

The Country Mother

Contributions from our Readers who write from Practical Experience

THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN

A First Prize Letter

The most important point in keeping children healthy is to see that they have the right food for their needs. I think



that children are a great deal better without anything but milk to the end of the first year. Bringing a baby up by hand is not an easy thing to do, and if one cannot nurse one's baby it is much wiser to buy a book about feeding babies than to try to get along by asking neighbors for advice.

Little babies vary so much that what suits a neighbor's baby may not do at all for one's own.

When the baby is a year old I start him with eggs and a little porridge. Oatmeal I find will not agree with young children unless it is strained, then they like it very much. Farina, ground rice and barley flour are all very good, also soups made with beef, mutton or chicken.

At a year old I plan the meals like this: 7 a.m. (or at waking), a bottle of warm milk, bread and butter; 10 a.m., porridge of some sort, bread and butter, a drink of milk. The baby should then go to bed and sleep till the next meal. 2 p.m., an egg with bread and butter, or soup with rice or macaroni, milk; 6 p.m., bread and milk, a bottle of milk; 10 p.m., a bottle of milk.

One has to find out for oneself what agrees with one's baby, as they vary so much. This plan I follow roughly to about two years old, adding other things as I find them agree with the baby. Baked apples, all sorts of milk pudding, chopped lean meat, plain cake, all are fairly safe to try. The sooner the baby will stop using his bottle the better, as the bottles are a great deal of trouble to keep sweet, but he should have just the same amount of milk from a cup.

At two years old I have the baby at table with us, still giving him only his own simple food. As our meals are rather far apart in summer, he has a piece of bread and butter and a drink of milk between meals. The last point in feeding children is to see that they have plenty of water. Even tiny babies will take water eagerly out of a feeding bottle. Throw the comforter into the fire and give the baby a bottle of water instead and see how much happier he will be.

The second point in keeping children healthy is to give them lots of fresh air. The rule I follow is that any child over a month old can go out when the thermometer reads above zero unless there is a high wind or it is raining or snowing. All my babies have slept out their first winter and liked it, tho if the baby is not used to being out, it is wise to give him a hot water bottle. If there is no hot water bottle, a warm flat iron or brick wrapped up well will be just as good. The older children should have leggings with feet attached and it's well to pin each mitt on with two safety pins until they are old enough to put them on again if they come off.

Airing bedrooms in winter is no easy task. Personally, I have found the easiest way is to open the storm window slat, have the three small holes cut into one big one and put a piece of board the width of the inner window across it to keep it from shutting right down. This airs without direct draft and the inside window should be opened up during the daytime. It is a good plan to leave a south window without a storm sash at all as it can then often be opened on a mild day, especially if it can be let down from the top.

The third point in keeping children healthy is for them to have plenty of bathing. They love it and it doesn't really take very long if one makes a habit of it. For my own part I aim at a daily warm bath, but I cannot pretend that it never gets crowded out. For older

children, a morning cold sponge bath is very good.

The fourth point is regular habits in eating and sleeping. There should be definite hours for meals and they should be kept to, with no nibblings between meals. The sleeping hours should be arranged in the same way, making sure that the children get plenty of sleep. A child under five should have a twelve-hour sleep at night with a nap at noon, if possible. Regular habits are easily established if one starts as soon as the baby is born to feed him at the proper hour and never between times. Every two hours for the first two months, every two hours and a half for the third month and every three hours for the rest of the first year are the proper hours.

The last point is, I think, one of the most important. It is to keep clear of medicine except under doctor's orders. If a child is constipated don't give castor oil, it will only make him worse in the long run. Instead, give stewed prunes for breakfast. Graham bread is very good for this, too. For summer complaint, stop all milk and give barley water. Finally, it is wise always to keep handy a bottle of lysol with some

clean boiled rags to dress cuts. A drop of lysol at once may save you from a badly festering wound or even blood poisoning.—E. M. H.

RAINY DAY PLAY Third Prize Letter

Dear Miss Beynon:—My children are still so young that I do not know if the hints I have to offer will be of much use, the oldest is only four and the other two; however, perhaps some busy mother may gain a little help from them and also a quiet half hour now and again. By plays, I gather you mean some amusement which will keep the youngsters happy for a while. Every mother knows the delight of children over a bit of dough, but it is not always handy when needed. Now a small box of Harbutt's Plasticine takes its place, is always handy and is clean. You can get a box for as little as fifteen cents up to one dollar. It is well worth the money for the joy it gives; the objects to be made with it are endless and the games to be played. Today a full tea set has been made, cups, plates, dishes, etc., and all the good things to be eaten too, and they have all been carefully put back into the box for a game next time. Next comes a box of chalks, the nice pencil kind which does not break and which baby cannot bite to pieces. Chalking pictures will keep them happy for a long time. For Sundays I have some nice scripture pictures which helps the little ones to learn a little Bible history. My little girl has just been doing the "Visit of the Wise Men" and has hardly gone outside the lines once. She insisted I should make a big star over the picture and was most interested in making the blessed Virgin's dress blue. She is not likely to forget the story, is she?

