

HOUSEHOLD.

The Sick Child's Diet.

(By Christine Terhune Herrick, in 'Harper's Bazar'.)

By the use of a proper diet many of a child's light ailments may be partially or entirely relieved. In view of this fact it is a pity that there should be among mothers so limited a comprehension of the effect of certain foods upon a disordered system.

Let us take, for example, one of the minor troubles to which many children are subject—summer-complaint, so-called, although it frequently manifests itself in cold weather. Few, indeed, are the nurseries in which the principal treatment of this disorder is by diet. The paregoric-bottle is usually the first resort in those homes where the old practice is followed and if one application fails to cure the evil, the dose is doubled. In other homes a dose of castor oil is considered a specific for an attack of diarrhoea. I have known these courses to have been adopted with children whose diet in the meanwhile received absolutely no attention.

Two pictures rise before me as I write. One is that of a delicate little girl of five, with a tendency to bronchial affection and bowel weakness, standing knee-deep in wet grass under a pear tree, eating her fill of unripe pears; the other that of a small boy whose intestinal troubles kept him constantly under the doctor's charge, rising from his seat in front of a basket of peaches and announcing that he had just finished his tenth. In both cases the parents looked on complacently, apparently as unmoved by the recollection that they had been up most of the previous night endeavoring to relieve the indigestion of their offspring, as by the anticipation that they would probably pass the ensuing night in the same fashion. I may state, en passant, that one child is dead and the other a hopeless dyspeptic.

One more example out of the scores that occur to me. This is of a child of ten, who was sent away from home by her parents in the hope that a change of air would improve her health, and break up the terrible attacks of nausea and pain, accompanied by dysentery, from which she suffered constantly. She was taken to the home of a relative, who had children of her own, and principles by which she reared them. She watched the child for a day or two, noticed that she came to breakfast without spirits or appetite, and that she complained of a constant acid taste in the mouth, as well as of headache and sick stomach. Investigation revealed that she always went to bed with a parcel of candy under her pillow, ate it before she went to sleep, took a nibble at it when she awoke in the night, and broke her fast with it the first thing in the morning. Her mother knew of this habit, and had given her money with which to replenish her supply when that which she brought with her from home gave out.

Without going so far as to say that all except contagious or infectious diseases can be averted by a proper diet, I do not hesitate to insist that it is never necessary for a healthy child to suffer from attacks of stomach or bowel trouble, any more than it is obligatory upon him to have a certain number of hard colds during the winter. Moreover, there is no doubt that he is in infinitely less danger of contracting disease of any sort, epidemic or otherwise, if he is properly nourished than when he is fed in the haphazard style that prevails in most households.

A little careful watching will indicate to the mother what foods produce specific results upon her child. Should she find, after two or three experiments, that this or that article causes pain or nausea, or is even injurious in some less marked manner, she should drop that item from the bill of fare, for a time at least. Sometimes a child may be disturbed in early life by a dish that will not disagree with him when he is older.

Feet and Shoes.

(Jennie Chandler, in 'Journal of Hygiene'.)

I sometimes wonder why so many women fail to understand how to take proper care of the feet. The feet are tortured into foot-gear that is a size too small, that fits in no particular, that presses on the flesh unequally, and causes corns, and, above all, that

makes women limp and wobble like ducks. Why women will persist in wearing hideously high heels no person in the world, not even themselves, is able to say. Not only does it throw too great a portion of the weight of the body forward on the toes, causing a spinal disorder, but it throws all the important internal organs out of place, and this at last results in a lot of more or less serious internal troubles.

To put the foot in a well-fitting shoe of the size that properly belongs to it and to wear low heels is the best way to preserve the foot in perfect health; and let me gently say that tight shoes are one cause of red noses and an unhealthy complexion.

If you have a long, narrow foot, or a fat one, it is better to have your shoes and boots made expressly for you, as ready-made ones do not take into consideration anything out of the common as regards the formation of the foot. If you have a flat foot, do not wear a too arched instep; if your foot is very arched, see that your boot is made to fit it. Always have your shoes eased for you before wearing them; and be careful never to take long walks when wearing a new pair, unless the fit of the shoe is perfect, and the pressure just right on every part. I have known lameness ensue, and pain is the inevitable result.

The feet should be well washed, at least once a day, twice if possible. Tepid water should be used, and the whole foot and ankle should be massaged. The feet need not be soaked in the water, but only kept in long enough to wash them. Too hot water and keeping the feet too long in it will make the skin very tender, and will cause various other troubles.

To keep the flesh in good healthy condition, rub a little salt on the soles when still wet. This will not only strengthen them, but keep you from catching cold. Salt and water dashed over the feet and legs will often cure neuralgia in the feet, especially if massage is given to them afterwards.

After a long walk, or when the feet are swollen from much standing, they should be bathed and rubbed. Teach your children the importance of caring for their feet, of being proud of perfect ones, and set them an example by doing this yourselves.

Cold Feet.

Those who suffer from cold feet will be glad to hear that two pairs of the thinnest stockings will be found warmer in year than one pair of the very thickest made. There is a scientific reason for this, namely, that between the two stockings there is preserved a layer of warm air.

Cultivating a Love For Books.

Susan Coolidge says: "If old tales were true and the gift-conferring fairies came to stand around a baby's bed, each with a present in her hand, I think out of all that they could bestow I should choose for any child in whom I was interested these two things—a quick sense of humor and a love for books. There is nothing so lasting or so satisfying. Riches may take wings, beauty fade, grace vanish into fat, a sweet voice become harsh, rheumatism may cripple the fingers which played or painted so deftly—with each and all of these delighted things time may play sad tricks, but to life's end the power to see the droll side of events is an unerring cheer, and so long as eyes and ears last books furnish a world of interest and escape, whose doors stand always open."

The real lover of books is thus introduced into the best society of all ages. At any time he can join the company of the brightest, keenest minds the world has ever known. The boy or girl who has formed a taste for the best literature has at least one strong, beautiful thread running through the warp of his life.

Have not we as mothers, therefore, a duty to our children to foster and encourage their love for books? Ought we not even to try to create this love? Almost anything can be done with a very little child in this direction if the mother really desires this joy for her little one, if she herself fully believes in the value of the taste to be acquired. Of course she must care for the best literature herself if she expects her child to do so. If the mother's time be limited, let the child see how much value is set upon the few minutes that can be taken for reading.—R. M. Brown, in 'Congregationalist.'

Selected Recipes.

Cup custards—Beat four eggs together until light. Add one half-cupful of sugar, one-fourth of a grated nutmeg, and one quart of sweet milk. Stir until the sugar is dissolved, and pour into custard-cups. Place the cups in a pan of boiling water and put it into the oven, till the custards are firm in the centre. Test them by putting the handle of a spoon in the centre. If the custard does not stick to the handle, it is done. Remove the cups from the water, and set them away to cool. Serve in the same cups in which they are baked.

To Boil a Ham—Scrape and wash the ham in two waters. Put it in a kettle and pour over cold water, barely enough to cover. Add one pint of vinegar. As soon as it comes to a boil remove the scum, add a pinch of red pepper and ten or fifteen cloves. Boil slowly till tender; remove the skin, cover with the white of an egg and rub it over with rolled cracker. Put it in the oven and give it a nice brown. The ragged parts with odds and ends, after the ham has been nearly used up, can be chopped very fine and mixed with a dressing composed of one dessertspoonful of mustard, two of melted butter, the yolk of a hard-boiled egg, rubbed fine, a little salt and four tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Mixed all together and spread on bread cut thin it makes a nice sandwich.

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