

satisfaction in eating is dependent upon simple food. Whenever it is necessary to tempt a child to eat by stimulant or tonic, or an adult by mixed preparations of condiments, spices, or "pick-me-ups," it is certain that healthful conditions are not present.

But, on the other hand, it is equally true that as much disease is indicated by abnormal appetite as by its loss. Children who are hungry all the time are not necessarily "hearty," as parents think,—are often, indeed, far from being as satisfactorily well as those who betray no special anxiety about their meals, but simply are ready for them when the time comes; and this, which is true of children and young people who are still growing, is still more emphatically the case with older persons whose physical growth has stopped. Then it is that we learn to discriminate between those who eat to live, or only in accordance with the necessary calls of their individual organisms, and that unfortunately large class who appear to live to eat.

In this latter class of human beings, we must include even those impecunious mortals to whom the price of a good dinner is a real inconvenience, yet who spend more for the sake of spoiling their stomachs than for any other requirement. For them, caterers and restaurant cooks lie in wait, and the marvel is, not that by far the larger proportion of an adult population suffers from dyspepsia, but that any members of it are free from it. To begin with, they call upon their stomachs to do at one and the same time two totally different orders of work: to assimilate food that is boiling hot, and to accept a bath of ice-water. The number of victims of hot breads and cold summer drinks, forms an alarming proportion of patients at all sanitoriums. The strange part about it is that even well-educated people, living in a refined social atmosphere, having at their command hygienic books and a prolific dietetic literature, are as great sinners in this regard if not even greater, than the illiterate population living from hand to mouth in our city alleys. They would far rather pay a physician for medicines, pills, cathartics, and other atrocities to enable them to sin with impunity, than learn the laws of healthful diet, and, having learned them, live up to them.

Nothing is more amusing than the consternation of people at the great sanitoriums, which are springing up all over the country as a direct result of the folly of over-indulgence, at finding that "dieting" means the systematic consumption, at stated hours, of food properly prepared, not the enjoyment of unusual luxuries daintily prepared. They expect, if they are men, to have the doctor, as they say, "knock off cigars and wine"; and if they are women are not greatly surprised at an interdict on tea: but few, very few, are prepared for the strict dieting which excludes favorite articles of every-day consumption, and prohibits indiscriminate use of peppers, spices, and sauces.

Hand in hand with excess, as a sin against the stomach, goes haste. People with absolutely nothing to do with their time, idlers in every sense of the word, will literally "bolt" their food as if they had not a moment to live. After all, Dickens's pictures of the guests in boarding-houses rushing at the sound of the gong as if from a fire, and of the provisions flying as if before a horde of hungry locusts, were scarcely an exaggeration. Parents pay far too little heed to this matter, in the case of children. Boys and girls at school rush home for dinner, eat rapidly, very often most indigestible food, and fly off again to study, expecting the stomach to act the part of a mere machine, accept all they choose to put into it, assimilate it without more ado, and be all ready in due time for the next meal, if, indeed, they do not outrage it still further by stuffing it between whiles.

One sometimes feels inclined to ask intelligent children, as well as older people, what they really imagine the stom-

ach to be? and what part it is supposed to play in their own individual cases? Perhaps some of our readers might like to attempt the answer to such a question. It is very certain that if they are in any way prepared with a true reply, and yet continue to sin daily against it, either by excess, carelessness, or irregularity, or by the equally frequent fault of committing to it, at one and the same time, ice-water and boiling soups and sauces, they deserve all the suffering that is in store for them as the dyspeptics they cannot fail to become.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOW I RECOVERED MY HEALTH."

Baby's Diseases.

III.

INCIDENTAL TO TEETHING.

IS dentition necessarily painful? Popular idea, of course, is that it must be so; and yet experience and observation would incline to a different opinion. That it must be an inconvenience, and tend by some disturbance of conditions to excite and perhaps irritate the nervous system, is of course true; but if pain and serious results were inseparable from it, painful dentition would be a universal fact, whereas we know perfectly well that this is not the case.

Here, once again, we realize that there are distinct advantages on the side of the children of the poorer classes. Visits to the cottage and the wealthy nursery, sometimes force upon the mind comparisons which are strongly in favor of the cottage. One finds the baby of the working-woman lying in its cradle, a fist in the tiny mouth, perhaps restless and irritable but accepting fate apparently with equanimity, or it is held up triumphantly by brother or sister with the remark that "Baby do dribble so it's always in a muss, but he's getting on finely with his teeth," and that ends the matter. The mother's time and attention are diverted in a thousand natural ways; and if she does not observe hygienic principles in diet as the result of knowledge or education, it not unfrequently happens that her children are the gainers from scanty living at a time when perfect digestion is the essential need for the infant.

Nursing mothers should reflect that in the crisis of dentition everything for the child depends upon their own self-control and abstinence from irritating and dyspeptic articles of food. It is a very terrible fact in connection with civilization, that women shrink more and more, as luxurious living abounds, from fulfilling the obligations of maternity. The working-woman errs on the other side, and continues very often to suckle her children longer than it is right, outrageous nature in this direction perhaps as willfully as her wealthy sister does in another; but it is, after all, the lesser evil of the two. Bringing up by hand means certain suffering for the baby all through its earliest months, and access of liability to sickness during dentition, which in itself should be the strongest argument in favor of supplying the disabled or unwilling mother's place by a wet-nurse.

Nature does not sacrifice unnecessarily; and when we reflect, we find that in this one fact lies the whole difference between her plans for human life, and the consequences of the actions of her children. There is a certain necessary pain inseparable from growth, as there is from birth: a perfectly painless birth was probably never intended; but civilization has added horrors to parturition that are entirely unknown among more barbarous people, and the same is true of almost all the necessary operations of human life. To

limit ourselves to our subject, however, it may be stated that this is emphatically true in regard to dentition. There are, properly speaking, no diseases connected with it; but we are so ignorant of the laws of health, and so regardless of them when we do know them, that our unfortunate children are constant sufferers.

