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# A Little Talk with the Baby's Mother

BY

Mrs. LAURA J. WINTER.

*Written especially for the Women's Institutes  
of New Brunswick.*

MOTTO: "For Home and Country."

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## CHILDREN.

"Speak gently to the little child,  
Its love be sure to gain;  
Teach it in accents soft and mild;  
It may not long remain."

When I speak of a baby to the mothers of New Brunswick, each one thinks of her own sweet children. It may be that at this moment some of you have a dear, sweet, rosy baby in your home; and what in the wide world is more beautiful or more lovable? It may be others of my readers have only the memory of their babies, now grown to manhood and womanhood, yet it is still so sweet.

When a true mother looks upon her babe for the first time, her heart is full to overflowing with love and gladness. It is only as the weeks and months merge into years that she feels her responsibility more and more. So much depends upon the mother's training and influence, and to do for her children what she should, the mother must have the support and sympathy of the father. A man's duty to himself, his family and his country, is to keep the mother of his children well and happy. He can help the children through the mother, by giving her the affection, attention and care which nourishes the mother's mind and heart as well as her body, and makes her life worth living and her work worth doing.

Any woman expecting to become a mother should take the best possible care of herself during the months of pregnancy. Not alone for her own sake, but for the child's as well. Most women find the first months the hardest, but we who are mothers believe it is worth an effort on our part during the hard months, to have in the end a perfectly formed and healthy baby.

Every prospective mother should make a study of the right things to do during the months of pregnancy. The bowels should have daily attention. If possible have them move naturally by taking proper diet, exercise in the open air, and by drinking plenty of pure water between meals. Take a sponge-bath daily; this is of the greatest importance.

The diet should always be plain and wholesome. There are times, however, when women in this condition crave for some particular article of food, and if at all possible it is better to satisfy this longing, than allow the mental enervation arising, to continue.

Hours of sleep should be regular and long. Wear loose clothing throughout the entire period; tight lacing is especially injurious. In a word, whatever of Hygienic Law is of value to women in general, is of especial value to the woman who wishes to pass safely through pregnancy and confinement and become the healthy mother of a healthy child.

### Baby's Clothes.

Next to the skin it is well to have the softest, finest material, made of wool and silk. The binder is made of soft, all wool flannel,

about four inches wide and long enough to go around the baby one and a half times.

The little shirt or vest should have long sleeves and button down the front.

The foot-blanket is made of all-wool flannel, one yard long and the width of the flannel pleated into a cotton band about four inches wide.

The night-dress should be of shaker-flannel, and also the napkins. It is very important that these should be soft and comfortable.

These are the necessary articles. Dresses and petticoats are added of whatever fine, white washable material the mother may choose.

### **Baby's Bath.**

At child birth the mother is made comfortable first while the baby is kept in a safe place, wrapped warmly in something woolen, such as a shawl or blanket.

Have everything ready before starting the bath; water, soap, (castile best) small amount of olive oil and good powder. It is well to give the baby its first bath in front of an open fire or stove. Afterwards when giving the bath you need use only a warm, comfortable room. In this way the baby will not be so susceptible to draughts and is not apt to catch cold easily. Cleanse the eyes with solution of Boracic Acid, one teaspoon to a pint of water. Wash the mouth with a bit of absorbent cotton dipped in the solution.

Rub the skin with oil wherever a cheese deposit is found, especially in the folds. Wash the head first, using the hand well soaped, rinse and dry. Now place the child in a basin of warm water, supporting the body with the hand placed under the back of neck and shoulders. Use sponge or soft wash cloth. Take child out on knee, dry the skin thoroughly, using little friction, powder the baby freely and dress. From now until the umbilicus or navel heals, give the baby sponge-bath daily, then return to basin or tub, as you gave the first.

In dressing a baby, have clothes snug and smooth, but not tight; leave space enough to slip one finger underneath the garment.

### **Food.**

Give your baby proper food, in the right way, and keep him healthy. Mothers should nurse their babies if at all possible. Everyone agrees that mother's milk is the proper baby food. The most perfect baby food in the world cannot compare with that originally intended by nature.

A nursing mother has need of abundant health. Her power to nurse her child is entirely dependent on this. If her health fails, the milk supply is the first to suffer. Plenty of nourishing food and drink are essential. One must keep up the appetite. This is best done by spending a good deal of time in the open air; above all, refreshing sleep is necessary. The emotions of the nursing mother affect the infant, therefore the mother should try to avoid worries of any kind, and here again the baby's father may help so much.

