

what wondrous care Nature defends the citadel of sentient life from outer harm. The nutrition of the brain is entrusted to a vascular network, that covers its surface and dips into its manifold convolutions; this beautiful structure is called the *pia mater*. The arteries that supply it are accompanied by the *vasa motor* nerves of the sympathetic nervous system, and we know that wherever we get increased vascularity in an organ we have a heightened sensibility. Whatever quickens the always-rapid heart-beats of infancy give rise to cerebral excitement; the nervous disorders of infancy, commonly called convulsions, are due to that cause. We all know what a little thing will make our baby "start," and the lightest impression of cold, hunger, or pain, conveyed to the brain by the sensory nerves, is flashed back by the motor nerves, and finds audible (?) expression in the reflex action of crying, the only way in which an infant can make known to us his woes, his wants, his wishes, or his wrongs.

The head in infancy varies greatly in size, *weight*, and shape, and these differences may for the most part be attributed to the greater or lesser amount of brain substance contained in the cranium; on the other hand, mere *size* may be due to congenital brain disease, such as hydrocephalus, or an excessive thinness of the cranial plates, leading to a too great expansion of the brain, especially about the region of the anterior fontanelle, and in this case baby is said to have a soft or open head; hence a small, firm head is more perfect in shape than the larger loose head. There is one point that has for some years attracted my attention—and I doubt not that of other practitioners in Midwifery—and that is the increasing *size and weight* of the female infant head. Can we attribute this fact to the larger amount of brain-power exercised by the mothers of the present generation over that of their mothers and grandmothers before them?

We must, however, leave these discussions for something more practical, and the two points of nursing, we deduct from the few facts I have just indicated to show the extreme sensibility of the brain in infancy, is the extreme need of *repose* and *slumber*, the rest of the brain; and this first has been (and is) interfered with by the *bad* nursing habit, *rocking* and *jerking*. This last is popularly called "joggling." This interesting (?) manipulation takes place something in this wise: The little victim is taken up from bed or cot, wide awake, and Nurse, sitting close to the fire, with baby's face well in front of it,

puts him on one of her knees in an upright position, his head hanging over her arm, which is placed across his chest. Having thus positioned (?) the patient (?) she commences a series of short sharp "jerks" with her foot, and as these soothing (?) movements are generally objected to on the part of the sufferer by "cries," the aforesaid are redoubled to pacify (?) them—the little head rolls about from side to side, having no support but the slender neck, the countenance is suffused with deep blushes, "tears roll down his innocent nose," and more often than not baby is sick! Thousands of infants are subjected to this treatment every day of their lives, and not once only, but many times a day. I leave my readers to judge of their effects upon infantile health and comfort, and I am inclined to think they will agree with me, that we had better *not* "joggle" our baby. The time-honoured custom (though more honoured in the breach than in the observance, according to our modern ideas)—rocking—has a halo of sentiment around it; and poets, for many generations, have used it to symbolise calmness, security, and peace. The mariner is rocked to rest on the bosom of the deep; the infant, on his mother's breast. The object of rocking, then, is to soothe the infant, and, in a measure—and in a *very* small measure—it may do so. Is there, then, no other way to quiet an infant without rocking—that is, disturbing the brain? Too much rocking has this effect, until at last it loses all power to soothe. I believe, and you will find, that when an infant cries, being half asleep and half awake, a very slight alteration of position, *gently* made, turning him from one side to the other, or raising the head a little, will suffice to soothe. There is also another little manœuvre I have often practised with good effect, that is, letting him hold one of your fingers, the baby hand twines round it, and the feel of it seems to give him a sort of sense of security, and he will frequently drop off to sleep. It is not desirable to take a baby out of his cot when you know there is no need for it, because he thinks proper to indulge in "cries." Soothe him where he lies; the quieter you keep him the better he will be.

A MEDICAL student of Vienna the other day telegraphed to his father, a well-to-do farmer, to forward him fifty gulden or more to purchase, as he said, a cow to enable him to further his studies as an innoculator. The indulgent father, who considered himself a very good judge of cows, hastened to Vienna and purchased a splendid specimen. It now appears that the prompt arrival at the son's residence of his father and of the cow very much startled the impecunious young man.

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[next page](#)