

INFANT FEEDING.

IN a former issue of this JOURNAL we referred to the various ways in which infants may be fed—the selection of a proper substitute, when breast milk was not available—and the modifications necessary to render cows' milk fit for infant food.

It is our purpose to discuss, in this paper, the quantity of food to be given—when and how it should be given—and how to supply and adjust the nutritive ingredients in an infant's food after it has outgrown an exclusive milk diet.

We return to this subject because we consider it one of the most important within the whole range of preventive medicine. In medical teaching and in medical literature it has not received the time and space it deserves. Young men go out from our colleges, who talk fluently of the Bacterium Coli Commune and the Bacterium Lactis Aerogenes, and are able to discuss seriatim the whole list of Toxicogenic microbes, but if you asked them the capacity of an infant's stomach at birth, not one in ten could make even a good guess. The same lack of practical knowledge prevails among the laity. Within the past month I have enquired of ten intelligent mothers and nurses, who had the care of children, how much milk an infant should be given at one feeding when a week old, and the answers have varied from four ounces up to a pint. Imagine an infant with a capacity for *one ounce* struggling to take in, digest, and assimilate a pint—eight ounces—or even four ounces of food, which is, at least, three times as hard to digest as human milk. Do we wonder that the death rate for infants is high, and that seventy per cent. of deaths, from all causes, in infants are due to disease of the digestive organs? Is it not a mercy that death does come to the relief of these poor, little, helpless, suffering victims of ignorance and indiscretion?

In preparing a schedule for feeding the average healthy infant upon cow's milk, the capacity of the stomach, its digestive power, the age and the weight must all be taken into account. During the early months of infant life the stomach plays a small and unimportant part in digestion. At birth it is simply a di-