

THE HEALTH AND HAPPINESS OF OUR CHILDREN.

The health and happiness of our children. Can there be a greater or more satisfying objective to set before ourselves for a lifetime of endeavour, whether for the children in our homes, children of the Nation, or the Empire, children of the rich and of the poor, that all should be well born, that all should have good health, with the resulting happiness which depends so largely upon such health?

It is only within comparatively recent times that the science of health has been studied on enlightened lines in relation to childhood. Affection which is reinforced by knowledge is a powerful protection to the helplessness of childhood, but alone it has no power to ward off danger, and in the past many mothers agonised because when their children were ill they could not help them, and even to members of the profession of medicine the science of periculture was a closed book. Until the reign of Queen Victoria little scientific study was given to the rearing of children on systematic and healthy principles which had been studied and were understood. It will be remembered that Queen Anne, who had seventeen children, lost them all in infancy, with the exception of the little Duke of Gloucester, and he died when under twelve years of age. Most of the children of George III grew up to adult age, and Edward, Duke of Kent, was the father of Queen Victoria, in whose beneficent reign so much progress was made in the art of hygiene.

The pictures which we publish in these pages are charming examples of mothers and children. H.R.H. Princess Mary Viscountess Lascelles, with the Hon. George and the Hon. Gerald Lascelles, and Princess Helene and King Michael of Rumania—even at this early age every inch a king—and all the children appear healthy and happy. Our own Princess Mary, like her Majesty the Queen, has much practical knowledge of the care of and upbringing of children, and Princess Helene devotes herself to the charming child in whose hands are placed at so early an age the reins of kingship. It is interesting to remember that all three boys are the

great-great-grandchildren of Queen Victoria; Princess Mary's descent being through King Edward VII and our present King, and that of Princess Helene through the Empress Frederick, and her mother the Ex-Queen Sophie of Greece. They are examples of wise care based on knowledge which should be applied to the upbringing of all children, and which should be the heritage of children in all ranks of life.

At the present day there is much instruction available for mothers in the difficult art of the rearing of children and in the care of their own health. "Heaven lieth at the feet of mothers," and in the honourable vocation

which is theirs, various Acts of Parliament have been passed in Great Britain which are of direct or indirect assistance to them. Notably the Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918. Again, Ante-Natal Clinics are established in many centres to help mothers to care for their own health and to conserve that of the coming child. Maternity hospitals and nurses and midwives are available for their aid at the birth of the child, and Maternity and Infant Welfare Clinics help and advise them in the post-natal period. Probably the period in which they receive least organised assistance is when their children are from two to four or five years old, when they are of school age, and come under the inspection of the School Medical Officer of Health and the expert understanding and kindly care of the School Nurses, in co-operation with the teachers, and whose work in the schools is invaluable.

We have been much struck to note the difference in the appearance of

London children of school age within the last quarter of a century. Bright and alert, with well-kept hair and teeth, clean and tidy clothes, and even well-brushed boots and shoes their standard of health, and we may add of happiness, for in the main these children appear to be happy and content, there is every augury for an uprising standard of national health.

Recent methods of treatment have also diminished zymotic disease, but as Dr. Saleeby insistently reminds us, "Mothers are the divinely and naturally appointed saviours of babies," and the French saying remains true even with all the advances of science in 1927, "Le lait et le cœur d'une maman ne se remplacent jamais."



H.R.H. PRINCESS MARY VISCOUNTESS LASCELLES, G.B.E.
HON. GERALD LASCELLES. HON. GEORGE LASCELLES.

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