The Road To Better Health

SENSE AND SCIENCE IN RAISING BABIES

By DR. ARTHUR L. FORSTER

Note: Dr. Forster will answer such health questions in these columns as will be of interest to others and permissible in public print. Personal questions will be answered only when accompanied by self-addressed and stamped envelope. Address Dr. Arthur L. Forster in care of The Durham Chronicle.

Being a baby is a hard job. The youngster is helpless—he cannot run, talk or fight. He is subject to the whims of his parents and the caprices of the world at large. It is a wonder to me, sometimes, that as many babies live through this critical time.

In the "good old days" when common sense alone dictated what was done to or for a baby, he had a rather hard time of it, as common sense does not have a universal distribution. Then along came science with its discoveries of what was good and what was harmful for babies, and the pendulum immediately swung the other way. But it swung too far.

It is a far cry from the dirty little germ-laden bottles and nipples of thirty years ago to the sterile feeding cells and imitation breasts of the present day. There is a vast expanse between the habit of nursing a baby every time he cried, with no idea of what or how much he got, to the principle of regular feedings of known content and quantity.

But I say the pendulum swung too far, until raising babies became ultra-scientific—hence, often foolish. Regularity was carried to extremes. The scientific mother, whose baby is supposed to be fed every three hours, will wake her baby out of a sound, peaceful sleep to give him that feeding. Grandma will say that is foolish—and grandma is right! Consequently what we need today is a proper mixture of science and sense in the care and feeding of infants!

I have saved scores of babies from marasmus by simply telling the mother to give more nourishment, despite the fact the baby was being fed according to the rules and regulations in such cases made and provided. Thousands of babies are literally starved to death because sciences has said they should get "three ounces" and no more, whereas those particular babies should have gotten four ounces. Two babies, each three months old and weighing twelve pounds, will require different kinds and amounts of food, because although they are of the same age and weight, they are different in every other respect. And anyone who blindly follows a set plan based on age and weight is doomed to failure before he starts.

No Two People Alike

Whenever patients ask me, "Have you ever had a case like mine?" I say, "No, not one." Why? Because no two people in the world are alike. By the same token, no two babies are alike, even if they are of the same age and weight. And just as every grown-up is a law unto himself, so every baby is a different and distinct personal unit.

The trouble with ultra-scientific propositions is that they take us too far from nature. The scientist is s often attempting the impossible to improve on nature. It can't be done. Take the lower animals—birds for example. They don't know anything about science, but they do know how and where to build their home. They bear their young, feed, them, teach them how to fly, what kind of food to eat and where to find it, and they go South for the winter. They don't know a thing about proteids, fats and carbohydrates, neither do they have malnutrition or rickets.

In all this, I do not want to be understood as deprecating the scientific raising of babies. But I do deplore the extremes to which some are led by not mixing a little sense with science in what they do for the baby. And I do hold that such a mixture will redound to the baby's well-being.

Take an example:

A baby should, let us say, be fed every three hours, and when his feeding time comes around, he is sound asleep. Science would say he should be awakened and fed; common sense would say he should be allowed to sleep until he awakens. Which policy is right? The latter, of course. A baby grows while he is sleeping, and to disturb him is distinctly harmful, provided he doesn't miss the feeding entirely.

And so all along the line of the baby's daily regime. Science says he should have certain regular hours for everything. He should get so-and-so at 6 a.m. He should have his bath at 9.30 a.m. He should sleep at 2 p.m. He should play at 4 p.m. All very good. There's nothing like regularity, and it should be carried out insofar as possible. But every mother will bear me out in the statement that it isn't and can't be done in the average household. And I feel sorry for the poor mother who attempts it.

Medical science has reduced infant mortality to an amazing degree during recent years. The best scientific minds in the world have labored unceasingly in behalf of our babies, with results that are nothing short of marvelous. By hitching this up with good, common sense, we shall have a team that will carry baby through safely and soundly. And a better race of men and women will be the result.

