

HINTS AND HELPS.

TEASING THE BABY.

The baby's life is made up of a mixture of worries and contents, of boisterous health and equally depressed physical conditions, unless the even hand of unusual intelligence rules a robust inheritance. With all our boasted calms and self-poised force, with all the control that we have gathered by years of hard discipline in a vexatious world, we still find our tempers disturbed by unnecessary buffetings; and when we are annoyed by untoward events which were hastened by careless hands, or carried by fun-loving tormentors, we confess to a lack of sufficient philosophy to keep us amiable. We do get angry. And when we are angry we become ill. Anger disturbs those processes of digestion which rarely cease entirely in any ordinarily comfortable frame, and with the suspension of the delicate machinery all other conditions are tangled and disarranged, and then follows the jargon or feverishness, restlessness, headache and other ailments more or less serious.

Suppose we tease the baby. We seize it quickly and frighten it. Then we scold it for its foolish fright. We toss it above its usual level, and its terrors rouse no sympathy. It screams, and we are pitiless. We offer it a tempting toy, and retain it just beyond its reach. We jump towards it, and before the clear idea of distance is comprehended by the poor infant of course it is distressed. Then we smile at its silliness, forgetting its anxious pain, and try it over again until the child wails, and we please ourselves by ending our wicked amusement to regain a selfish quiet and not for humanity's sake. A stranger, whose presence is disagreeable, comes into its presence, and in compassion you insist upon the baby going into her arms if she asks for it. Just because she is disagreeable and you pity her. The child not comprehending anything of your sentiments of humanity, and possessing only the instincts of self-preservation, shudders, shrinks, and probably shrieks, but you have no compassion for the little thing. It is the woman who touches the heart, and you decide to discipline the little child by forcing it to do violence to its

tastes and likings, when it has no words with which to protest against unkindness. Put yourself in the child's place, with all your knowledge of the harmlessness of your visitor, would you willingly submit to such familiarity? Of course not. You would prefer a muscular protest rather than do the very thing that you force upon the child.

Nervous fevers, hysteria and other derangements of the nerves; convulsions, gastric disturbances, and various physical troubles, that are quite as likely to follow mental shocks as to arise from other causes, may not unfrequently be traced directly back to conflicts with the child's mental organization, or to wanton shocks that its strong instincts have endured.

BABY TAKES NOTICE.

When a nurse says, "Baby takes notice," the time has come for all about it to take notice too. How slowly the power of directing and fixing its attention grows! Let not the mother be impatiently anxious to fix the child's eye upon herself, but wait the slow waking of the soul for if at its earliest attempts to look there be hurry or excitement produced amongst the co-operating nerve-fibres at work, by endeavors to rouse the senses, there will be danger to the brain, and perhaps the babe will never be able to fix attention rationally while it lives. A permanent babyhood of brain has often been the result of exciting the nerves too soon or too violently; and many a mother has lost the joy of ever meeting her child's responsive smile by her eagerness to excite it, or to engage it too long when excited. An eye that watches too much is an evil eye. When a mother has once seen her babe smile in sympathy with her own smiling face, she may be sure that rational intelligence is beginning to express itself, for no idiot can so fix attention upon her loving face as to smile in response. A nursing mother should have nothing but nursing to do. At least, whatever she does should conduce to her comfort and health. She should have no considerable demands upon her heart and energies beyond those that