

HEALTH

A HEALTH SERVICE OF THE CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AND LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES IN CANADA



YOUR BABY THIS SUMMER

Summertime should be the season when the infant citizens of Canada can build up the stores of health so necessary for normal growth and development. Too often the baby fails to do well during the warm weather because of the neglect of a few simple rules of summer comfort. Even as you and I the child requires less clothing, and even fairly young infants may safely be reduced to a diaper and a cotton dress when it is hot. Many parents, in an effort to protect the baby against the imagined harmful effects of draughts, continue to use the flannel binders, woolen vests and voluminous outer clothing. The result is a thoroughly uncomfortable child who is irritable and sleepless and who quickly acquires an extensive eruption of prickly heat. Frequent tepid baths and the liberal application of a drying powder also are effective in promoting comfort. All mothers should take advantage of the opportunity to expose the infant to the beneficent rays of the sun. A healthy tan is easily gained if the unclothed child is permitted to lie in the sunshine for periods gradually increasing from five minutes per day. Fair-skinned individuals are more susceptible to sunburn than their darker brethren hence the period of exposure should be shorter and more slowly increased. It is quite possible with care to safely build up a tan without the discomfort of a burn.

We all require more fluids in the summer to replace the moisture lost through sweating. The baby should be given ample opportunity to drink as much cool boiled water as he wants. On extremely hot days we are inclined to eat less than usual. Your baby may exhibit the same tendency. Offer the usual food but do not be unduly concerned if the total amount consumed is rather small. He knows better than you do his requirements for comfort and above all do not prolong the meal time by forcing food on an otherwise normal infant. The milk supply must be particularly safeguarded during the summer. The heat causes an amazing growth of organisms in milk which accounts for its rapid souring. Pasteurization destroys many of these germs but for infant feeding it is always wise to boil the milk 3 to 5 minutes in addition. (Having prepared the baby's formula the bottle should be kept in a refrigerator until just before feeding time. Parents taking infants to the summer cottage should be particularly careful of the local milk supply which is usually not pasteurized. Thorough boiling and refrigeration are most essential here and the use of canned evaporated milk properly diluted is a safe substitute for fresh milk.

Questions concerning Health, addressed to the Canadian Medical Association, 184 College Street, Toronto, will be answered personally by letter.

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THE LIBERAL SHORT STORY

APRON-STRINGS

By Norah Smaridge

Mrs. Morrison watched Sally nervously from behind her ruffled curtains. Twin spots of color burned in her cheeks...as always happened when she was upset...her limp became more pronounced as she turned to look at the clock.

Ten of six! She began to think Sally Winter would never leave. It had taken three broad hints...

Now everything was peaceful in the living-room. Mrs. Morrison straightened a knife and fork, gave a final satisfied look at her inviting table, and lowered herself into her rocker, creaking grimly.

Not a bad girl, Sally, as girls go. Pretty, like they all were nowadays. But not too modern; that is, she didn't use slaughter-house red on her nails, or chain-smoke. She was quite a cook too, judging by the chocolate layer cake she had just brought over. But that only made her more dangerous. A flighty girl might attract Billy...but she wouldn't hold him. Billy had sense. But a girl like Sally...pretty, wholesome and a good cook! That was a real menace.

Obviously the girl felt attracted to Billy. She hadn't lived long in the house next door...but long enough to be dangerous. She'd made friends with Mrs. Morrison as they worked in their gardens...and she'd gotten into the habit of running in during the day. She'd tried it at night when Billy's lamp was shining in the living room. But Mrs. Morrison hadn't asked her to come in; she'd been pretty short with her...so the girl hadn't tried that again!

She didn't want Billy to marry. He was a good son. Kind, devoted, hard-working. They were comfortable together, she and Billy. He'd promised her father to look after Mom. And he'd kept that promise faithfully; she had no cause for complaint. He'd gone through high school, got a job and started to study accounting in the evenings. She'd managed as best she could on the little insurance left them. Billy hadn't actually suffered...but he'd had little time for girls, thank goodness!

The last few years things had got better and better. He had only one more exam to take; then he'd be a full-fledged accountant with the promise of a fine job. They'd have oil-heating put in and electric cooker. Mrs. Morrison hurried to the kitchen the coffee was perking. Yes, she and her son had got on well together. She always had lobs in the open fire in winter with Billy's armchair at the blaze, his slippers were warmed and his pipe on the mantel. Or, in summer the windows flung to the breeze, plenty of beautiful salads and iced tea.

