

men. Sometimes the arms are bent and the fists clenched. Errors in food are usually accountable for colic.

#### VOMITING.

Another of the minor ailments of infancy is vomiting. This occurs very commonly and on slight provocation. It is often met with in quite healthy infants, and is then commonly due to overfeeding. "Possetting" is a form of rejection from the stomach where small quantities are eructated from time to time without effort, and trickle from the corners of the baby's mouth. In true vomiting there is usually retching, and the gastric contents are forcibly ejected.

Vomiting may be due to either local causes or be symptomatic of general conditions:

1. It is commonly an evidence that the food is unsuitable. The milk may be too rich in fat or proteid. Sometimes the milk is impure or contains irritating elements. Dietetic or emotional disturbances in the mother may for a time derange the character of her milk.

2. The walls of the stomach may be in a hypersensitive condition so that even milk of normal composition may set up peristaltic movements leading to its rejection.

3. Many infants placed on cow's milk are unable to deal with the hard and heavy curd and this mechanically, often aided also by fermentative changes, produces vomiting.

4. A vomiting which persists in young infants of only a few days old may be symptomatic of a congenital obstruction at the pyloric outlet of the pylorus.

5. Reflex vomiting may be due to teething or worms.

6. In certain forms of cerebral disease, such as meningitis, vomiting may be an important symptom.

7. It is also necessary to bear in mind that vomiting may be indicative of some form of obstruction of the bowel, such as comes from intussusception, or peritonitis, or other local disease.

8. In many acute affections accompanied by rise of temperature, vomiting may be one of the earliest symptoms noticed.

#### DIARRHŒA.

This is an ailment which may speedily prove of the most serious character.

Infants vary greatly as regards the frequency of their motions. All degrees of diarrhœa are met with from a slight looseness to a malignant purgation which may be fatal in a few hours.

The term diarrhœa is a vague one, and is much abused. It is often used to include abnormal frequency in the passage of the

motions, increase in quantity, alteration in consistency, and sometimes is made to include conditions in which blood, mucus, or other abnormal constituents are present.

The signs and symptoms may vary greatly according to the amount and intensity of the diarrhœa.

The motions, instead of being of a bright yellow colour and homogeneous in consistency, are green, curdy, slimy, fluid, and offensive. The baby is thirsty, but has no appetite for its food. The tongue is coated, and there may be distinct inflammation of the lining of the mouth. The skin about the anus and genitals and over the buttocks becomes excoriated. Rapid wasting occurs. The muscles become flabby, the sub-cutaneous fat disappears, and the skin is loose and wrinkled.

What are the causes of diarrhœa in infancy?

1. Let me remind you that newly-born babies when suckled often have a looseness of the bowels, due to the colostrum or milk first secreted on the establishment of lactation.

2. Dietetic errors and psychical disorders on the part of the suckling mother are sometimes answerable for diarrhœa in the suckling.

3. Diarrhœa is chiefly due to the presence of some irritating element in the bowel, and indicates an effort on the part of nature to hurry this through and out of the body.

In artificially fed children the danger of this is only too clear to need repetition. When pure cow's milk is used the large curds formed may be responsible for the irritation, but, more frequently, in hand fed infants the cause is impure milk from which toxic poisons are generated. Sometimes the diarrhœa may be caused by foods which are poisonous to the child.

4. Diarrhœa in some cases is a symptom of organic disease of the bowel.

5. Reflex diarrhœa is due to the nervous influence of some other part. One of the commonest examples is that which in not a few babies accompanies teething.

6. Diarrhœa may also be an evidence of some general disease, such as pneumonia, septicæmia, or toxic affection.

#### CONSTIPATION.

Imperfect, insufficient, or infrequent evacuation of the bowels is a particularly troublesome condition in many babies. It is important because if neglected it may be perpetuated in youth and adult life, and may hinder, hamper, and derange the sufferer.

Constipation is most frequently dependent on dietetic errors.

Constipated nursing mothers often have constipated babies. A milk lacking in fat or con-

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