

A Hindi translation of the "Handbook of Nursing for India" is being prepared for publication. This is the text book authorized for use by the North India United Board of Examiners for Nurses, and also by the recently formed Mid-India United Board of Examiners. The cost of the book will probably be between Rs. 2 and Rs. 3 per copy. Will any who are desirous of securing copies of this book please communicate at once with Miss F. E. Gruchy, U. C. C. Mission, Banswara, S. Rajputana, stating the number of copies likely to be required so that the committee appointed may know how large an edition to order?

DEAR FELLOW-MEMBERS OF THE H. V. L.

You must forgive me this month if I only give you a reprint from a Magazine, as I have only recently arrived from Kashmir, and we open school to-morrow, so you can guess that I am pretty busy!

I had meant to write this month something about the care of Premature babies in the homes in which we visit, which is a very specialised matter, and so well worth while taking a lot of trouble over.

In the meantime, here is an account of the progress of two very tiny people in England, which I have ventured to copy from this month's issue of that excellent little paper "Maternity and Child Welfare," published by Gordon and Gotch, Ltd., 15, Bride Street, E. C. 4 and obtainable monthly for Rs. 7-8 per annum.

By the way, we all ought to keep up our reading as much as possible, otherwise we cannot possibly keep our knowledge up to date.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

LAHORE,

MURIEL SIMON,

October 10th, 1928.

Hon. Secretary, H.V.L.

## THE YORKSHIRE TWINS

BY MARGARET L. READ

(Assistant Matron, Mothercraft Training Society.)

ON July 21 last two tiny babies suddenly sprang into notoriety. They were the two-and-a-half-months premature boy twins, Percy and Robert, who travelled from a village in Yorkshire when they were only two days old. They were brought to the Mothercraft Training Society's headquarters at Highgate London, by a mothercraft (nursery) nurse, who realised that their one hope of life lay in getting them into an institution where the dieting of infants is systematically taught and where, if necessary, breast milk would be obtainable. They were the second and third children of a labourer and his wife. The babies travelled each in a wooden box lying on a cushion, and the temperature of the

"bed" was regulated by three rubber hot-water bottles, one under the foot of the cushion and one on either side of the infant. The babies arrived wrapped in gamgee, and only two little pink faces were visible peeping out of their tiny bonnets, and were so much alike that one was decorated with a blue bow and the other with a blue rosette to distinguish "t'other from which."

The passengers on the train were much interested in this unusual phenomenon, and the guard of the train was most assiduous in his attentions and in helping to replenish the hot-water bottles from time to time. The babies arrived as warm as toast.

Great preparations had been made, and great excitement prevailed at Cromwell House in anticipation of their arrival, and, after making them comfortable and taking their temperature,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of breast milk with  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of water was given by pipette and taken readily by each baby. The babies were kept under observation in their boxes for twenty-four hours, and were fed two-hourly with mixture as above. As their condition remained satisfactory, it was decided to undress and weigh them at the end of this time, and there was much speculation as to what their weights would be.

Percy turned the scale at 2 lb. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. and Robert at 2 lb. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  oz.; their measurements were also interesting as throwing light on the prematurity:

|        |        |                      |       |        |                      |
|--------|--------|----------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|
| Robert | Head   | 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. | Percy | Head   | 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. |
|        | Chest  | 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ "    |       | Chest  | 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ "    |
|        | Length | 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ "   |       | Length | 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ "   |

Being so small, it was thought best only to undress and oil them every third day. The umbilical cords (contrary to normal teaching) came off very soon—Percy's at 3 days, and Robert's at 5 days. Robert did not pass any meconium till the evening of the third day, and also took several days before he showed signs of a "changing" stool. Robert was thought on admission to be the less vigorous of the two, but Percy soon began to show symptoms of jaundice and oedema. He also became very lethargic and disinclined to suck. For some days much anxiety was felt about him and, unless one had been able to resort to oesophageal feeds, it is very doubtful whether he would have lived. In giving oesophageal feeds to feeble infants one realises how much less exhausting it is than the effort of sucking or feeding by pipette. But of course this is a method of feeding which can only be resorted to under medical direction. The jaundice and oedema eventually disappeared, and the baby became more active and vigorous.

The babies' mother was given careful instructions about the increase of her own breast milk, and how to draw it off regularly every 3 hours. The twenty-four hours' supply she posted every night to Highgate. She managed to send a small quantity every day for a few weeks, but it never increased and the supply gradually diminished. It was not possible for her to leave home for a sufficient length of time to establish full breast-feeding, so it was not thought practicable for the mother to be admitted to hospital.

Both children were fed on expressed breast milk and water only, for two months, but as the breast milk was increased and the water reduced, it was

found that they both had a marked "fat intolerance" as evidenced in the stools, which become frequent with definite fat curds.

For a week therefore the breast milk was "set" one hour, skimmed and boiled, and then, as the motions improved and showed signs of absorption, the time of "setting" was gradually reduced. By this time it was necessary to begin to introduce artificial food, and a modified milk formula was given, which ultimately would give the children a mixture approximating to mother's milk as closely as possible in sugar, fat, and protein. Here again the babies showed that their chief difficulty was in absorbing fat, and the New Zealand cream was introduced very gradually, 124th of an ounce being added to the whole day's supply to begin with.

When the babies weighed 4 lb. they began to be oiled and washed on alternate days, and they were also given artificial sunlight treatment, to which they responded by becoming much more vigorous and active. Their weight was slow but steady, though Robert had a bad upset when 3½ months old, due once again to fat intolerance, and he lost weight for a week. Reducing the New Zealand cream during that period soon helped to put matters right, and ten days later he was up to his full percentage again. The gain in weight was still rather slow, so the babies were graded on to the higher protein mixture, in the hope that the increased protein of 1·6 per cent would help in this respect. Shortly after this, both babies gave up their night feed and were put on to four-hourly feeding at 5 months without any difficulty.

The "Yorkshire twins" (by which name they are commonly known to the public) were discharged on January 12, 1928, Robert weighing 5 lb. 13½ oz. and Percy weighing 6 lb. 13½ oz. They were both developing quite well, particularly Percy, who has a dimple, which makes his smile highly attractive.

The twins were much missed because, during their time here, they had required much skill and attention, and the nurses had become genuinely attached to them. Their mother is delighted to have them home, and would "not part with them again for anything." They have made excellent progress since returning home, and we still hear regularly and know they are thriving on the Truby King system of feeding, *i.e.*, cow's milk modified to human percentages.

Robert's weight to date (March 24) is 8 lb. 4 oz. and Percy's is 9 lb. 4½ oz. The final measurements on discharge may also be of interest:

|        |              |       |              |
|--------|--------------|-------|--------------|
| Robert | Head 15 in.  | Percy | Head 15½ in. |
|        | Chest 11½,,  |       | Chest 12,,   |
|        | Length 19½,, |       | Length 21,,  |