

(continued from previous page)

for lunch as long as we are back in time to rest a little before the 2 o'clock feed." She laughed. "One day, nearly everybody was out to lunch, and I was rather new and thought I could just stay quietly in here in the sun. Nobody came near except Matron! Since then, I've been hounded to bed every day. I feel like a criminal. You'll hear the nurses: 'Now, Mrs. B., you will go to bed, won't you?' 'Are you going to bed now, Mrs. B?'"

"After the babies are fed, those who are well enough and over six weeks, go over to the 'kicker' for exercise in long woolly suits."

"The 'kicker'?"

"A large play-pen, rather nice, with sides covered in pink linen and animals all over it. It's in the porch with windows all round. The infants love it. While they're there we have our afternoon tea. As your baby is older, you'll probably be able to take him out in the pram. Later, topping and tailing of the babies, feeds and bed. Then our own dinner. After that, we sit and talk babies till about eight, when we have coffee."

"Coffee?" I said, in much the same tone as I had used about a dummy. "Coffee for nursing mothers?"

"Cereal coffee—bran and treacle, I think, but I'm not sure. Anyway, it's quite nice. More baths—our own—and to bed at 8.30. About 9.30 the nurses bring the babies to us in bed for their feeds, and take them away again and tuck them down. And there are night nurses to look after the babies at night, of course—the babies all sleep over at general."

I sat entranced. "To bed at 8.30 . . . the nurses bring the babies . . . and tuck them down." All this and Heaven, too! For eight months I had risen at five and gone to bed later than I cared to admit. Would it all really happen?

"Some of the babies have to be fed every three hours. And some of the mothers have to have special treatments to increase their supply of milk. . . ."

THEN it was time to "top and tail" in the nursery. Why, oh, why don't they build houses with nurseries or even with decently-sized kitchens or bath-rooms? I thought of my efforts on the dining-room table covered with a rug. And visitors will come around when the place is strewn with baby clothes, napkins, jars of ointment. . . . Here everything was cream and blue, small blue chairs with cream tie-on cushions, small tables for the trays, cupboards, screens, curtains, large sinks for the baths—with benches—and, of course, nurses helping and answering questions

WE were in another world. We didn't once hear the news from London. We didn't even read the newspaper.

The meals were good, very wholesome—though, strange to some palates. For instance, white sauce with grated cooked carrots for breakfast. We all drank lots of milk and lots of water. We laughed a lot—over very simple things. "Good for Nursing Mothers" was our slogan. And how we talked—it was babies, babies, babies! We would listen while one was holding the floor, all of us making the right kind of noises, but each anxious to have her turn and tell her day's experiences in detail. . . .

Most of the mothers were very young. I was an "old" mother because I had two children. I felt an old mother, too, when I heard one young thing remark of someone "Of course she's getting on. She must be at least 25." We were rather shabby, too. The mothers of the older babies who had been sick were tired and careworn, and the younger mothers were still mostly post-natally amorphous, still forced to wear, to their intense disgust, their old clothes. We "old" mothers reassured them: they would soon get back their figures, especially if they persevered with breast-feeding, and we tried to explain, learnedly, though probably very inaccurately, the physiological reasons for this.

SOME of us were shown over the hospital. I peered through the glass window into a "premature" ward, a beautiful room done in eggshell blue and a delicate pink. It was explained that all babies under five and a-half pounds, whether full-time or not, are better for the special treatment given to premature babies.

"Do they come here as soon as they are born?"

I asked.

"No, it would be too great a shock to them to be moved at once, so they wait 24 hours. Once in Karitane, they have almost complete rest. They don't leave their cribs, even to be fed. Every three hours they are turned from one side to the other."

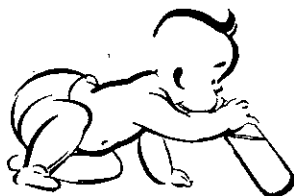
"And the window in the door?"

"That is so that mothers can see their babies. The nurses wear masks all the time in that ward; if the babies are gaining in weight and strong enough, they can be wheeled over to the window and raised so that their mothers can see them. . . ."

The dispensary, or Milk Kitchen, was a most interesting place. In the huge refrigerator were crates of labelled feeding bottles and frozen cubes of breast milk. Nearby were bottles of breast milk sent from all over the province, and just collected from railway station and bus depot, waiting to be boiled and put away for the respective babies. In this dispensary all the artificial foods for the babies were prepared. There were—oh, awesome sight!—dozens of bottles of rose-hip syrup.

Before I went back to the cottage, I watched some of the babies begin their evening meal. It was a heart-warming sight. The young nurses sat in a circle with the babies round a large steel waggon with all the food on it. Behind screens, in the corners, the "bad" babies who refused to eat in company, were being fed. It was obvious that the nurses loved their jobs and loved the babies. I decided that even if I had to go home and leave my baby for a week or two, I would be perfectly happy about him, knowing that he would have every care, and knowing, too, that he would be mothered.

IT was nearly a month since we had trudged wearily up the road. Now we were going home. The mother who was to have my room had arrived. She sat on the edge of a chair in the mothers' sitting room. Her face wore a stricken look. There were loud wails from the nursery. "That is not your baby crying," I said. "It's my son who is making all the noise. All the new mothers are the same. . . ."



'If you behave properly

and grow up to be a fine healthy sheep with a thick coat like your father, then you too, may live to see your wool go to the Bruce Mills.' Yes, it takes good wool to make good woollens. You will always get warmth and wear from any garment marked with King Bruce. The Bruce Mills are busy with war work, but some Bruce woollens are still being made for you. Be on the look-out for them.

53



Who finds the Cash to pay Estate & Succession Duties?

WHEN the time arrives to administer your estate, will it be necessary to sell valuable property at short notice and perhaps on an unfavourable market to pay the Death Duties? . . . duties which must be paid in cash and in full. The Public Trustee can help in this matter, as he possesses special statutory powers enabling him to advance the required funds with no attendant legal expenses and to avoid the forced sale of assets of the estate. Consult your nearest Public Trust Office for further information.

The PUBLIC TRUSTEE