

and down to the hands, and if a little too long in the body can be turned up round the bottom to prevent it from getting wet.

At this point I usually weigh my babies, and, if possible, measure them; allowance can be made for the vest and binder.

The first stools are very apt to stain the diapers, making them difficult to wash; I usually place a piece of old linen between the diaper proper and the child, the diapers are then very little trouble to wash, and by the end of the first week the child will probably have got into the habit of being held out. Some people will not believe that so young a child can be taught, but it is possible: I kept count of the diapers of the last baby I had, and there were only three soiled after it was four days old until it was five weeks, when I left. I have since heard that he is a pattern baby. But to go back. Before putting on the diaper, the buttocks, thighs, and genitals should be well oiled; this preserves the skin much better than powder. I have tried both during the last sixteen years; the powder is washed off the moment the child is wet; the oil does in some measure protect the skin. I have never seen an oiled baby have the slightest approach to redness. Having put on the diaper in the usual manner, the pilch is wrapped straight round and fastened with safety pins. Next put on the long flannel, which folds over in front, making two thicknesses of flannel; the long ends should be turned up behind, for there are already two folds of flannel in front and only one at the back; if you turn the long flannel up in front as is usual you have five folds. Next put on the night dress, feet first, and then put the baby to bed; it should sleep for some hours. According to the text-books a baby requires little or no food the first day, but I remember one boy who sucked his thumb vigorously before he was five minutes old, and cried just as vigorously because he was hungry before he was many hours old. We gave him an ounce of hot water, after which he slept for two hours, when he awoke and sucked his thumb again for half an hour; then he had a second feed, and from that time on demanded a meal every two hours. He increased in weight four ounces the first week and eight or ten every week after, and was very good.

During the first twenty-four hours a baby will not require changing more than once or twice at most. The diaper must, however, be unpinned, and the bottom of the binder turned up in order to watch for any oozing from the cord.

If the weather be warm there is no reason why the baby should not go out. A baby I had last September was put on the lawn after

her first bath, and remained there for five or six hours. She spent most of her days on that lawn, and always slept at night in a room with the windows wide open. She is a very healthy, and consequently happy child.

I have said nothing about the swellings sometimes found on a baby's head or buttocks, because the only treatment is to leave them alone; and nothing about its food, because it usually requires none during the first twenty-four hours. If it does need any, and the mother can nurse it herself, it should be put to the breast every four hours. My hungry boy was fed after his drink of hot water on two teaspoonfuls of cream, one teaspoonful of milk, two teaspoonfuls of lime water, and three teaspoonfuls of sugar water; the sugar water being made with sugar of milk.

*Baths.*—The hammock bath is very much used by some people, especially Americans; it is very simple. It consists of a large stool or small table turned upside down, and a piece of strong mackintosh sheeting, its edges bound with tape and a ring sewn to each corner; the rings are slipped over the casters on the legs of the table. This forms a hammock, which makes a very comfortable bath for a small baby, but is of no use for an older child.

*The Cot.*—The one I do not like is the high one with beautiful curtains; these are very expensive, and in a town the hangings are soon soiled. I never can see the use of spending so much money on a thing that can rarely be used for more than six months. The one I think the best is a little wicker one, costing from 2s. 6d. to 2s. 11d., which can easily be carried from one room to another if necessary. Unless one is very rich there is no need to have a horse-hair mattress, and yet the majority of babies do have that luxury. A large pillow-case filled with oat husks makes a clean and comfortable bed, and costs very little. Oat husks can, I believe, be procured from any corn dealer. The pillow should also be filled with them; they are much cooler than feathers or down. Blankets should be soft and light; the sheets should be thin cotton ones. At first it is better not to use a top sheet.

### Exhibition of Nursing Appliances.

It is proposed to hold a small exhibition of Practical Nursing Appliances in London during May next, and those interested in the scheme who may have something of value to show might communicate with Miss Barton, (Hon. Secretary, Provisional Committee, National Council of Nurses), Matron, Chelsea Infirmary, Cale Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)