of two portions of varicose veins, and rise of temperature on the sixth day. Of the baby girl, who was born asphyxiated, Miss Gordon writes that "she only showed signs of life after being worked with for one and a half hours, all the various methods of artificial respiration being used in succession. Even after breathing was evidently well established it was found necessary to waken her and make her cry as she did not seem to be particularly anxious to remain with us."

The baby weighed five and a half pounds at birth, and was fed every hour, being partially breast fed. At the end of the month she had gained over a pound and a half in weight.

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