She looked after his clothes scrupulously. Kept his drawers tidy, mended his clothes and socks, pressed his pants, she was a regular valet...and liked doing it!

No girl could make him as comfortable as she could, she knew that. Now her face lit as Billy's key turned in the lock.

"Hello, Mom!" He kissed her. "Good day? Had any visitors?" She noticed with approval how sleek his hair was, how well-fed he looked, how nicely he kept his hands.

She made him grin with an account of the funny things Elsa had said; Elsa was the Polish girl who came twice weekly to do the hard scrubbing. She told him about the rector's wife dropping in—

But she didn't mention Sally, though the girl's chatter had been the liveliest of the lot.

They sat down to supper. She was pleased with the way his eyes sparkled at the sight of her chicken potpie. He relished the layer cake. She didn't say Sally had made it; let him think it was that new bakery.

"And now..." He relaxed, lounging in his chair. "I've something to spring! I've had a ratse...and you're going to have a vacation!" He chuckled at the sight of her startled smile and the way she dropped the pullover she was knitting him. "A couple of weeks at Asbury Park. Build you up! The boss says it's a swell boarding house. Fine view of the ocean and good eats..."

"Lovely dear!" She leaped forward, her mind at work. "When do we start? What shall I pack for you?"

He held up a restraining hand. "Not me Mom! I can't make it. This promotion means a whole lot more work...I'll be up to my ears! But you're going...and if you behave yourself I'll run down at the weekend and we'll go on a binge together."

"But son!" Her face fell. The visions disappeared. She had seen herself, in a flash walking on the board-walk, her arm through his,

Rocking on the porch. Billy in the next chair. "I can't leave you behind alone. Who'd look after you? Who'd get your meals?"

"I'll grab something in the city." He waved away her objections. "Elsa can come more often. I'll get by." He grinned. Do me good to hustle...I'm getting soft!"

Her mind was icy with forebodings. Go away and leave him to that girl next door. That Sally! She'd be finding excuses to run over, she'd bring him a pie or something. Next thing you know, she'd be making free inside the house...

Suddenly her eyes gleamed. She had thought of a way out.

She'd go. It would never do to let him see she hated to leave him on his own! Yes she'd go...but she wouldn't stay two weeks. Two days maybe. Then she'd come home unexpectedly. She'd say she was homesick...the place didn't agree with her...the sea air hurt her leg. He'd laugh at her and kid her for such feminine behaviour...but it would be worth it. She'd be back in three days. He couldn't get into much trouble in that short time!

Her spirits soared as she got out of her taxi at Seaview. Quite a swell place with crisp white curtains, shining brasses, and a flight of high scrubbed steps. She liked its plant-filled porch, its cheery lounge and her airy bedroom with the smell of the ocean seeping through the windows.

She liked buxom Mrs. Connistey, the proprietress too. The women took a fancy to each other...so that Mrs. Connistey seated Mrs. Morrison at her own pleasant table for eight.

Nice people stayed at Seaview. Eating her soup Mrs. Morrison was suddenly relieved that Billy could not come! Altogether there were too many pretty young girls. Any one of them might have shared his fancy...and a lot could happen in two weeks, at the ocean.

There were some couples too and a widower. And a plump youngish-old man, who sat opposite her.

She didn't know what it was made her take such an interest in the man opposite. But he had a curious fascination for her. She talked to him a lot. He seemed a bit lost.

Not that she approved of him. He struck her indeed, as a bit of a sissy. He didn't talk as the other young men talked, of sports and politics. He talked about his grandmother, with whom he lived, and their pets, a dog and a parrot. He seemed, to Mrs. Morrison's critical eye, to be far too much interested in his food, a faintly greedy look in his spectacled eyes disgusted her. Only thirty-eight...and distinctly overweight, with a growing corporation!

His name, she learned was Raymond Jenkins. She noticed him later in the lounge. How plump his hands were! And his clothes a bit dandified.

No, she didn't like him. He reminded her, vaguely and tantalizingly of some one she knew. But when she tried to track down the resemblance it eluded her in an irritating way.

