

INFANT FEEDING.

BY DR. MCKEE, TORONTO.

The sole object of this paper is to arouse discussion. I do not suppose that I will be able to say anything about the subject that most of you do not already know, either from practice or reading, but I hope to draw attention to some points that sometimes slip the memory of the busy practitioner, and to others that are not given the attention they deserve. In fact, the whole subject of infant feeding is given too little attention by a medical man as a rule.

It should hardly be necessary to repeat here, that cow's milk, modified by the addition, in varying proportions, of cream, sugar and water, and these only, should be the only food given to infants who are artificially fed, up to the age of nine months, and the chief food until they are one and a half years old. This is one of the things too often forgotten.

Sometimes we hear it said that this or that baby cannot take cow's milk. That is not the fault of the baby, but of the modification of the milk. That it is difficult in many cases to modify milk so that it will agree with the given case is shown by the many patent foods on the market, each of which claims that, if used according to directions, with or without the addition of cow's milk, it will make a perfect substitute for human milk. That in some cases these foods do seem to agree better than cow's milk is true, but if any thought is given to the question it will be seen why they do so, and why they are so much used even by physicians, although the results are usually so unsatisfactory in the end. It is possible to so modify cow's milk that it will agree with any infant, with whom it will agree if one of these foods is added, and at the same time give them a much better chance of growing into healthy children, and escaping in great measure the illnesses too common in infancy.

I well know that parents often use these foods without asking the advice of the physician, simply because some friend's baby has been fed that way and looks fat and rosy, but too often they use one or the other of them on the advice of their physician, and once they begin to use the patent food we usually have nothing more to do with the feeding of that baby, unless some illness follows. In no branch of practice do we let so many patients, who would be good paying ones, slip away from us, to be guided by the directions on the labels of some patent article, when, if time and care were only given to the work we would be able to hold them, and in nothing does care and attention to detail give such results as in the artificial feeding of infants.