

## THE CARE OF CHILDREN.\*

In this little book of "Practical Hints to Mothers and Nurses at home and abroad," we find nine chapters of exceedingly useful information not too technically put: information which will be found useful to a larger public than the one for which the book is ostensibly written. The chapter on food is particularly full of wisdom and enters very fully into the best methods of feeding; it also contains two excellent tables, one of the quantities and proportions of various milks (cow's and the different varieties of condensed, etc.), the other table giving the composition of various artificial foods with dried human milk as a standard. In the chapter on drinks and medicines the author emphasizes the importance of giving children plenty of pure water: and how very true is his comment in this connection—"while mothers will give almost anything else to children they often carefully withhold water" which is one of the necessities of life. In fact the entire book is bristling with what are often called "Just the common-sense things" but which are, alas, so uncommonly to be met with in practice, and which need emphasizing. Several persistent little superstitions are ridiculed: and is there a trained nurse who has not been hampered in her work by these people:—"The fact that a woman has had thirteen or fourteen children (many of whom have perhaps died of diarrhoea) is deemed by some to be sufficient evidence that she must of necessity know more about the feeding of infants than any medical man can possibly know."

The chapter of Hints on Infectious Diseases should be read and again read by those who have the care of children in their hands. In this chapter and the one on the Nursery the author lays stress on the best germicides being sunlight, boiling water and soap, and tells us that "many sanitary sins have been committed in the name of disinfection;" and we can all bring to mind instances of the truth of this, where the fetish of a mild disinfectant takes the place of cleanliness.

The Hints on First Aid should be very thoroughly studied by children's nurses particularly in India or any tropical country where life is so uncertain and the Doctor not always in the next street. It seems only the other day that we were all carrying our little first aid pocket case with permanganate of potash and a scalpel for snake bite: but now that treatment has given way to the serums, which do not of course come under first aid that can be applied by any one but a medical man, and so Major Blackham advises us to go back to

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the old way of ligaturing above the bite, sucking, etc., while the collapse is treated by the usual methods and artificial respiration: incidentally, a very clear description of Schäfer's method of artificial respiration is given in this chapter.

This little book is one which young trained nurses, as well as the children's nurses to whom it is addressed, would find very useful. When we read that out of every 1,000 children born in England and Wales 140 to 150 die in their first year, while in India the mortality is 250 to the same number or 1 in 4 (the statistics for this last March give the infantile mortality in Bangalore as 369 per thousand): this, combined with the falling birth rate, surely "gives to think" seriously. Major Blackham treats the matter imperially, and gives the keynote in his preface to the second edition:—"It appears to be essentially the duty of Medical Officers of the Crown to exert all their energies to preserve those young lives.....which constitute the true wealth of the nation and the hope of this great empire." May we add, that it is also essentially the duty of all nurses.

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#### HINTS FROM "THE CARE OF CHILDREN".

Simple method of pasteurising milk:—The required amount of milk is placed in a bottle, the neck of which is closed by a plug of clean absorbent wool instead of a cork.——The bottle is immersed in a saucepan of water, which must be kept on the boil for forty minutes. The bottle is then removed from the water, and cooled as rapidly as possible. The milk should be kept in the bottle until it is required.

Humanized Milk:—Let half a pint of fresh cow's milk stand for three or four hours and then skim off the cream and put it aside. Warm the skim milk and add a teaspoonful of essence of rennet which will curdle it; drain off the whey and reject the curds. Mix the whey and cream with half a pint of cow's milk and one ounce of sugar of milk and sterilize the mixture in a bottle. The result is a preparation very closely resembling human milk.

A concentrated lime water which is very convenient for travelling or for use in the tropics can be made up in the following way. Take of slaked lime 1 ounce: refined sugar in powder 2 ounces: distilled water 1 pint. Mix the lime and sugar thoroughly. Transfer the mixture to a bottle containing the water; cork and shake occasionally. Siphon off the clear solution with a piece of clean india-rubber tubing after twelve hours, and keep in a stoppered bottle. The solution contains eight grains of lime to the ounce, so is sixteen times stronger than ordinary lime-water. Five or fifteen drops according to age of child is sufficient to add to each bottle.