She described Raymond and the others in her nightly letter to Billy. She didn't say much about the girls...it might make him think of running up here. And he was safer at home, probably.

Much safer at home, she decided. Because the girls were a man-mad lot. Almost every one was paired off...for dancing, bathing and riding. The only one they didn't seem to bother about was Raymond Jenkins. Mrs. Morrison could hardly blame them, he wasn't active...and he was certainly greedy. He lived for his meals—and his seat in the shade!

She still hadn't caught that resemblance. It baffled and annoyed her...until she went through all her friends and acquaintances trying to track it down. With no success.

Billy's letters came regularly...frank, open letters, hiding nothing. Perhaps, after all she'd stay a week she was so comfortable here, and he seemed to be getting on all right. There was no mention of that girl anyway.

And she enjoyed Mrs. Connistey. They went on drives together in her second-hand car. Mrs. Connistey yawned away about the boarding-house business, it was rather thrilling.

She was very much at home with Mrs. Connistey, when Billy's fateful letter arrived on the fifth day of her stay. Color rushed into her cheeks as she read it. Half a dozen pictures fell on the table. She and Mrs. Connistey had lingered over their coffee, the guests had long since left the tables, Raymond Jenkins being the last to leave, as us-

ual...pretty well stuffed with chocolate pudding.

"Trouble?" Mrs. Connistey raised sympathetic eyebrows.

"Not at all!" Mrs. Morrison heard her own voice, sounding quite calm and natural...and her own duplicity amazed her. "Just a letter from my son!" She pushed the pictures toward Mrs. Connistey. They would occupy her. "Most of these are of...of the girl next door."

Her mind whirled furiously. She had thought Billy was so safe. But that Sally had beaten her! Look at those pictures. Billy with a casual arm around Sally's shoulders. Sally, playing the hose and laughing. Laughing at Billy, no doubt! Sally looked radiant—triumphant.

To a casual eye there was nothing shattering in the letter. But to a mother who read between the lines. "She's a sweet kid, isn't she?" he wrote innocently. "And she thinks the world of you Mom! When you get back ask her in to Sunday supper..."

Mrs. Morrison sat rigid. She must leave. She must go home. She'd get rid of that girl...somehow. She would make Sally feel she wasn't wanted. The girl should see...

"Nice girl!" Mrs. Connistey was admiring Sally. "Cute and sensible, too. Your son's a good picker!" Suddenly she started, frowning at the next snap. One of Billy, it was. "Who's this? He reminds me of poor Mr. Jenkins!" She stopped, reddening with embarrassment. "Your son? Well...of course...he is not really like Mr. Jenkins. Not so far." She was confused and stammering. "Just a trick of the shadows, I guess...but it does have a look of poor Raymond!" She shook her head. "Regular mother's boy he is. She kept him tied to her apron strings till she died, after that he lived with his grandmother. And she's even worse! Pity isn't it?"

Mrs. Morrison murmured something unintelligible. Stiff in her chair she scooped the snapshots towards her and stared at Billy. That was it! There was a resemblance. The one that had eluded her. Oh, just a fleeting resemblance...but it was there all right. She couldn't cheat herself. Billy wasn't fat, but he was getting that sleek, well-fed look. She felt hot as she remembered how he had begun to take too engrossed an interest in her good cooking...how he helped himself more lavishly to cakes and puddings.

Her son...like that repulsive Jenkins boy! He couldn't be Raymond Jenkins was spoiled...a sissy... She stopped in her thoughts, hor-

rified. Was that what she was doing to Billy? Turning him into a Raymond Jenkins. She tried to smile as she heard Mrs. Connistey's soothing voice running on.

"I used to be a bit possessive about my lads. But I learned sense." She chuckled. "They're both married...and they have no time to get fat, believe me! Fine lads...and they think the world of their mother." Her bright eyes sought Mrs. Morrison's. "And believe me I'm happier working. It keeps me alive...and I'm no burden on them. Their wives respect me too!" She leaned forward. "Which reminds me Mrs. Morrison, I've a plan I wanted to suggest to you..."

