

## THE HOUSEHOLD.

## CRYING CHILDREN.

BY CYRUS EDSON, M. D.

The first impulse of a woman who hears a baby cry is to look for a pin. Failing to find one sticking into the little body, she supposes the infant has cramps. Indeed, it is natural and reasonable to presume that the crying indicates pain. But many a baby will cease crying at once if its attention be called to something new. This is plain proof that the crying is not always caused by physical pain. But there is no effect without a cause, and the crying of a little baby is often a symptom which, if we can read it aright, will tell us much about the baby's health.

Little children are nothing but little animals, and the cause of any act of theirs is a merely animal cause. In treating them we do not have to puzzle our brains over that 'mind diseased' which is so often a factor of gravest importance in the ailments of adult humanity.

Supposing, then, that no pin is torturing the baby and no colic is giving it pain; why does the baby cry? There is not the slightest doubt that it would not cry were it perfectly healthy.

Unfortunately for children, they inherit from their parents much more than mere life, flesh, bone and muscle. The irritable, nervous organism which is a result of this terribly stimulated modern life descends to our children. These are born nervous, and the inherited irritability of their nerves manifests itself at a time when, if they had their due of good health, they would be merely little bundles of animal processes going on silently and unconsciously.

It is of great importance that the continued crying of children should not be attributed to ill-temper or 'badness.' It is of great importance that parents or those who have charge of the babies should recognize crying for what it commonly is, namely, the symptom which points to irritability of the child's nerves. It is of great importance to recognize the evil, because we cannot otherwise take proper measures to end it.

Recognizing the evil, then, our first step should be to find out the general condition of the infant's health. It is of especial importance to ascertain whether the alimentary canal be healthy, and the natural processes of life going on properly. When the alimentary canal is clogged from any cause, or when the digestion of the baby is imperfect, there is set up a disarrangement of the nerves of the stomach, which are among the most important of the body. When they are in an irritated condition they will sympathetically affect the whole nervous system.

It is of primary importance that the blood should be in good condition. We must be careful to see that it does not become poor by the retention of particles of effete matter. To this end we must see that the liver does its work properly.

If the stomach, liver and alimentary canal are found in good order, we must, if the child still shows nervousness, search further for the cause. One of the first things to which attention should be paid is the ventilation of the room in which the baby lives or sleeps.

While a very young child demands and must have heat, its need for good air is one of the greatest. Babies are very susceptible to every cause of physical evil, and bad air is one of the commonest of them. How people can expect a baby to oxygenate its blood properly, and properly burn up the waste in rooms that I have been in, I cannot understand.

I have found infants in atmospheres that made me feel faint. I have often, when the window was thrown open, watched the child's long breaths and seen color come back to the pallid cheeks. Give the babies fresh air!

It is easy enough so to wrap a child up that it may be taken out-of-doors with perfect safety to its health, even in the coldest weather. Of course it would be folly to take the little one out in a driving rain-storm, but barring the rain, there are not many days when the open air will not do far more good than harm. The child needs change, too, and if it be only from one room to another will benefit thereby.

Special care must be taken to see that nothing like sewer gas can get into the room where the baby sleeps or lives. I would not allow a standing wash-basin, connected with a sewer or cesspool, in any nursery or sleeping-room if I could prevent it. Very young children are affected by things to which their elders may bid defiance, and too much care cannot be shown in such matters.

To preserve the health of children, especially if they be of the nervous kind, they must take all the exercise they can. As soon as a child can walk it should be allowed to play out-of-doors as much as possible. The fact that it plays in the dirt, providing the earth be dry, is of no consequence. Clothe it in such fashion that it cannot hurt the clothes, and then let it enjoy itself.

Fresh air and plenty of it; warm clothing and as soon as possible, exercise; plenty of sleep and in short, a rational sort of life and the best health attainable are the remedies for those mournful, wailing cries that try the grown people almost as much as the little ones.—*Youth's Companion*.

## IMPERFECT DEVELOPMENT.

BY JOHN ELLIS, M. D.

'From nothing nothing comes.' If children are to have good teeth, bones, and muscles, they must be fed on food which contains an adequate supply of nourishment for the above structures; otherwise they are half-starved and are quite sure to be troubled in after life with decaying teeth, contracted jaws, crooked spines and legs, and delicate muscles. We have not to look far for the chief cause of the decaying teeth which often crowd the poorly-developed jaws of the rising generation.

