

The Midwife.

MATERNAL EDUCATION.

BY ANASTASIA MILLER, R.N.

Next?—A young mother with something tiny and precious wrapped in a bunny robe stepped up and freeing it of its covering laid it on the table before the doctor.

It was a pitiful little body that lay exposed. The palor, the distended abdomen, the sunken chest told a story of something wrong.

The doctor, whose life had been spent in the interest and study of children and their needs, made no comment, but proceeded systematically with the examination. As he spoke the secretary at his side recorded the data:

Apparent mental condition: good; development: fair; nutrition: poor; color: pale; muscle tone: fair; tissue tone: fair; skin clear; head well formed; anterior fontanel 3x4; Posterior Fontanel: closed; Cranio tabes: one plus; Eyes, ears, nose and throat: normal; Anterior Cervical glands: not palpable; Posterior Cervical glands: not palpable; Axillary glands: not palpable; Inguinal glands: palpable; Thorax-triangular; Rosary two plus; Groove one plus; Heart and lung sounds: clear; Abdomen: distended two plus; Liver and Spleen: not palpable; Epiphyses: one plus; Rectum and Genitals: normal; Extremities and reflex: normal.

The examination completed, the little mother again wraps the bunny robe about her baby, and as she presses it to her there is a world of hope and query and anxiety in her eyes as the doctor scans the history sheet. He finishes it and passes it back to the secretary.

Then in his kindly fashion: "How often have you been nursing this baby, mother?"

M.—"I nurse it one time and the next time I give it a bottle. I don't seem to have enough milk to satisfy baby."

Dr.—"Tell me, did you ever live on a farm?"

M.—"Yes. I was raised on a farm."

Dr.—"Did you ever milk a cow?"

M.—"I surely did."

Dr.—"What did they tell you would happen if the cow was not milked regularly and completely?"

M.—"They told me I'd dry the milk up."

Dr.—"And that is exactly what you are doing to your milk, mother. Every time you omit the breast it deprives it of the stimulation which creates milk. As a result your milk is growing less and less and you are gradually weaning your baby. This you must make every effort to avert, for there is nothing can take the place of breast milk. It alone can bring the fresh pink color to your baby's skin. Science has long tried to produce this with artificial foods, but has failed.

"The food you are giving in place of your milk is not supplying your baby's needs as his condition shows.

"Let me take your finger and outline the opening on the top of his head. Do you feel how large it is? Now feel the softness of this little chest wall and the row of knobs along these ribs, we call a rosary. Here, across the chest is a groove caused by the diaphragm drawing in the soft chest structure, and this swelling at his wrist or epiphyses, is the same formation we found at the ends of ribs, called rosary.

"All these things point to a lack of development and to the condition known as Rickets. Now it is up to us, mother, to stop the development of this right here, and it will not be difficult if you will work with me.

"To-day at nursing time we found the baby got only one ounce from the breast. I want you to put baby to both breasts every four hours, ten minutes at each one. I will

write out for you a small formula to complement this temporarily. The amount will be less than his requirement in order that he will be hungry when the next nursing falls due and go after it more vigorously. After he has finished nursing express all remaining milk from the breasts by working at least ten minutes on each one. Place your thumb and forefinger just outside the coloured area, around the nipple. Press the fingers backward deep into the breast, together and forward thereby compressing the ducts back of the nipple, which hold the milk. The fingers should not be moved from the original place on the skin surface just outside the coloured area. The nurse will do this with you before you leave to make sure that you understand it thoroughly.

"The next thing of importance is your own diet. Be steadfast in the observance of the list we give you. Bear in mind the importance of fresh vegetables and include raw vegetables or fruits in some form in your diet daily. Substitute whole wheat for white bread, and use the whole grain cereals and you will have no further trouble with your bowels. Above all, do not endanger your natural appetite by eating between meals or engorging yourself with liquids with the idea that this will make milk for it only defeats our purpose.

"So much for the re-establishing of your milk supply. Now for the direct treatment of the baby. Sunshine and cod-liver oil have been found to be the two great curative agents in rickets, so you will give the oil as I have directed, and gradually expose baby's skin to the *direct* rays of the sun as these written directions specify. Remember the sun must not come through glass, as this breaks up the violet rays, which we are depending upon for cure. Be careful always that baby's head is protected by a sunshade of some sort. In a couple of weeks, through this gradual process, baby will be able to spend most of the day in the sunshine.

"I want you to return one week from to-day. Arrange baby's nursing so it will fall due while you are here, to enable us to weigh the amount he takes.

"That is all to-day—Next?"

And so on through busy hours of busy days, these child specialists of Portland are patiently giving of their time to put over education of this sort in breast development with gratifying results.

Breast development is being taught in the Department of Pediatrics of the best universities; and is the subject matter of a pamphlet recently issued by the U.S. Children's Bureau for physicians and nurses. According to statistics, a baby has six out of seven chances to live if it is breast-fed, with only one chance in seven on the bottle. No wonder this work has been termed "the best life insurance and health insurance purchasable."

—In the *Pacific Coast Journal of Nursing*.

The Catherine Gladstone Maternity Home, at Mancot, Hawarden, founded and endowed by Mr. Henry Neville Gladstone, Lord-Lieutenant of Flintshire, to the memory of his mother, was recently opened by Countess Beauchamp.

Miss Jentie Paterson is engaged to lecture at the Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow, on October 2nd and 6th, and at the Royal Infirmary on October 15th and 22nd.

Miss Paterson comes south again in November, when she will give a lantern lecture at the Royal Sanitary Institute entitled "Nutrition and the Value of the Healthy Child to the State."

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