(Copywright, 1926, by The Bonnet-Brown Corporation, Chicago.)

HEALTH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This and That

A. E. writes:

"(1) I have a sort of gurgling sound in the stomach, especially evenings when sitting idle and not doing much active work. I work on the farm.

"(2) Am 20 years old. Am 6 feet, 2 inches tall, and weigh 176 pounds. Am I underweight?

"(3) I would like to get fatter but don't know how, as I eat plenty. Can you give me rules for diet?

"(4) Is sugar fattening?

"(5) Which is most fattening—Tea, coffee or cocoa?

"(6) I consume plenty of sugar and drink lots of water. Would you advise leaving out sugar and sweets?

"(7) Could water contain something that causes symptoms in question (1)?

"(8) Where could I get our well water analyzed and what would it cost?"

Reply

(1) You probably eat too heavy a meal in the evening. Try taking your principal meal at noon. The gurgling is caused by gas which is a result of fermentation. Study your diet and determine which are the offending foods.

(2) You are six pounds overweight.

(3) A chap of your age should not be fat. Perhaps you are a bit scrawny now, but don't worry—you'll fill out.

(4) Yes.

(5) Cocoa.

(6) You do hard work and need sugar. Eat all you want, within sensible limits.

(7) It might.

(8) At the University of Alberta. It may not cost anything.

The Days Of Long Ago

Taken From Chronicle Files of Twenty and Twelve Years Ago.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

April 5, 1906.

The Edwards family of Zion is having its own share of trouble. Last week word came that Mr. Glencross of the Soo had died and the remains were being taken home for interment. Deceased was a son of Mrs. Harry Moffat of Murillo by her first marriage, and a nephew of Mr. R. T. Edwards, our Traverston correspondent.

At an interesting Horticultural Society meeting in the town hall Tuesday night, the following program was given: Rev. W. Farquharson, chairman; piano duet by Misses Rita Irwin and Amy Kelly, a vocal quartette by Miss Jean Brown, Miss Ada Brown, J. L. Flarity and Allan Bell, and a piano solo by Miss Ruth Johnston. The speaker of the evening was H. S. Peart, B.S.A., demonstrator in horticulture at the Agricultural College, Guelph.

The J. L. Browne property on Queen street has been sold to Mr. George Yiirs. Mr. Grant Whittaker has bought the William Burgman residence on Countess street, and Baker Stinson has purchased from Constable Carson his residence on Garafraxa street.

Married.—On Tuesday, March 27, 1906, Richard Allan of Varney to Miss Lavina Avery of Armow, Bruce County.

Married.—At the manse, Durham, by Rev. W. Farquharson, on March 28, 1906, Charles Henry Moffat to Lilian Grace, daughter of Mr. Daniel Greenwood, Glenelg.

About seventy of the friends and neighbors gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Aldred to express their good wishes and meet them for perhaps the last time on the farm and to show in a slight way their esteem. They presented them with an address and a 97-piece dinner set, a carving set, a dozen of knives and forks and a fine Bible.—Varney Correspondent.

April 12, 1906

Mr. George Lawrence has sold his store and dwelling to Mr. John Smith, harnessmaker, and, we believe, purposes going West shortly. We are informed that Mr. Smith has rented the premises to Mr. McIlraith, who takes possession about the first of June.

A very pretty wedding was celebrated yesterday morning at 9.30 at the residence of the bride's parents, Winchester, when Miss Bertha Mabel Quart was married to Mr. Will M. Christie of the same place. Both bride and groom are known in Durham, the bride being a sister of Mrs. F. W. Scarch of this town.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Banks, Owen Sound, was the scene of a very pleasant event on Wednesday, March 28, when their cousin, Miss Lizzie McArthur, formerly of Edge Hill, was united in marriage to Mr. John Sutherland of Owen Sound. The bride was attended by her sister, Miss Kate, of Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Around the Cement Mill.—Mr. Ernest Brooker resigned his position a few days ago. Two of the rotaries were put in operation last Saturday, and at time of writing, there are seven of them in full blast.