Naturally, every effort should be made to keep up the breast milk, yet nursing should not be made a matter of sentiment. One should know when to make a change if it is necessary, and be willing to make it. If the child does not thrive, if it is restless and cannot sleep, if it seems hungry after nursing, it is not being properly nourished. Do not wait until your baby is a mere skeleton "because you like to nurse the baby," or "because it is your duty." Your duty is to do your best for the baby's welfare always.

If your baby is not thriving on the breast, try the bottle. Cow's milk stands next to mother's milk for the baby. Cow's milk can always be had and if properly used is far better than any of the prepared baby foods on the market. Cow's milk contains all the elements necessary to nourish the infant, but they are present in different proportions than in mother's milk. When it is modified to suit the age and strength of the baby, the little one will be seen to thrive immediately.

Use the top of the milk at first, and for diluting use only boiled, cooled water. Small quantities of lime-water may be used for acidity if the baby requires it.

The following table is taken from Holt's book on "The Care and Feeding of Children."

AGE.	Interval between meals by day.	Night Feeding 10 p. m. to 7 a. m.	No. of Feedings in 24 hours.	Quantity for One Feeding	Quantity for 24 hours Feeding.
	Hours			Ounces	Ounces
2nd to 7th day.....	2	2	10	1 - 1½	10-15
2nd and 3rd weeks.....	2	2	10	1 ½-3	15-30
4th and 5th weeks.....	2	1	10	2½-3½	25-30
6th to 9th weeks.....	2½	1	8	3 - 5	24-40
9th week to 5th month.....	3	1	7	4 - 6	28-42
5th to 9th month.....	3	0	6	5 - 7½	30-45
9th to 12th month.....	4	0	5	7 - 9	35-45

This schedule gives the averages for healthy children. The smaller quantities are those required by small children whose digestion is not vigorous.

The larger quantities are those required by larger children with strong digestion; in very few cases will it be advisable to go above these figures.

The interval is reckoned from the beginning of one feeding to the beginning of the next.

Milk should form the principal part of a child's diet for the first two or three years, and even after that let him have plenty of milk if you wish to keep him well. Do not give a child solid food for the first year and a half.

Personally, I do not believe in weaning a child from the bottle until he is two years of age, as he will take more milk from the bottle than from a cup, therefore will be better nourished with that and the light diet, such as, cereal, oatmeal, farina, cream of wheat—any of these must be cooked well—bread, soft-boiled or poached egg, soup or beef juice, baked potato, baked or stewed apples and prunes, fruit juice.

### Diet from 3 to 10 Years.

Milk, eggs always cooked soft, either boiled or poached, meat, beefsteak, roast beef, lamb or chicken, fish, potatoes, peas, string-beans, celery, beets, carrots and squash. In cereals the important thing is that they are properly cooked. Never choose ready-to-serve cereals for children; oatmeal, hominy, rice, wheaten grits, cream of wheat, are all good. Nearly all plain broths may be used, also soups thickened with rice or barley. Give stale bread rather than fresh; oatmeal, graham or arrowroot biscuit are good, also very plain cake and desserts.

Cooked fruits and the juice of fresh fruits are an important part of the diet.

For drink, for children use only milk, water and very weak cocoa; never tea, coffee or any kind of beer.

In full particulars in the care and feeding of children one cannot study a better book than the one written by L. Emmett Holt, M. D.

If the mother is to nurse the baby, the child should be put to the breast within twelve hours after birth. Usually the baby is put to the breast just after it has been bathed, or as soon as the mother has rested sufficiently. If the baby is not taught to nurse within twelve hours after birth, it becomes more difficult with every hour. The milk as a rule does not appear in the breasts until the third day, but the child obtains a thick, nutritious substance, called colostrum, which acts as a gentle laxative and affords all the nourishment needed. If the child is not satisfied feed it a little hot water, nothing else will be necessary. A baby should be given water every day, oftentimes a child cries with thirst, which the milk will not satisfy. Feed the baby almost every eight hours, until the milk appears on the third day, then feed every two hours. About twenty minutes is the right time for each feeding.

