

# THE CASE OF PHOEBE ATKINS.

SOME comments have lately been made in the daily journals with regard to the statements of a girl named Phoebe Atkins, whose child recently died from mal-nutrition. With regard to the statements made, we should have thought it was thoroughly well known by this time that Salvation Army Rescue Homes are not managed according to prison system, the inmates being at perfect liberty to leave whenever they please. There was no difference whatever made in this case, Phoebe Atkins could leave when she pleased. Any statement, therefore, to the effect that the girl was "obliged to stay" in the Home for three months is incorrect. Moreover, she never asked for cow's milk, nor was it necessary for the child to have it.

It may be pointed out that Phoebe Atkins entered the Rescue Home from Poplar Workhouse, in February, of this year. She obtained a situation to which she went on July 8th, so that at the time of the child's death she had been out of the Rescue Home for over two months. The child died at the house of a person who was nursing it, and who received it from the mother herself on the 7th of July last.

Since, therefore, both mother and child left the Home in the early part of July, we entirely disclaim any responsibility for the condition of the child, which, it seems, although originally very puny, thrived during its stay in the Home, and never had any illness there whatever.

Further, some time after the child had been thus placed out to nurse by the mother, the officers of the Home, acting entirely from the purest motive of philanthropy, called on the nurse in question, and being dissatisfied with the child's condition, arranged with the mother that it should be removed. Subsequently, however, the mother altered her mind, and wrote saying that she "wished the child to remain where it was." Consequently, our Rescue officers were unable to take it away, and, so far as they were concerned, the matter entirely dropped.

These facts, which are vouched for by Mrs. Bramwell Booth, are surely sufficient to show that everything possible was done from beginning to end for the mother and child by the Rescue authorities, and this is doubly proved by the letters of gratitude and regard received by them from Phoebe Atkins herself.

We may add that a properly-qualified medical man gives most careful oversight to the Babies' Home, sees all the babies frequently, and is always sent for in any case of illness.