A Trip Through Healthland

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A Trip Through Healthland

By ETHEL HUEBNER

HEALTH habits are the most vital problems a mother has to confront. No mother can be too busy with outside duties to neglect the every-day health habits of her little ones.

The wise mother cringes at the thought of "musts" and "don'ts" and endeavors to originate a better method by which she can teach her children personal health habits. Since the instincts of children are never to be crushed it is the duty of every mother to provide for these instincts and in every manner to guide them. From this standpoint why not work out a scheme for the cultivation of health habits for the little ones which involves the natural instincts and results in "wills" and "want to's."

Why not put the acquiring of health habits of youngsters in the form of a game, calling it a journey to "Healthland?" If this is carefully carried out the children, finding expression for their instincts, will take intense interest in the game and the whole health problem will become a very much easier task for the mother as well as the lively youngsters.

Let us start the eventful journey to the happy "Healthland," with mother as our faithful conductor and little Mary and John (five or seven years) as the precious passengers. Their tickets are a quart of milk per day for mother recognizes that this amount is required for her children's proper growth and vitality.

Each day as they pass through the stations they tarry at "Toothbrush Junction" in the morning and evening especially. Here they open their kits and brush their teeth for if they are to reach Healthland their teeth must be in good condition. With the beauty and joy of "Healthland" explained by mother the children want to brush their teeth and a habit is soon formed.

The games of "Healthland" are like bright stars in the heavens and each day they are anticipated. Out under the bright stars mother explains the beauty and importance of eating the green fruits and vegetables. But the children too, have an imaginary milky way on their journey so they are eager to eat the cream and milk on cereals and puddings. If mother explains how coffee and tea and spices would darken their milky way, a good habit in nutrition is formed by substituting milk and water and plenty of it. At least six glasses of water a day besides the milk is mother's aim. Is it not surprising that the children take interest in the things which they can understand and share in the doing.

"Tidytown" is a station where the little folks must stop before each meal and mother tells them that here they can clean up during the journey so that they can enjoy all the places in "Healthland." Face and hands are washed and nails cleaned so that they will be ready to visit the many world of their journey.

Fairy tales have told of forests and the children have imagined such places. As they journey to "Healthland" they can have their imaginary forest—say "Vitamin Forest." It is here that mother brings in the enjoyment of oranges and other fruits and vegetables. There is no reason why the youngsters cannot be taught to eat these necessary vitamin foods. Mother tells them of this green forest, of the green foliage that has carefully protected the fruits and vegetables, and how in turn the oranges, carrots, tomatoes, etc., will protect their bodies so that they will be strong and happy in "Healthland." This habit of eating the growing foods is one which should not be left for the child to cultivate later. Nor is the proper chewing of foods neglected, for mother teaches carefully that the food is not washed down with water or milk. Tacit-ful mother arouses imitation, love of approbation, and interest and thus good eating habits are cultivated. To eat candy, cakes and pastry between meals is harmful to the bodies of the children. Mother teaches them this, and after visiting "Vitamin Forest" mother tries to have pure wholesome candies on hand so that her little ones can enjoy the proper visit to "Sweet grove." In this way it is easy to guard against the eating of wholesome candy and other foods between meals.

It is by appealing to the instincts of play, wonder, curiosity, and imitation that the nutrition habits—the most important of health habits are put into effect.

During the journey mother sets a certain time for play and guides the play as much as possible. This is the time when the children visit "Play Hill" and are taught fairness, generosity and good sportsmanship. Part of every day is played out of doors where there is room for action and benefits from the air and the sun obtained. In damp or rainy weather mother teaches them to wear their rubber which are little boats to keep them safe and dry. Many a creek and flooded street are crossed when they journey in their life-saving equipment.

"Soldier Review" is never neglected as the children travel on to "Healthland." With mother as the captain, posture is taught. Mothers feel it desirable that he play soldier and mother teaches them to sit correctly, stand and walk correctly so that they can breathe deeply, and be her strong little soldiers to keep guard. How they thoroughly enjoy soldier and their soldier parade!

Each day as the journey progresses mother guides her babies through "Hap-pyland." Here there are fountains of good nature and statues of peace about which they are told. If anything goes wrong mother reminds them to look around to find a fountain or statue for her. This can be so cultivated that the youngsters soon remind each other of the "Happy-land." Mother's love declares that her children be content and happy, and that nothing shall hinder their health as they rapidly progress toward the famous land.

Children dislike to take baths but if mother tells them of the pleasantness and fun of "Bathtubville," they are easily induced to stop there on this journey. This stop is made two or three times a week and must be just before entering "Slumberland." The waves and waterfalls are on the scenic route through this "splashing" station and are thoroughly enjoyed as well as looked forward to.

"Slumberland"—"tis a noted place for plenty of time to rest, plenty of fresh, cool air, a clean, snug bed and splendid opportunity for growth. "Play Hill" passes the little ones and after a story or so mother has little trouble in starting them off to "Slumberland" quite early. It is surprising how soon after a little practice, it becomes second nature for the children to want to have windows open and an early visit to this quiet, peaceful little land of dreams.

Yes, the important stop at "Stooltown" is made every day. This is easily made a habit and relieves mother of the worries of constipation. It is the all important and necessary preparation for "Healthland" and "Play Hill." Mother makes plain emphasis that "Stooltown" is a resting place each day of the jour-ney. Soon the little bodies become regulated to their health schedule which mother plans and guides with her intense love.

By emphasizing important, daily health habits in the form of such a game it is only a question of a short time before the desired impressions are made upon children. Rewards or surprises work well when they are given correct attention. Children love to work out a scheme for the children to be content and happy, and that nothing shall hinder their health as they rapidly progress toward the famous land. The green fruits and vegetables which are like the "Vitamin Forest," of the green foliage that has carefully protected the fruits and vegetables, and how in turn the oranges, carrots, tomatoes, etc., will protect their bodies so that they will be strong and happy in "Healthland." This habit of eating the growing foods is one which should not be left for the child to cultivate later. Nor is the proper chewing of foods neglected, for mother teaches carefully that the food is not washed down with water or milk. Tacit-ful mother arouses imitation, love of approbation, and interest and thus good eating habits are cultivated. To eat candy, cakes and pastry between meals is harmful to the bodies of the children. Mother teaches them this, and after visiting "Vitamin Forest" mother tries to have pure wholesome candies on hand so that her little ones can enjoy the proper visit to "Sweet grove." In this way it is easy to guard against the eating of wholesome candy and other foods between meals.

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