

The Midwife.

A MOTHERLESS BABE.

A motherless babe is always an object of compassion, deprived of the mother love which is the sunshine in which it thrives; and of the nourishment which is vital to its existence. In civilized countries an artificial substitute can be provided; but in Central Africa the baby's life is usually in peril, for both milk and its substitutes are most difficult to obtain.

Our illustration, which we owe to the kindness of the Rev. Duncan Travers, Secretary of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, is of Mtondoleni, a baby whose mother died the day he was born, on the far-away shores of Lake Nyasa. His great grandmother did her best to bring up the child, and African women are almost without exception very kind to children; but as she fed him on *pala*, a gruel made of flour and water, it is not surprising that the child did not thrive. Then, fortunately for the baby, his grannie heard that at the hospital of the Universities' Mission at Kota-Kota, the nurse would give milk to babies who had no mother; so she tied the child on to her back, and, with her husband, trudged off to Kota-Kota to beg for milk.

But it was impracticable to supply the milk, though the nurse would gladly have done so, as naturally if it were carried for a long distance in a tropical sun it would be unfit to use, so, finally, the old lady agreed to come into the hospital with the baby. That was how he got his name of Mtondoleni, which means "picked up."

At first old Achawo would not believe that the milk and water upon which the baby was now fed could possibly be sufficient for him, and surreptitiously gave him *pala*. Nemesis fell upon her when the child had convulsions, and she promised

not to offend again. After a time, with proper feeding and care, Mtondoleni became a happy and bonny baby. His dress, as may be gathered from the picture, consisted for the most part of strings of black seeds, gathered on the hills, which he wore round his waist, wrists and ankles. In the hot, vertical sun the little black bodies need no covering for warmth, and, as African babies, like those of other countries, have an unlimited propensity for getting grubby, in his baby days Mtondoleni was happy dressed solely in his beads. When necessary water was poured over him from a native pot, and rubbed over him by a wet hand, then he had only to dry in the sun and the fine, dark, skin shone and glistened once more, clean and healthy, especially if just a suspicion of oil was used to complete his toilet.

In our second picture he is shown on the back of his aunt Mtomba, and this illustrates excellently the way in which African women carry their babies, either tied on their backs or seated on their hips, thus leaving both the mother's arms at liberty. Africa is a topsy-turvy country, and you are apt to think, so when you go to pick up a baby and it puts out

its legs, instead of its arms to you, as invariably it does. But the baby is as cosy as possible, and for the mother the plan has obvious advantages.

Miss E. M. Pye will speak at the Institute of Hygiene, at 33, Devonshire Street, Harley Street, W., on Wednesday, April 21st, at 8 p.m. on the Friends' War Victim Relief Expedition, including the Maternity Hospital at Chalons. The address will be illustrated by lantern slides. Members of the National Union of Trained Nurses will be admitted free on showing their badges, and non-members on payment of sixpence.



BABY MTONDOLENI AND HIS NURSE.

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