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Some Practical Experiences and Verifications of the Homœopathic Remedies in Disordered Maternal Nursing.

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To say that mothers of the present day do not wish to nurse their infants and are anxious to avoid this duty is a mistaken idea. I can recall but few cases where a mother with a good supply of milk has been unwilling to nurse her baby.

Whether a physical inability to supply proper breast milk is increasing among women in this country is a question which the general practitioner is in a better position to decide than the pediatrician. The latter is called upon to treat the infant who is not doing well, the result usually of the breast milk supply having failed.

It is a peculiar fact though that many women of splendid physiques have practically no breast milk even after repeated pregnancies. This is undoubtedly morbid and this woman needs restoration to health through the aid of the indicated remedy, and also do we see the small frail woman who has an abundant flow of milk with a correspondingly robust infant. These cases when taken seriously tax the ingenuity of the physician, he must know the indications for successful breast feeding as well as those of unsuccessful breast feeding. He also has two problems confronting him, the mother's health and the infant's metabolism. The best guide, of course, is the condition of the baby itself. When we are brought to face the awful fact that gastric, intestinal and nutritional diseases are responsible for at least 50 per cent. of all the deaths which occur in infants during the first year (Holt), practically all of these have been artificially fed.

Is there any reason why I make such a plea to conserve maternal nursing? This should be a sufficient argument to encourage both physician and mother to conserve the food

supply of milk of normal composition. As has aptly been said neither physician nor layman possesses an inherent right to destroy a helpless babe's means of sustenance. The obligation of marriage and motherhood carries with it to the healthy woman the obligation of maternal nursing for at least nine months. But how shall this be done? The first and most important thing to be done is to carefully examine the mother's milk; by that I mean, a thorough laboratory examination so we may know what the baby is getting. Secondly, examine the mother's physical condition, inquire into her diet, correcting it when necessary and also her general mode of living. When all this has been done the infant is examined carefully, paying particular attention to its loss in weight, and digestive symptoms, also a careful analysis of the stools. The infant should be weighed before and after nursing. When the combined examination of both mother and child have been completed we may have the key to the case, and possibly correct the error.

The modern tendency is to prescribe complementary or supplementary modified cow's milk formula; this is much more successful today with our present knowledge of infant feeding than formerly, but there are infants who seem to need human milk, who represent difficult feeding cases and often go into a marantic state at times without the timely use of human milk. After galactagogues, hygienic and dietetic treatment of the mother has failed to produce the sought for results I have sometimes been successful in establishing maternal nursing when I dig up the almost lost art of Homœopathic prescribing in the cases for both mother and child. There are, I admit, according to my observations of many years only a few remedies that have proved their real clinical worth in these serious conditions. I am not going to give you a lot of text book indications for a group of remedies, they are there in the text books if you care to read them. I am also sorry to say I have not been able to confirm in my work many of the remedies given for this condition

in the text books, so I will recommend to you only remedies that I have seen produce cures during my experience.

The indications which I will give you, I believe, are accurate and dependable, and as I have said before, have been frequently verified.

Aconite. This remedy has restored milk when the mother have suffered a sudden chill, or fright, and has no doubt saved a great many complications. This I have verified even after other measures have been tried.

Borax. The mother's milk is too thick, curdles soon after it has been drawn, frequent morning nausea is complained of as though she is pregnant.

Cal. Carb. The breasts are distended, milk is scanty she is cold, feels the cold air acutely, there seems to be a want of vital activity to bring the milk forward, leucophlegmatic constitution. This remedy has proved a wonderful galactagogue when the patient presents the Calcarea Carb. makeup.

Carbo. An. Painful nodosities in the mammary gland; nursing causes stitching pains in the breasts which have no relation to breathing, she cannot bear to have the breasts touched or handled, the milk is thin and has a saltish taste, there is present a peculiar exhaustion, great sense of emptiness in the pit of the stomach, after nursing she suffers cramps.

China Off. This remedy has done wonderful work when the milk has become scanty and poor due to loss of blood or excessive menstruation during the normal nursing period, and has restored the appetite, conserved the mother's strength when there was present galactorhea.

Mag. Carb. Vomiting of mother's milk, the milk causes diarrhoea and vomiting, both are sour in character, the infant is usually much emaciated, presents a toxic rash and has the characteristic stools.

Natrum Carb. Vomiting and diarrhoea from mother's milk, the vomitus consists of small sour curds, look for the acid type of dyspepsia in the mother.

Silicea. When the infant refuses the breast, or vomits immediately after nursing, aversion to mother's milk, the mother is not well, she has the *Silicea* constipation, or other symptoms indicating this remedy.

Valerian Off. After the mother has been in an angry passion the infant may vomit as soon as it nurses, the vomitus is curdled, and often has a sickening odor like putrid eggs, and with this vomiting the infant presents a type of faintness, white lips, and cold body, the child is very restless.

I will not mention the indications for *Aethusa* here as it only has been successful in my hands for the vomiting of infants caused by cow's milk and not by human milk.

Other remedies are often called into use when we have acute inflammatory conditions of the mother's breast known as mastitis. The more prominent remedies for this complication have been :

Belladonna. Is indicated when the breasts rather suddenly feel heavy, there are red streaks running like radii from a central point ; she is occasionally chilly, has a dull stupid feeling, the breast is engorged, full and hard, the pains are aggravated from being jarred.

Bryonia. Her breasts have a stony heaviness in them, they are hard, hot, painful, *but not very red* she feels sick on first sitting up, and still more so on standing up, rough, dry lips, thirst and constipation, stools are dry, looking as if burnt, she always feels worse when moving, therefore, keeps very still.

Phytolacca. Particularly where the hardness is very apparent from the first, very sensitive nipples or breasts, which are more or less painful, very useful even after suppuration has taken place.

The glandular or organotherapy has aided me at times but I have not been able to confirm the wonderful results advertised for the substances. I believe the placenta and mammary substances have at times stimulated the glandular

functions in the patients and aided the homœopathic remedy to do its complete work.

I trust the indications given here may prove of some practical value to those who are still trying to conserve nature's food for the infant.

DISCUSSION

DR. ALEXANDER B. ARTHUR : When Dr. Griggs handed me his paper today to read I had two reactions : first, that the nursing mother must produce anywhere from a pint to a quart and a pint of fluid for her baby. She must also urinate an adequate amount. Therefore, the chief indication in nursing mothers, to my mind, is that they drink an adequate supply of water.

Secondly, I said to Dr. Griggs : "You have not mentioned Hepar Sulphur." And the doctor stated right there a homeopathic fact, that patients under homœopathic prescription, as a rule, do not manifest the severer types of symptoms that we often come across. I said, "homœopathic prescription." I do not mean the physiological, chronic, toxic or other action of a remedy, but homœopathic action, which simply starts nature in a curative direction. Nature must then go on in that curative method until some untoward circumstance disturbs it and we have to do it over again. But it will go on, and we can, by repeating and repeating the remedy, effect a cure.

DR. WILLIAM B. GRIGGS : I will try to answer the question you raised about the proportion of mothers who nurse their babies in the Children's Hospital. That means absolutely nothing. All the young mothers, as a rule, will nurse their babies for two weeks while they are in the hospital, but it is when they get home and begin the official duties of their household, or go back to work again, that the milk give out. The hospital is no criterion. It is after they get into the world a few weeks or a month, when their milk declines, and

they hunt up some powder and add some hot water and serve it—and they do not know any better.

CHAIRMAN MATEER : There ought to be some follow-up on them to see that this is carried out.

DR. WILLIAM B. GRIGGS : We do have a social service that follows them up, but you cannot change a woman's environment.

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