

first three days to help prepare the little stomach for the harder work which it will have on the third day. How sad one feels for the little thing when one hears the old saying: "Oh, he will stop when he has had enough." So the wee stomach is loaded with a feed, often lasting half an hour, or three-quarters. We expect a new-born infant to know what is good for him better than some adults, who do not know when to stop. Perhaps we think the babies are so near to Heaven that they have brought this wisdom with them. It seems to me we nurses have a great work before us in pointing out all the advantages of natural feeding, and all the dangers and disadvantages of artificial feeding, not forgetting the danger of rickets through lack of fresh milk direct from the mother. We should keep before us the fact that it is only the amount of food digested (whether mothers' milk or humanised) that nourishes the baby. If it were otherwise, why are the over-fed children the most like skeletons? What an immense gain we have given to each infant when we have secured the natural food for its use, and have taught the mother the A B C of feeding according to the digestion of the individual infant.

While in one case I mentioned ten minutes is all the baby could digest at present, yet in other cases fifteen minutes and half an hour may be needed. When once the amount that the individual baby can digest has been discovered—by reducing the time until there is no curd in the motion, etc.—give the baby a few days at that amount, and then advance

by a minute or minutes until you see signs of indigestion, then shorten the time just enough to allow the digestive organs to do their work, and continue at that amount. The saving to the nursing mother is great, seeing nature tries to meet the demand. Nature in the mother has been trying to make enough milk to feed a baby for thirty minutes when that baby is only able to digest a feed of ten minutes, in some cases, and the other twenty minutes feed has not only been utter waste, but injurious often to both mother and baby—particularly to the baby.

Is not this one great cause why mothers do not nurse their babies? They think they have not sufficient milk unless they have enough to feed the baby for half or three-quarters of an hour.

In conclusion let me say that the result of my experiment has cheered me much; because I no longer feel the God-given food for infants has all gone wrong (as in the great majority of cases it appeared), but it shows that the fault is that somehow we have lost sight of the need of being guided in natural feeding by what a baby can digest. This amount is not a matter to be estimated by rule of thumb; but in cases outside the average depends on the digestive capacity of each child. Thus each child must be a special subject of study to the nurse, especially in cases where nature's nurse—the mother—calls in the aid of those whose duty it is to benefit by the experience gained by observation.

Mrs. Grace Neill

Nurses will be pleased to hear that Mrs. Grace Neill has returned to New Zealand from America, where she has been for the last two years. The climate of Montana unfortunately tried her greatly, and since her return she has not been at all well, but her friends hope before long she will be among them.

The various members of nursing associations which have been formed during the last few years in the chief centres, are hoping that when she is well enough she will identify herself with their interests, and become the first president of the New Zealand Nurses' Association. They do not forget that it is to

her they largely owe the fact that their profession is recognised by the Government. Thus giving them a high status in the nursing world.

The trouble so often experienced in getting the new baby to nurse is suddenly overcome by first pumping a little milk from the breast. Have ready a little of the milk in a medicine dropper, and as the nipple is put into the infant's mouth, drop some milk into his mouth, and what he has tasted will be an incentive to work hard to obtain more, and he will go at his task with a will.—From "Practical Suggestions," *American Journal of Nursing*.