To-day our children are fed largely upon bread, cakes, pie-crusts, and puddings, made from the finest white superfine flour which can be ground or rolled and bolted from wheat and rye. A careful analysis of these grains shows that immediately beneath the hull lies the dark portion of the kernel, which is hard, firm, and very difficult to grind or roll into a fine flour, and more or less of it is quite sure to remain in contact with the bran, and in bolting, the rest of it is mostly separated from the fine flour. Now this dark portion, thus disposed of, contains in excess the very substances required to nourish the teeth, bones, muscles, and brain,—namely, the gluten and phosphates; whereas the central or white portion of the grain contains an excess of starch which is easily pulverized, and by bolting, gives the superfine white flour. The superfine white flour is composed of an undue portion of starch, which, where in proper proportion as it exists in the grain, is useful for supplying heat and fat-producing material, but it does not contain enough teeth, bone, muscle, brain, and nerve-nourishing materials, to sustain animal life for any considerable length of time: consequently, superfine white flour will keep in barrels and bags for a long time without being disturbed by insects, worms, or must, whereas the unbolted meal will not keep for any great length or time without becoming unpleasant to the taste. Magendi, one of the ablest physiologists who have ever lived, demonstrated by experiments that animals fed exclusively upon the finest superfine flour died in a few weeks, whereas those fed on unbolted flour thrived. During the study and practice of medicine for over thirty years the worst case of scurvy I have ever seen occurred in a girl five or six years old who for some weeks would eat nothing but toast made from superfine flour bread. I only rescued her from death by requiring her mother to mix mashed potatoes with the flour from which her bread was made.

Imperfect development of the teeth, bones, muscles, brain, and nerves is the inevitable result which follows if children are fed largely on superfine white flour cooked in any form, and deformity, dyspepsia, and debility in after life. Wherever people live on unbolted wheat or rye flour or meal, they have good teeth, bones, and muscles. I well remember, when in Egypt in 1884, at Thebes, the little Arab girl who, with a vessel of water upon her head, ran over the sand, stones, rocks, and hills as we rode upon our donkeys to visit the tombs of the kings, for she had splen-

did teeth, sparkling eyes, and a beautiful and well-developed waist, symmetrical in form, and graceful in every movement. On a visit to the house of our Arab dragoman, or guide, to look at some curiosities which had been obtained from the tombs of the ancient Egyptians, we saw two women grinding at a mill and making the kind of flour which that young girl ate. There were two mill-stones, perhaps eighteen or twenty inches in diameter, standing in a tray, with an opening through the centre of the upper one for pouring in the grain, and at opposite sides erect handles. The women took hold of these handles and turned the upper stone around and around, and back and forth, and the flour or meal came out between the outer edges of the stones. I said to our guide, 'We have not had a bit of good bread in Egypt, for at the hotels at which we have been stopping they think that they must furnish superfine flour bread for foreigners to eat. Now, I want you to make us a loaf of bread from that flour and bring it to our hotel to-morrow and I will pay you for your trouble.' He did so, and it was the best bread we had in Egypt.

It is wonderful to see the improvement in health, development, and vitality which frequently ensues when delicate, sickly children, and even old dyspeptics, who have been living largely upon superfine flour and its products, are fed upon unbolted wheat or rye flour bread or pudding. But, if the stomach and bowels are weak from the want of proper nourishment, or if they are irritable or inflamed, then for a limited time, or until they gain strength and health from the use of this more nourishing food, it is necessary either to sift out with a coarse sieve the coarsest of the bran from the graham flour, or to obtain flour which has been ground from wheat which has been hulled before grinding, which can be had in some of our cities. If this caution is not heeded by those beginning the use of graham or unbolted flour, it will not infrequently, in the cases named above, prove too irritating at first and its use abandoned and condemned, but for strong, healthy children and adults, this flour, bran and all, is just right, as the Lord intended it.—*National Temperance Advocate*.

## BLACKING AND BRUSHING.

'Mrs. Peters,' remarked Mrs. Price, after the ladies had chatted on various topics of interest for some time, 'how do you keep your shoes always looking so nice and polished? Mine will look old and rubbed in spite of all the blacking I put on; it does not last.'

'I wondered why you were observing my feet so closely,' said Mrs. Peters, smilingly, and drawing her foot under her dress. 'But I am very willing to tell all I know on the subject. An old shoe salesman told me once that to keep shoes in good condition one should use vaseline on them, applying lightly with a cloth at night, then polish off with a clean cloth. Occasionally I put on a little polish, and by giving them a dry rub night or morning, I usually keep them looking well until they are worn out.'

'I'm afraid I have so much blacking in the pores of the leather, the vaseline will not penetrate,' said Mrs. Price, looking down at her shoes.

'This same man told me,' said Mrs. Peters, 'that when blacking commences to cake on the leather, wash with plain water, no soap. Perhaps that will help yours.'