Teach your child regular habits. No one gets a habit more quickly than a baby. If baby is asleep when the time for feeding arrives, waken him, you will only need to do this a few times. Also have regular time for bath, in the morning, midway between two feedings is best. And it is not only when your child is very young that it needs bathing, for the daily bath should be continued in the mornings until your child is at least two years of age, then could be changed to the evening. Do not count time wasted which is spent in keeping your children clean. Keep your baby's flesh dry and avoid chafing. There is no surer sign of a good mother than the perfect condition of the baby's flesh.

The infant should sleep from eighteen to twenty hours of the twenty-four in the first three months.

If your baby is to be bottle fed, see to it that the feeding bottles are always kept clean. Clean the bottle as soon as the baby has finished feeding. First rinse with cold water, then wash both bottle and nipple thoroughly in warm, soapy water, rinsing again with clear water. If this is done each time, you will have no trouble in having clean, fresh bottles and nipples for your baby's milk. Never use any milk left in the bottle for a second feeding, always use fresh milk each time.

A baby's weight usually tells how a baby is thriving. The healthy baby gains steadily in weight. If the baby does not gain something is wrong and the doctor should be called in.

Table of what an average child should weigh:—

At birth	Weight	
One Year	.....	7½ lbs.
Two	.....	21 "
Three	.....	26½ "
Four	.....	31 "
Five	.....	35 "
Six	.....	41 "
Seven	.....	45 "
Eight	.....	49½ "
Nine	.....	54½ "
Ten	.....	60 "
		66½ "

The above weights are with ordinary house clothes.

"They went to another, cosier care when the baby came."

—Kipling.

Keep your baby quiet and comfortable. The baby needs fresh air day and night. Have a supply of fresh air all the time, just as you have a supply of milk for the baby. Oxygen (fresh air) is the baby's most necessary food. Have a window open either in the room where the baby is or in an adjoining room. The chief cause for so many children having colds, etc., is bad air and keeping them in overheated rooms.

Have your baby go out in the pure, fresh air as much as possible while the sun shines in winter, and in the summer in some shady place not exposed to extreme heat.

Never give your child drugs of any kind.

I have written a great deal about the baby, for I believe if we give our children a good clean, healthy start in life and teach them from babyhood up the need of taking the best care of their bodies, in after years they will not depart from the habits formed in childhood and we would soon have a better, healthier, race of people in this our fair Dominion of Canada.

As your child grows older, the problem of governing and teaching either the boy or the girl in the right way grows harder. We who are mothers, can only hope to succeed if we get and hold the entire confidence of our children. Teach them to be open and straightforward in whatever they do. Treat them as rational human beings. They are forming their own theories of life from what they see and they are sure to imitate others. Listen well to everything they have to tell you. Do not always be too busy to have a game or little romp with your child. If you care for your child's confidence (and every true mother does,) win their hearts and make them feel sure you are interested in every little thing they do each day, whether it be work or play.

Give the boy or girl some work when old enough, even a child of three is made very happy in the thought of helping mother, and it is in the first years of the child's life that the mother's influence and example are most needed.

We all, I think, get discouraged at times, but if we only stop to think that what is being done for our boys and girls in childhood is going to influence their whole life, we will, I am sure, do our very best for them.

Their success or failure in after life depends a great deal on what the father and mother teach their little children. Have them think pure thoughts; teach them to be honest and truthful.

A great deal has been said and written on what parents should tell their children and when to tell them the things they must know at some time from some one. The time, I think, is when your child asks questions, answer the questions truthfully, and in as nice a way as possible. There are a great many helps in these days that the mother can procure from the leading journals (privately), if the mother is in doubt how best to tell the story of life.

Mother is the one to tell her children and prepare them thoroughly in a loving, confiding way, for the path they must travel, both boys and girls, and in this the father should give his sympathy and help in every way. Teach your children to value their bodies and to be true ladies and gentlemen.

The following is taken from an article I read a short time ago and it may be of help to some reader:

#### "Bring God Into the Nursery."

"The teaching of sex-truths to children is, indeed, simplicity itself. It must be begun almost as soon as the child is capable of asking intelligent questions. No lie, no half truth must be dropped, like a seed, upon this most fertile of all soils, to spring up into rank weeds, difficult eventually to remove.

