

The Midwife.

RELATION OF FOOD INTAKE TO WEIGHT IN NEWBORN INFANTS.

A study has recently been made by Drs. F. L. Adair and C. A. Stewart, of Minneapolis, U.S.A., reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association, of the changes occurring in the body-weight and also of the amount of breast-milk obtained at each nursing for the first ten days of life, for 298 babies weighing at birth from 2,500 to 5,000 grms. The amount of breast-milk obtained at each feeding was determined in the usual way, by carefully weighing the infants before and after nursing, the routine followed being four-hourly feeds of 20 minutes each from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., omitting the 2 a.m. feed, this regime beginning from six to ten hours after birth. In addition to breast-milk the babies received up to 66 c.c. of a 10 per cent. lactose solution after each nursing for the first five days. It was found that the average body-weight for 149 first-born and also for 149 later-born infants decreased to a minimum on the fourth day, the greatest loss in both groups occurring on the second day, although there was no progressively uniform daily decrease of weight. The average loss in Group I amounted to about 8 per cent. of the birth weight, and in Group II to about 6.4 per cent. After the fourth day the average weight, for each group progressively increased, although on the tenth day it was still 2.4 and 2.6 per cent. respectively below the birth weight.

For the first-born infants the amount of breast-milk obtained at each feed increased rapidly from an average of 13 grms. on the second day to 54.9 on the fifth day, reaching on the tenth day 78.4 grms. The amounts obtained by the later-born infants were slightly higher, averaging from 16.9 on the second day to 54.9 on the fifth and 84.7 on the tenth days. The heavier infants were generally found to obtain more milk at each feed than the others, especially after lactation was fully established.

In the discussion that followed the presentation of this report exception was taken by one of the speakers to the administration of lactose to newly-born infants, or indeed of giving them anything more than mother's milk. Dr. Stewart explained, however, that the lactose solution was given as an experiment, mainly to counterbalance the initial loss of body-fluids, and so to prevent the development of inanition fever, as well as to keep the post-partum weight-loss at a minimum. He added that as a result of his study he was convinced that the administration of a 10 per cent. lactose solution during the first five days of life was of definite value in attaining both these objectives; and that it in no way interferes with nursing if the lactose is given after the breast feeding.

A HAPPY REMOVE.

History may not always repeat itself exactly. But it has a way of imitating itself fairly closely. When the war broke out, the handsome buildings of the Brighton, Hove, and Sussex Grammar School in Dyke Road were turned into a military hospital. Now the old premises of the Grammar School in Buckingham Road have in their turn been changed into a hospital.

The Brighton and Hove Hospital for Women, which has been at West Street for ninety years, and which has trained hundreds of midwives, has in the past few days been removed to these former premises of the Grammar School in Buckingham Road. The first patients have been admitted. The old premises in West Street have been shut up, and sold. Matron and nurses are now rejoicing in a new hospital big enough for their present needs, and for more than present needs, and as fresh and bright as a new pin.

"AS THE BRANCH IS BENT."

The nine-months-old baby lay in its pram in the scullery, screaming lustily.

"Mary, do come and quiet the baby," called the busy mother to her ten-year-old eldest born.

Mary hurried downstairs, and with her left hand jerked the pram violently up and down, with her right hand shaking a rattle energetically in the baby's face, while she sang, "A few more years shall roll," all through, *prestissimo* and *fortissimo*.

"That's a good Mary," said the mother, gratefully. But the baby only screamed louder than ever.

COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Many years ago in discussing State Registration of Nurses with the late Dr. Matthews Duncan of Barts, he said emphatically midwifery should form part of the curriculum of a nurse, as it does that of a medical practitioner. He was a very far-sighted man.

The Midwives' Acts came along and constituted midwives a class apart. Now have come the Nurses' Acts and excluded Midwifery. I note however that Northern Ireland has taken the first step towards this desirable inclusion of midwifery in a Registered Nurses' Curriculum, by forming "the Ulster Nursing and Midwives Council," to administer the Nurses Registration Act (Ireland) and presumably the Irish Midwives Act. This would be the solution of the "Nurse Midwife" question of which there is "no such a thing."

Yours sincerely,
REGISTERED NURSE AND CERTIFIED MIDWIFE.

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