It was very late before Mrs. Morrison retired to her fresh, sea-smelling bedroom. Her head was held high, her eyes were clear and her limp was barely noticeable, as she went to the little writing desk and pulled a sheet of paper toward her. "Dear son," she wrote. "Why not bring Sally down here, when you can come this week-end? As you say, she's a sweet girl." She paused a minute and went on rapidly. "I have a business proposition to make you. Mrs. Connistey is taking the property next door...enlarging this place. She wants me to go into partnership with her. And I'd like to. You'll be marrying one of these days." Her pen faltered a moment...but only for a moment. "And I don't want you to wait too long. There's nothing more awful than a man tied to his mother's apron strings. It's simply a thing I won't permit!"

HOW TO DELIGHT THE EDITOR

A new game entitled "The Editor's Delight," is played this way: Take a sheet of ordinary writing paper, fold it carefully, and enclose a cheque or postal note sufficiently large to pay up all arrears, and one year in advance. Keep an eye on the editor and if a smile adorns his face, the trick works like a charm. Now is the time to play the joke.—Northern Observer, Sioux Lookout.

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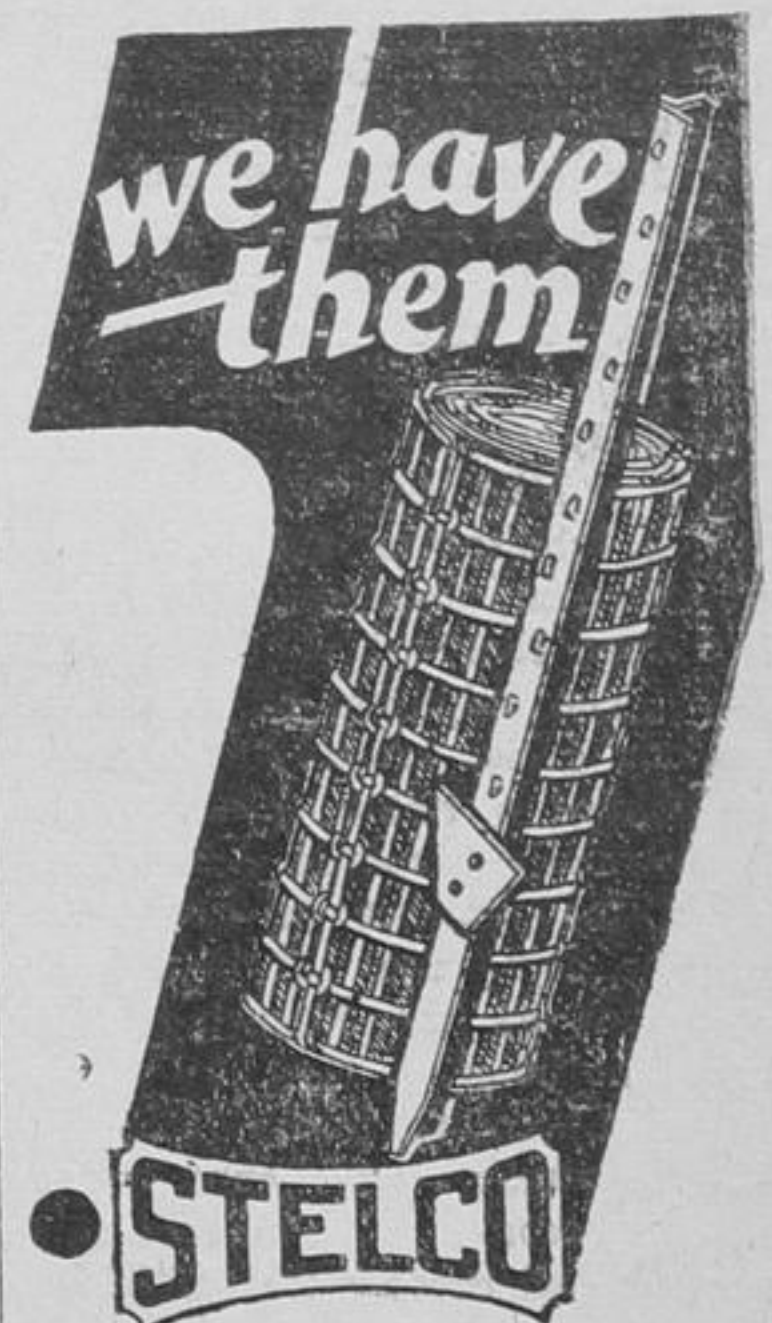
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