

chastity is in most cases impossible, and in many cases harmful."

In its campaign against these most terrible of the infectious diseases the newly formed Council can count upon the sympathy and support of the National Council of Trained Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, whose help may be an asset of great value.

In this connection may we offer our heartfelt congratulations to Lavinia L. Dock and Albinia Brodrick the two trained nurses who, at the meeting of the International Council of Nurses in London five years ago, delivered such magnificent speeches on the necessity for the action now taken by the leaders of the medical profession.

### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

MENTION THE VARIETIES OF VOMITING IN YOUNG INFANTS. WHAT DO THEY USUALLY INDICATE?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Edith F. Mason, Croydon Infirmary, Thornton Heath, Surrey.

#### PRIZE PAPER.

Vomiting is the chief symptom of gastric disturbance, and in young infants is usually divided into three varieties, viz. :—

1. Vomiting immediately after food.
2. Vomiting from ten minutes to half an hour after food.
3. Vomiting more than half an hour after food.

1. Vomiting immediately after food may indicate (1) simple overfilling of the stomach; as a rule the milk will flow out of the mouth in a gentle stream, without either effort or noise, and is unchanged and has no sour odour.

(2) Vomiting due to eructation of gas is of a more violent character. Air is taken into the stomach either before the feeding by the use of a "dummy" teat, or during the feeding by the bottle being held too horizontally, or the hole in the teat is too small. The violent efforts to disperse the wind result in the ejection of food. By holding an infant in the upright position it can be trained to bring up the wind without vomiting.

(3) Vomiting immediately after food may be due to violent movements in the stomach, induced by—

- (a) The irritating or stimulating quality of the food.
- (b) The irritable condition of the nervous mechanism of the stomach.
- (c) Shaking or jolting of the infant.

The most important of these is the irritating quality of the food. The mother may have eaten something which imparts to the milk an unusual flavour, or in the case of a hand-fed infant the cows may have been fed on unsuitable food, or the milk may have undergone slight decomposition. Nervous disturbances in the mother, causing alteration in the metabolic processes of nutrition, may cause human milk to suddenly become very irritating to the infant's stomach.

2. In vomiting from ten minutes to half an hour after food, the milk is of a sour odour, and contains clots due to the milk coagulating too rapidly in the stomach, causing it to resent the irritation. This may be caused by the presence of acid bodies in the stomach at the time of feeding. This is liable to occur when the stomach has not been completely emptied since the last meal, and may be due to an insufficient time between the feeding, the indigestible character of the food, or to mechanical interference with the motor functions of the stomach.

3. Vomiting more than half an hour after food has been taken to indicate that either the food is of an indigestible character or that the powers of digestion are feebly developed. The vomited food will consist of solid matter, which has not been liquefied and is therefore unable to pass through the narrow pyloric orifice. The food under these conditions remains too long in the stomach, and chemical changes, such as fermentation or decomposition from bacterial action occur. Other reasons of prolonged digestion causing vomiting are inco-ordination of the muscular contractions concerned in gastric movements, dilatation of the stomach from overfilling, or incomplete emptying or irritability, or spasmodic closure of the pyloric sphincter.

Vomiting often occurs in infants purely as the result of nervous disorders, or it may be present in inflammatory or other disturbance of the bowel, as in summer diarrhoea, &c.; it is an important symptom in certain cases of fever or toxic poisoning, but the majority of cases of vomiting in young infants are due to food causes.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention :—Miss Dora Vine, Miss H. M. Springbett, Miss E. Robinson, Miss M. MacMahon, Miss F. Wright, Miss G. Bowden, Miss F. Sheppard.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

How would you nurse a patient suffering from mental shock?

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