

A Baby Asleep on its Mother's Breast

I.
There are many fair things that adorn this world.
In the great fields of nature, of science and art.
And each day newer beauties spring up to delight us,
Which charm the senses and gladden the heart;
But the sweetest sight this earth affords,
Mid its ceaseless changes and great unrest,
Is to see, with its rosy face, dimpled and soft,
A baby asleep on its mother's breast.

II.

The tired mother, weary from toil of the day,
With plenty of care for the coming to-morrow.
The child by her side with its innocent mind,
Unconscious of later life's joy or its sorrow.
Calmly asleep in its mother's embrace,
Like a little bird sheltered and safe in its nest,
Oh! surely there's nothing on earth so sweet
As a baby asleep on its mother's breast.

III.

Often I've thought do they wander together
Away in the mystical region of sleep;
For I've seen baby smile as if playing with angels,
While mother would clasp it and silently weep.
Perhaps, I said, some angel band
For their missing companions have come in quest.
And felt in my soul there's no lovelier sight
Than a baby asleep on its mother's breast.
—James Wallace.

Children's Feet and Small Shoes.

Too much cannot be said against the cruelty of forcing children's feet into short and narrow-toed shoes. A man in a large and fashionable shoe store said that he sometimes used all his strength, that of a developed man, to force large feet into small shoes, for grown folks, but when he was requested by mothers to put shoes too small on children, he objected. Many children, before they are ten years old, have incipient corns, bunions and callouses, caused by the foolish pride or carelessness on the part of the mothers. Many do not know that if a child's foot is allowed to develop naturally, that when fully developed, it can wear with ease a much smaller shoe than when crowded back and forced out of shape while growing so fast. The foot is one of the parts of the body that completes its growth early. The size of the feet of a growing boy are sometimes noticeably large; when the rest of the body has finished its growth the feet are proportionate. If a growing foot is crowded into short shoes, the toes are pushed back and become thick at the ends. They are pressed up against the top of the shoe and corns are made. They are enlarged at the great and little toe joints, causing bunions, which are more painful than corns. Narrow-toed shoes cause lapping of the toes, callouses, and corns, especially on the side of the large toe and under the widest part of the foot; ingrowing toe-nails are also produced. Corns cannot be cured so long as pressure is on them. This must first be removed. A man who suffered terribly with corns, said he would do anything to cure them. His friend said, "you are going up into the mountains; go barefooted this summer." He did so, and his feet were entirely cured. Another cut the tops of the shoes away, leaving the soles and the leather back of the toe-joints and toes.—Pauline Adeline Hardy, in *Good Housekeeping*.

A. LEOPOLD.

In the course of a lecture on Kew Gardens, recently delivered at the Westminster Friends' Meeting House, London, J. G. Baker said the total number of characteristically tropical plants known to science might be roughly estimated at from 40,000 to 50,000. The plants of the north temperate zone comprise about 20,000 species. "The total flora of the arctic zone does not reach 1,000 species, and the plants which are confined to the higher levels of the mountains of the north temperate zone may possibly be twice as numerous, in all 3,000 species of what gardeners call alpines, that is, plants specially adapted to a cold, damp climate with a short summer." The same speaker estimates the total number of plants represented in the British possessions at 46,000 species.

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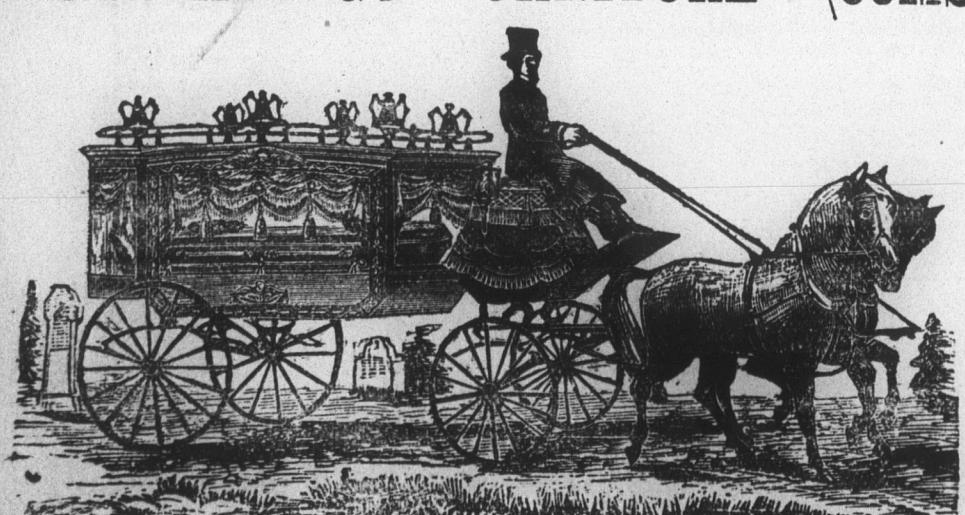
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