

The Midwife.

A SUGGESTED SCALE FOR FEEDING INFANTS ON DRIED MILK.

DR. VYNNE BORLAND, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., Glasgow, D.P.H.Lond., Assistant Medical Officer of Health, Willesden Urban District Council, contributes to the *Lancet* a very interesting article on the above subject. He writes:—

"It is now generally recognised that many diseases of early childhood, and in some cases of later life, are due to over-feeding at an early age. This refers more particularly to babies artificially fed than to breast-fed babies, and since in later years dried milks have come very much into use for baby feeding there is a greater tendency towards over-feeding.

"While attending the consultations at an infant welfare centre one is soon struck by the great differences in weight of babies of a similar age. If they are bottle fed one finds, with very few exceptions, that, although there may be as much as 3 lb. or 4 lb. difference between their weights at the same age, they are receiving practically the same quantity of milk in twenty-four hours. The reason for this is that feeds are given according to the age of the child, the weight being considered only in a haphazard way. This occurs more particularly in those cases that are fed on the various "baby foods and dried milks" which bear the instructions for feeding on the covering label. This matter becomes more important under the present difficult conditions when, owing to the decreased value of money, a large number of nursing mothers go out to work in order to lessen their financial troubles, and consequently their babies are no longer breast fed. At the same time, owing to the scarcity of fresh cows' milk, the demand for specially-prepared milks has very materially increased, and many local authorities have adopted "dried milks" as the most convenient form of distribution in connection with a welfare clinic, either at a cost price, or free in necessitous cases.

"A PLAN FOR FEEDING BABIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR WEIGHT.

"Taking these facts into consideration, it is desirable that a more appropriate method of arriving at the necessary feeds should be adopted than by calculating quantities of feeds according to age alone. Therefore it is suggested here that it would be an infinitely better plan to feed a baby in relation to its weight. This method has produced very satisfactory results in Willesden, where it has now been practised for over two years. . . .

"The present scale is based chiefly on a full-cream dried milk which has been modified to resemble human milk, but others not so modified have answered satisfactorily when given according to scale.

"If the suggested scale of feeds is to be adopted it is essential that it should fulfil the following con-

ditions:—1. It must be practicable. 2. It must be easily understood by doctors, nurses, mothers, or any person having charge of the baby. 3. The calculated amount of feed must produce a satisfactory gain in weight per week. 4. The stools must remain normal. For the number of level teaspoonfuls of dried milk to be given in 24 hours the formula is as follows:—

"Below 7 lb. add 9 to weight = up to 16 level teaspoons in 24 hours.

"From 7 to 16 lb. add 10 to weight = 17 to 26 level teaspoons in 24 hours.

"From 17 lb. upwards take second figure as one feed = 28 teaspoons upwards (four feeds in the 24 hours)."

THE TERM OF TRAINING FOR NURSE MIDWIVES.

Dr. Elizabeth Sloan Chesser appeals in *The Times* to "girls who are being demobilised from the various military and Government services and who would like to take up useful and remunerative work in the future. There is, she says, an urgent need of young women to train as nurse-midwives for urban and rural districts all over the country. Girls can, indeed, receive their year's training free of all expense (living and educational) if they will agree to serve afterwards at a good salary for two or three years as nurse-midwives in connection with the County Nursing Association which has trained them."

The qualification for midwives is defined under the Midwives Act, that for nurses will shortly be defined under the Nursing Acts, but it is safe to say that a year's training will not enable girls to qualify both as nurses and midwives. It is much more likely that the time of midwifery training will be raised to one year.

INCREASED COST OF LIVING.

In view of the increased cost of living, the fee for board payable by nurses who are admitted for four months to military families' hospitals for training as midwives will be increased from 10 guineas to £15.

BEREFT.

O, brown Earth, warm and fragrant,
Make soft her tiny bed,
Oh, great Winds, in the darkness
Move gently overhead—
Be kind, you waving grasses
She gathered baby-wise,
And all you buds and blossoms,
Rest lightly on her eyes.
Oh, mothers, to your bosoms
Fold close and safe your own—
My little babe is sleeping
Beneath the stars . . . alone.

—Anna Spencer Twitchell.

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