To be a good nurse when her children are sick, to understand how to deal with convulsions, diarrhoea, infantine cholera, or the many disturbances which often make infancy a miserable experience, is not the greatest triumph for the mother, but to be so truly mistress of herself and children, and so thoroughly conversant with the laws of health, that she can prevent disease. Prevention is always better than cure, and every doctor will assure us that more than two-thirds of our children's illnesses might have been entirely obviated by judicious care. For infant health, the requirements are absolute regularity of life, the utmost simplicity in nutrition, fresh air, cleanliness. A little self-denial on the part of the nursing mother, the exercise of watchful care on the part of one who is forced to bring her child up by bottle, will do more to carry it safely through the possible dangers of dentition, than the attendance of the doctor.

There are families in which convulsions seem as much a part of teething as the teeth themselves, and mothers accept the fact, apparently as if all that was required of them was zeal and attention at the time, instead of considering, from the first week of the child's life, how best to arrange and prepare rules for its guidance in order to avoid any suffering. Attention to the state of the bowels, from the first, is one great secret of health. Very often the stools show slight disturbances, or are close and constipated; but as the child appears well, mother and nurse regard it as of little importance, and possibly it might not amount to anything serious were there no drain upon the system.

But as the process of dentition is in itself a disturbance of perfect balance, it is needful to be ready for it even before its action has really commenced. Very few mothers seem to realize this. They are ready for action when dentition is fully under way and the baby dribbles and rubs its fist against the gums—*then* they awake to greater watchfulness; while had they carefully regulated the bowels *from the very first*, never allowing the smallest irregularity or constipation to escape immediate preventive measure for the future, they would be saved much anxiety themselves, and the child, possible suffering.

Convulsions are absolutely preventable, by care, in all cases but those of diseased children; and there is no reason whatever for continued disturbance of the bowels, for fever, or excessive irritation, if proper care be patiently given from the very start. Thus we are compelled to the conviction that while suffering may be incidental to this crisis, *diseases* really are not, and suffering itself can be so largely mitigated by care from the earliest weeks of infant life that it shall cease to be looked upon as its necessary accompaniment.

Perhaps the greatest evil ever introduced into the modern nursery has been soothing-syrup. Artificial ease, like artificial sleep, is valueless. If the baby cries and worries over teething, it is perfectly useless to put it to sleep by means of anæsthetic syrups. Drugs in even the mildest form ought to be banished from the nursery. If teething is painful, it is so because nature's laws have been outraged, and it does not mend matters to attempt to remedy one outrage by another; and drugging is always an outrage. The true remedy lies in the removal of the cause and in preventing its recurrence. The cause, almost invariably, is due to indigestion or exposure, or to undue excitement.

Quiet, regularity, system, absolute cleanliness of vessels in which food is prepared, when the bottle is used, self-denial on the mother's part, in the avoidance of unsuitable

food, if she suckles her baby, simple remedies for constipation if the infant suffers from it, and resolute avoidance of all *cheap methods* of stopping the child's protests by administering soothing-syrups or sleeping-powders, which are in themselves outrages against nature, these are rules to be laid down for guidance during dentition. When, by neglecting them, convulsions or serious disturbances ensue, there should be no delay in calling in competent medical assistance. The case then has become too serious for home treatment.

JANET E. RUTZ-REES.

The articles on "Food, its Relation to Health and Disease," by Susanna W. Dodds, M.D., the first of which was announced for the June number, will not be commenced until the present series on the "Sins Against the Stomach" is concluded.

The Floral Message.

(See Page Engraving.)

"In Eastern lands they talk in flowers."



FROM time immemorial, flowers have been a peculiar votive offering,—the offering of friendship, of devotion, of sympathy, of affection, of love.

Nor are their welcome sweetness and fragrance always all that they impart. The fervid imagination of the Oriental has endowed each blossom with an attribute of sentiment in some way analogous to its beauty or perfume. The sweet conceit has been adopted by all nations; and the blue forget-me-not, "which blooms for happy lovers," in our Northern lands is as significant as the lilac of Persia, "the white flower which perfumes the valley" and tells of unspoken love, or the charmed lotus of the Nile.

The Eastern custom of asking forgiveness or seeking reconciliation after dissension, of expressing affection or any sentiment, or even making a proposal of marriage by an offering of selected flowers, is an old one, and was of frequent occurrence in the palmy days of ancient Rome.

Our picture is a scene of that period, and shows us a beautiful Roman lady to whom the kneeling slave of an Egyptian lord presents her master's offering. The proud, richly adorned patrician, attended by her *flabellifera*, or fan-bearer, and accompanied by a charming intimate, who bends forward in eager suspense to hear the decision of her friend, glances with calm hauteur at the symbolic gift,—a basket of flowers,—in whose arrangement she reads an offer of marriage. The Egyptian prince who sends the floral message lingers with his chariot in the court for the return of his messenger. If the flowers be received favorably, he will know the beauty has accepted his heart and hand as well as the fragrant flowers he has selected to tell the story of his love.

It is not likely we should be prophesying falsely in presuming that he will be disappointed, for the fair lady looks somewhat haughtily at the proffered basket and the kneeling girl, and she evidently is not prepared for the offering or to accept it, for she has no flowers in readiness to return with an answer in kind.

The scene is full of expression and suppressed feeling, and the robes of the beautiful Egyptian slave and the lovely patrician are perfect costume studies of the time when Rome and the cities of Egypt were the centers of civilization and refinement.