'I believe I will try it,' was Mrs. Price's conclusion.—*Standard*.

## SIMPLE DISINFECTANTS.

Lime is one of the cheapest and most efficient disinfectants, combined with fresh air, sunshine and cleanliness, nothing else is needed as a purifying agent. An article in *Public Health* refers to this important matter as follows:

I wish to call attention to the means of disinfection at our disposal other than boiling. They are, the use of concentrated alkalies, caustic lime in the form of fresh whitewash, or lime water prepared after the form here reprinted for convenience, and for washing clothing, floors, etc., strong soft soap, which is a potash soap and very fatal to microbic growths. These two

agents are cheap, prepared by any one, and available in country and town alike. The free use of the first upon all collections of excreta or other decaying matter, and of the last for cleansing purposes, make up a sufficient list of means for ordinary purposes, and if properly used add largely to our safety.

Lime water is the clear solution of quick-lime. Take best quick-lime in lumps, put in a pail, pour on one-third as much water, cover slowly and slack till it is a fine powder or creamy fluid; one part of this to three of water will make a saturated solution. Add water in that proportion to the mixture, stir well and then pour on half a teacupful of kerosene, which will protect it from the air and preserve its strength. Use the clear solution as needed, and the semi-solid matter can be made into white-wash or thrown into vaults, cess-pool or garbage barrel. Always use soft (potash) soap for cleaning floors, furniture and the like after infectious diseases; it is a powerful disinfectant.

## POOLS OF STAGNANT AIR.

There are sentences in this description, quoted from the *New York Times*, that might make a nervous person hesitate to intrust himself to a bedroom until a sanitary expert has passed upon it; but the warning is a wise one, and it is easily obeyed.

It has been proved by actual experiment that a layer of air lies against the walls, which is subject to very little movement, even when there is a strong circulation in the middle of the room. It is, therefore, important that a bed should not be placed close to the wall. If kept there during the daytime, it should be moved at least several inches out into the room at night. Alcoves and curtains should be avoided. In an alcove enclosed on three sides a lake of air forms, which may be compared to the stagnant pools often observed along the margins of rivers. A few yards away a rushing tide may be moving swiftly along, but these placid pools are unruffled by the current.

While placing the bed, especially the head of it, where it will be shielded from the strongest draught, there should still be enough motion to the air in that vicinity to insure fresh supplies constantly throughout the night. The prevailing lack of appetite for breakfast, as well as many cases of anemia and worse diseases, are due to the breathing over and over again of the same air in restricted bedrooms, where beds are too often placed in alcoves or are shielded by curtains, which are far too seldom shaken out in the fresh air.—*Golden Rule*.

## RECIPES.

**STEAMED APPLES.**—Pare and halve good sour apples, remove the cores, and steam over boiling water till tender. Serve with sugar and cream.

**APPLE PIES.**—Fill a dish two or three inches deep with apples, cored and sliced; add sugar and spices, and a little water. Cover with a nice crust and bake till the apples are done. In pies thus made there is no soggy undercrust.

**GRAHAM BREAD.**—To three small cupfuls of white flour sponge add a tablespoonful of molasses or sugar, half a teacup of corn meal, salt to taste, and half a pint of warm milk or water, with enough graham flour to make a stiff dough. When light, fill the baking pans half full, and when risen, bake.

**PRESSED CHICKEN.**—Boil two chickens till the bones drop out; remove, chop fine the meat, and season with salt, pepper, and butter, pour in enough of the liquor they were boiled in to make the meat very moist. Put in a dish and place a weight on it till cold. Nice for lunch or tea, and for travelling lunches or school lunches.

**FOR BREAKFAST,** stir together over the fire a tablespoonful of flour and butter till they bubble, add two gills of boiling water and one of milk, season with salt and pepper and dash of nutmeg. In this sauce cut up as many cold boiled potatoes as it will cover; when they are heated through pour all into an earthen dish, dust with bread crumbs, and a little grated cheese, brown in a hot oven, and serve.

**STUFFED DATES.**—This is a very nice sweet-meat to have on the luncheon table, besides being easily and cheaply made. Allow a quart of peanuts to a pound of dates. Split the date open along the side and remove the stone, filling its place with a peanut. Press the date together and roll it in fine granulated sugar; if they are to be kept for any length of time, they should be closely packed in air-tight boxes.

**HARD AND SOFT WATER IN COOKING.**—Peas and beans should be boiled in soft water. If hard water must be used, add a little soda. Salt hardens soft water. For making tea, soft water is always preferred. For soup, put the meat in cold soft water, and the juices of the meat will be extracted. Where the juices should be retained, use salted boiling water.