The mother, and it is upon her shoulders that all responsibility rests, must be honest and fearless. Her child is honest and fearless and demands as well as deserves to be treated fairly. God must be in the nursery of this little one, not as a bogey, to punish and to frighten, but as a good and loving friend, always watching over the home to inspire, protect, encourage; to help when feet are stumbling; to forgive when mistakes are made. And the beginning of the teaching of sex-truth as well as the middle and end of it, must spring from faith in God. It is not to animals and plants that the mother should turn for a sort of explanation to the young, inquiring mind; there must be no such feebleness on the lips of the enlightened and child-understanding mother. She must erect no such sham ambushes between the truth and the child's questions. She must simply say that God placed men and women on earth and brought them together in love in order that they might use His beautiful and wonderful gift of creation to people the world. She must say, from the earliest moment of her quiet and dignified teaching, that a child is part of its father, brought into life by the mother, by the grace of God; that such a wonderful and exquisite deed is the fulfilment of God's intention, and is the very fruit of the love that he placed in the hearts of His grown-up children, so that His earth shall be refreshed by new, young life, constantly renewed and replenished.

And not only to the little girl must these facts be taught in this way, but to the little boy also, because presently, when he shall have grown into a sturdy youth he will have it in his power either to be useful or harmful; either to be a young man with clear brain and honest eyes, who will look upon the girls of his own age with the respect that is due to them because they are like his sister, or lasciviously unaware of the fact that his own children can only be healthy and splendid if he himself is both.

#### Teach Boys and Girls Alike.

Taken early, when imagination, idealism and faith are glowing in the boy's mind, he will be as eager and as easily inspired as his sister. He will grow into the ineradicable belief not only that he is a person of great importance, as his father is, and one upon whose shoulders rests immense responsibility, but also that he must never

by any chance, for any selfish reason or momentary gratification, so fall away from the trust placed in him by his mother as to debase the gift of God.

He will indeed, and without doubt, if taught in such a way, if permitted to grow up with an honest knowledge of his capacity and his future responsibility, become a man anxious and determined to hold himself in trust for the girl he will eventually marry, and for his own children, born in love. He will not be obliged to peer at life 'through a glass darkly' since the mirror of Nature will always have been held before his eyes. He will not be left to struggle blindly through the difficult years of his school days, but he will be enabled to go through them fortified with knowledge, and cleanly, scorning everything that is low and unmanly. His relationship with his girl friends will be honest and charming. He will know, because he has been told, how and why there are unfortunate little children born blind, born crippled, born twisted. And above all, he will be aware of the hitherto, scoffed at fact that he need not regard himself as unmanly, because he keeps himself under strict control. He will respect all girls for the reason that he respects his sister. And his sister will be modest, because she does not know the meaning of false modesty. She will be frank and charming and clear-eyed, because she knows the truth truthfully. She will not enter into marriage blindly or hurriedly and without a sense of its meaning. She will demand that the man she marries shall be as clean as she is, because she desires to emulate her mother and bring into the world little ones born as well and as beautifully as she was born."

If the mothers of today would give more earnest thought to this matter, there would, I feel certain, be fewer ruined homes and heart-broken fathers and mothers, and we would soon have a healthier and nobler people in our country.

Ignorance not only on the part of the boys and girls, but also of the parents, has much to do with conditions as they exist today. And just in this one work, the organization of Women's Institutes throughout New Brunswick and the Dominion will find a wide field ready for earnest laborers, and no one could be more interested than the mothers of the country.

The motto of the Institute, "For Home and Country" certainly embraces all that can possibly be done for children, not only our own children but all children everywhere. The children make the home, we work for them, our plans are for them, they are the coming generation and as such will make or mar our country.

"To thine own self be true,  
And it must follow,  
As the night the day;  
Thou can'st not then  
Be false to any man."

And so in the upbringing of the children which God has given into your care, be true to yourself, to the best that is in you. Teach yourself to think noble and beautiful thoughts. "For as a man thinketh so he is," and in so doing your influence with your children and others will be for good.

#### List of Books.

Almost a Woman.....	Dr. Mary Allen
What a Young Girl Ought to Know.....	Dr. Mary Wood Allen
What a Young Woman ought to Know.....	Dr. Mary Wood Allen
What a Young Boy ought to Know.....	Dr. Stall
What a Young Man ought to Know.....	Dr. Stall
Teaching Truth.....	Dr. Mary Wood Allen
Child's Confidence Rewarded.....	Dr. Mary Wood Allen