As we mentioned before, the church of this section is prospering under the care of Rev. Mr. Bice. They are now even discussing the erection of a new church, to be built in the near future.—Corner Concerns Correspondent.

Honor Roll, No. 1, Normanby.—Sr. IV.—Nellie Burns, Willie McAlister. Sr. III.—Arthur Backus, Willie Wallace, Arthur Gadd. Jr. III.—Minnie Keller, Mary Backus and Albert Keller, equal. Sr. II.—Myrtle Caldwell, James Marshall. Jr. II.—Walter McAlister, Mary McAlister, Neila Marshall. A.—Grace Mountain, Elmer Fee. Sr. Part I.—Stanley Mountain, Mabel Wallace. Jr. Part I.—Arthur Mountain, John Bauer. Average attendance 31. M. M. Adair, Teacher.

Born.—In Durham, Sunday, April 8, 1906, to Mr. and Mrs. George Ryan, Jr., a daughter.

TWELVE YEARS AGO

April 2, 1914.

March had a rough begining and a mild ending.

The tile industry which the C. P. R. has kept in operation for the past three years or so has been closed down, and the machinery is being moved away.

We regret to learn that Mrs. Chapman, Egremont, was stricken with paralysis on Monday last while on a visit with her granddaughter, Mrs. D. Gordon, in town here. She is over 80 years of age, and little hope is held out for her recovery.

Excavations are now being made under the town hall to make room for a furnace and a place to keep coal and wood. It is the intention of the Council to enlarge the building by adding 20 feet to the south end.

Mr. Joseph Firth, son of Mr. C. Firth, returned last week from Fergus hospital where he underwent an operation. He is improving nicely, and expects to be able to return to British Columbia in a few weeks.

The congregations of Amos and Knox churches met in Amos church on Monday afternoon to moderate in a call for a minister to succeed Rev. Mr. Kendall. Rev. Mr. Smith of Hamilton Presbytery was chosen on the first ballot, and the vote made unanimous.

We regret to chronicle the death of John Torry, who died on Thursday, the 26th ult., in his 44th year. His widow and one daughter survive.

The news was received with a deep feeling of sadness of the death of Mrs. Fred Noble on March 27, after but a few days' illness from blood poisoning. She was 34 years of age, and it is over 14 years since her marriage to Mr. Noble. Besides her husband, she leaves three sons and three daughters to mourn their loss.

Married.—At the Manse, Minnedosa, Man., March 16, 1914, Victor Jopp of Rocanville, Sask., to Irene Black of Minnedosa.

Died. — In Normanby, Tuesday, March 24, Alexander Smith, aged 82 years.

Died.—At Cleveland, Ohio, March 25, Mrs. Brooker, formerly of Durham.

April 9, 1914.

April so far has been cold. It started in wet and has been snowing more or less every day since. Sunday was a day of blizzards and sunshine, following each other on the lightning change plan.

On Wednesday next at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the induction of Rev. S. M. Whaley, B.A., will take place in the Presbyterian church.

On Tuesday night the Baptist congregation tendered a very hearty welcome to their new pastor, Rev. W. W. Wylie, who entered his new field of labor on Sunday last.

On Sunday morning last, Mr. John McCalmon passed away at his home at Varney at the ripe old age of 94 years, 5 months and 4 days.

The Right One

A traveller, stopping near a small shack by the roadside in Kentucky, said to the woman who came to the door:

"Where is your husband?"

"Down yonder in the field," the woman replied.

"Which one of those two men is your husband?"

"They's only one man down yonder. T'other one is a scarecrow."

"All right, I'll go down there and see him."

Dryly the woman remarked:

"Look and see which one moves the most, and t'other one will be Hank."

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