

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

CHAPTER 33: RESTORATION OF HEALTH

Can you give any instructions as to how parents may restore the health of their children when lost?

We can only give some hints, and these will be very bare ones. Nevertheless, they are such as we have acted upon in our own family, the wisdom of which has been confirmed by a good many years' observation of the causes and cures of sickness in the families of others'. We advise –

(1.) As a rule, keep from physic. The proverb says:

"Every man" – and, we suppose every woman – "is a fool or a physician at forty." A woman should be a good piece of a doctor as soon as she is a mother, and even before that. If the mothers would only take some little trouble to inform themselves, as we have before recommended, they would be able to deal with the ailments and weaknesses of children far better than ordinary doctors, for it is proverbial how little doctors understand the needs of children. Children will be very bad indeed before they need physic. In the worn-out, torpid systems of men and women, poisoned with long courses of neglect, excesses, and disease, the strong potions of the formidable doctor may be of some service, but even there, generally, the less -the better. But with regard to little children, we should say, if the parent does not know how to help and restore health, call in some experienced old nurse, who has had many opportunities of helping little ones through their infantile and childhood troubles.

(2.) It will be found very useful, in some forms of sickness, to keep the children from food. In cases of colds, for instance, which, I suppose, lay the foundation and are the cause of half the deaths that take place among children, the absence of food – save and except a little warm gruel, or the like – will be very useful. It has been said that "you must stuff a cold, and starve a fever." This is altogether wrong. It should be quoted: "If you stuff a cold, you will have to starve for a fever." That is to say, if you load the stomach when it is inflamed by cold, the probability is that you will add to its

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

inflamed condition and the inflamed condition of the blood, and so bring on a fever. The best remedy we know for cold is to keep in a warm room, and take plenty of thin, warm drink, or get some active hydropathic treatment, such as a wet pack, a lamp bath, or a Turkish bath, and, thus assisted, nature will throw off the evil as soon as possible. (See "Hints on the Water Treatment," further on.)

In cases of fever, and in nearly every case of indigestion, fasting is a very efficient remedy. In all cases of sickness, the appetite, as a rule, is a safe guide on the question of food. When the stomach is in a condition to deal with food there will usually be a desire for it; when food is not desired, it is an indication that the stomach is not in a condition to deal properly with it. In all such cases, we should say, give the stomach rest. When the organs are out of order, it is wisest to give them less work to perform. When the nervous system is overworked by lessons, or by any sorrow or fright, rest is the only remedy. Let the children have extra sleep and extra play.

(3.) When children are out of health, change of air and scene will often work like magic on them.

(4.) Always take things in time. While we would be far from recommending you to imagine that every ache and pain of your child is to terminate in some serious going malady, at the same time there are certain symptoms which any thoughtful father and mother can understand as signifying something serious. If you do not know what is the matter, and cannot get to know with any certainty, call in a doctor and get him to tell you. You can then set to work to use, in co-operation with him, the simple remedies taught by your own common sense and experience, and superior knowledge of the ways, and habits, and disposition of your child.

Children will often inherit the diseases and weaknesses of their parents. For instance, a child will have something the matter with the lungs, or a nasty cough, or diarrhea, or dysentery, and its mother will remember some attack of the kind in her own case or in that of her husband. Let her try and remember or get to know what was beneficial in her own case, and if it seems worth while, apply the experience to the treatment of her child.



The
William Booth
Collection

THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

In serious matters you must always have a medical man, and abide carefully by his directions; but in all such cases good nursing, watchfulness, quietness – seeing that the child sleeps and is kept quiet so far as is possible – will greatly help the medical treatment.

Lastly, HAVE FAITH IN GOD. Never allow yourself to suppose for a moment that He cannot act independently of human measures. Use means for the recovery of the body from sickness in the same way that you use means for the restoration of the soul from the presence of sin. Employ every method, trusting all the time in the Living God for healing and life and victory.