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ARTIFICIAL FEEDING AND CARE OF INFANTS.

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The subject of artificial feeding of infants is a most important one, and is becoming more so every day we live, because the number of children requiring it is rapidly increasing.

While it is an unfortunate thing for a child at the very best of times to be deprived of nature's form of food, it is no less a fact that circumstances often necessitate partial or complete feeding by hand.

Our profession has not, I think, given this subject the practical attention it merits. Too much latitude has been allowed the commercial greed of the makers of the various patent foods with which the market is stocked. The matter of infant's food and all the little details pertaining thereto, are usually left to the discretion of the nurse, who may be the most incompetent party in the world to judge in such matters, or else to the mother, who often young and inexperienced, feeds her child on pure cow's milk or the same diluted with simple water or lime-water. Not satisfied with this, for her baby usually does not thrive well upon it, she may add a daily allowance of well-boiled bread and milk or boiled biscuit. As a result the child vomits or has diarrhœa. All the mothers of families in the neighborhood, with the most tender solicitude for the baby, assure the young mother that "vomiting in a baby is a healthy sign." The mother is soon frightened into consulting her doctor. He, often without a great deal of thought in the matter, though he may tell her that such vomiting means too much, or an improper quality of food; may prescribe Nestle's

Food, which is as good as any of its class. It by no means nor often does well. It may suffice for a small child, but is never sufficient for a large one. If this evidence of simple indigestion were the worst result 'twere well, but the large infant mortality is directly traceable to improper feeding, and, worse than all, so frequently, is the miserable dyspeptic after-life.

These few reasons should amply suffice to lead us to inquire with the greatest care as to what should be the food of the infant, who must of necessity be fed on some substitute for the mother's milk. We should in such a case be at once able to recommend the best, and to give proper instructions regarding its preparation, proper quantity, times of feeding, etc.

The *best food* is that one which first of all is satisfactory as regards *quality*. Then to meet with favor it must be *simple of preparation, easily and cheaply procurable*. A complicated plan may do for some people, but with the majority it will suffer from neglect.

The patent foods, as I have already intimated, are not likely to be satisfactory as regards quality. They do not suit the varying ages of the child. They are expensive and not always to be depended upon.

The best food, and that which will continue to be most used, is one having for its basis cow's milk. Asses' and goats' milk approach the mother's more nearly in chemical composition, but they are not usually accessible. We must approximate the cow's milk by proper preparation to as near that of the mothers' as possible.

A comparison of the two shows that—

Cow's milk.		Mother's milk.	
Acid.	Reaction.	Alkaline.	
13.2 per cent.	Solids	12-13 per cent.	
4	Fats	3-4	"
4	Albuminoids	1-2	"
4.5	Sugar	7	"
.7	Extractives	0.1-2	"

So we see the chief differences between the two are in that cow's milk is acid in reaction, contains a little more fat, considerably more albuminoids, and considerably less sugar.

The most important practical difference consists in the manner in which cow's milk coagulates in the stomach. It forms a tough curd unlike the flaky curd of mother's milk. This is indigestible and consequently ferments. It causes the painful flatulence, the vomiting and other well-known