A pencil and a chequered exercise book is another source of unfailing interest, if only "mother" has time to help a little to set a page of ladders, spades, little houses, all done in the straight lines of the chequers, which is so easy and lays a foundation for writing, drawing and counting.



Little patterns are easily made and here the chalks come in again to color them. Card sewing is also a joy, when I am doing my bit of mending. These can be bought all ready stamped, but can easily be made. The little cards at the top and bottom of tea packets come in very handy with some simple pattern either drawn or traced on them. Let the child prick holes round and sew with a bit of bright thread, leaving a space between each stitch, the space to be filled up coming back. These cards make wonderful presents to some favored friend.

When I am cutting up turnips I sometimes take a sharp knife and make tables, chairs, a stone boat, blocks for building, houses, troughs, and the chicks will enjoy a splendid game with them. These are just a few hints which I hope may be of use. You may say they are not regular games, but the children quite consider them play and they are a great relief after the regular noisy romps which go on most of the time, or the games when I am called upon to be a doctor, nurse, soldier or some neighbor and have to keep up the necessary conversation. As the children grow older they will need less help from me and I think most of them lay a foundation for education in one form or another and without worrying the baby brains.

I may say my husband has taken The Guide for a long time and both he and I find it most helpful and I for one shall look forward to the Household Number with great interest.—MRS. E. MAIRE, Islay P.O., Alta.

HEALTH OF CHILDREN

Before my first baby was born I read and studied all the baby lore I could obtain. When she came

I was so particular to feed her just ten minutes every two hours until she was two months old, and then fifteen minutes every two and a half hours, and from the time she was 3 months old until I weaned her at nine months, twenty minutes every three hours. She was bathed regularly every morning at the same time, and twice a week gave her an olive oil bath. As I washed her mouth out every day with a boracic solution she never had a sore mouth. She was a well

nourished child and a very fine child physically, and was very bright and active. Imagine the shock and surprise it was when at the age of 19 months she was stricken with infantile paralysis. On a certain Friday night as I put her to bed she was particularly playful, and on Saturday morning she could only take a step or two and would then drop to the floor. We had the doctor by ten o'clock, but by this time she could not stand at all. She grew worse and at times seemed to suffer great pain. During these bad spells we kept flannel cloths, wrung out of hot water on her thighs and over her abdomen, being very careful to take them off before they grew at all cool. As there was practically no life or circulation in her limbs we had to supply artificial heat and kept hot water



bottles around her, being careful that they were covered and did not burn her. We flexed her knees by placing a roll of flannel about the size of your arm, under them, also another roll was put at her feet to keep them from dropping. We changed her position often, as she was unable to move at all. Milk and water was the only nourishment allowed her for about three weeks. She had a tablespoon of castor oil almost every night and the doctor also gave her medicine. At the end of three weeks the disease had run its course and she was getting to the point where we must work harder than ever if we wanted our little girl to walk again.

We commenced massaging her limbs for about an hour, about fifteen or twenty minutes at a time, every day, keeping our hands well moistened with olive oil or cocoa butter. We increased the massaging gradually until we were working with her, massaging and moving her limbs in different directions, about four and five hours a day. By this time we were also using electricity for about half an hour each day. She was getting good nourishing food every three hours, in the form of eggs, milk, fruit and beef juice, nothing very solid tho.

Three and a half months after she was first taken ill, she commenced to creep, then she advanced like any baby, learned to creep, then stand with a support, and walk with a support. At the end of six months she was taking a few steps alone, and she has continued to improve until now at the end of ten months, she is running all over, and is not deformed at all.

MOTHER.

KEEPING THE GROWING BOY AND GIRL ON THE FARM A Second Prize Letter

It is deplorable, but nevertheless true, that many of our country boys and girls are yearly leaving the farm for the city. The reasons are obvious. In many cases there is too much work with little or no amusement. There is no truer saying than all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, and we might add a discontented boy; and needless to say girls are no exception to the rule. It is high time the subject was looked into and country parents awakened to the fact that they should and must, as a duty they owe to their boys and girls in particular and to the world in general, make farm life less humdrum.

Recreation

Give the growing boy and girl time to admire nature's ever changing beauties—the sunrises and sunsets, the young leaves shooting out and the different flowers coming in bloom. These are the chief attractions of country life, where you are near to nature's heart. In summer encourage a tennis club, help them to organize one if it be possible, or for the girls a basketball team, and let them have time to practice at least once a week. Unless something unusual occurs to prevent, let them have the Dominion holidays off to take in any sports there may be in any of the adjoining towns, and if an occasional circus visits your home town give them a horse and rig to attend that. In winter, which is usually the slack season, give them a pair of good skates apiece if they are fond of



Continued Page 30