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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHATS

Wednesday, May 4, 1932.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

Subject: "Warm-Weather Clothes for the youngsters." Information from the Childrens Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor. Menu from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletins available: "Ensembles for sunny days." Mimeographed material on infants' clothing, Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

A young homemaker in Iowa is responsible for our topic today. She wrote me a letter and the minute I read it I said to myself, "My very next talk is going to be on clothes for babies--babies, "both East and West."

Here's what the letter said: "Dear Aunt Sammy: You've told us about clothes for children and clothes for their mothers. Now I'd like to know what clothes to plan for the well-dressed infant this coming summer."

I appreciated that letter. My memory needed some jogging. Far be it from me to forget that prominent personage, the baby--especially the new baby. And it certainly is time to talk about dressing him for warm weather.

Well, I'm glad to say that styles for babies have changed, and the old tradition of bundling-up in hot weather has been discarded. In place of a woolen shirt, cotton undergarments are now most widely used. They are easily laundered, don't irritate tender skins and are not too warm for summer.

Another uncomfortable style that babies had to endure a generation ago was long dresses. The new baby's wardrobe was usually provided with a big supply of dresses, slips and petticoats--yards long. It's a wonder any of us ever learned to move our feet and legs, hampered as we were with all that weight of material just when we needed to practice kicking. Today's baby doesn't have to spend the first part of his life in those long dresses. He wears short dresses that just cover his feet--dresses about 20 to 24 inches long. From these first frocks he progresses directly to the romper outfits for creeping.

It is a pity that Baby Bunting has nothing to say about his own wardrobe. What tales he could tell of uncomfortable clothing, fussily cut and badly made. Of all kinds of collars and fancy bids around his neck. Of hot woolen garments for midsummer. And all lumped under him so that he can only wail to relieve his feelings.

"Don't talk to me about style," says Mr. Baby. "Comfort is what interests me. And comfort means simplicity in materials and in cut, finish, and decoration. Of course, my mother wants me to have pretty clothes. That's all right with me, so long as the clothes are simple. But tucks, bows, frills and elaborate fancy embroidery, I despise. Around my neck such decorations are especially uncomfortable. If you only know how my tender chin suffers when it has to rub on colored embroidery. And frills and gathers around my neck always get in my mouth. Give me a roomy, comfortable frock with an easy neck-size, finished perfectly flat with perhaps just a tiny edge of soft lace for the sake of appearance."

Thanks to the clothing specialists and the child care experts, better styles in baby garments are being recommended today.

In warm weather, light-weight cool clothes are best and those which allow sunlight to reach the skin directly. Though enough garments should be used to keep the small body warm, the baby should never be dressed so that he becomes overheated and perspires. This not only makes him uncomfortable, but may result in a chill later, if he is taken into a colder place or is in a draft. It is a mistake also to dress the baby too warmly for his outdoor airings. When he comes back inside, his garments will be damp, from perspiration and he may actually be colder indoors than out.

If you want your youngest to be comfortable, make his clothing simple and easy to wash. Adapt it to the climate and the season, and to the temperature of the house. Provide light-weight garments for summer. For the hottest weather, only the band and the diaper need be worn. And suit the clothing to the baby's age and condition. Very small or frail babies lie still a great deal and need to be watched carefully to be sure they are warm enough. But many hale and hearty babies suffer from being dressed too warmly.

How to tell when the baby is wearing too many clothes? If he perspires continually and if his body feels moist, that is evidence enough. So take off that extra blanket or sweater. Any baby who is hot is likely to be restless and fretful.

If you have your pencils within reach, you may want to jot down these few pointers as reminders when you select or make your baby's wardrobe.

First, choose garments that are loose but not so bulky as to wrinkle.

Second, choose garments of soft material with no irritating embroidery or seams and be sure they are soft around the neck.

Third, avoid fussy frills, ruffles and bows.

Fourth, don't provide too large a layette for the new baby. He will soon outgrow his first clothes. It is economy to buy clothes in size 2 rather than size 1, because the baby will not grow out of these so rapidly.

Fifth, choose shirts and bands of knitted material, because these allow the baby freedom to move and grow.

But there. Some other day I mean to go into the subject of the baby's underwear. Just now we have a menu to give and a very few minutes left to talk about it.

Now about the menu for today. I'll give you a vegetable plate meal--nice for a change. This is another inexpensive menu with baked macaroni and cheese as the main dish. Baked macaroni and cheese; Harvard beets; Fried egg plant; Salad of apples, celery and nuts on lettuce. The menu Specialist suggests either French or cooked salad dressing with this salad. For dessert let's have Butterscotch pudding. Would you like the recipe for that pudding?

All right, I have it right here. But first let's go over that menu once again. Baked macaroni and cheese; Harvard beets; Fried egg plant; Salad of apples, celery and nuts; and for dessert, Butterscotch pudding.

There. Now the pudding recipe. First the ingredients. There are seven of those.

3/4 cup of flour.
3 cups of milk
1 and 1/2 cups of brown sugar
3 tablespoons of butter
1/2 teaspoon of salt
2 or 3 eggs, and
1/2 teaspoon of vanilla

Shall I repeat that list? (Repeat.)

First, blend the flour and 1 cup of the cold milk until the mixture is smooth. Then heat the remaining milk in the double boiler. Now pour some of the hot milk into the flour and milk, return the mixture to the double boiler and stir until thickened. Then cover and cook for 15 minutes. Meantime, cook the brown sugar, the butter and the salt for 5 minutes over the direct heat and stir constantly. This you know gives the butterscotch flavor. Add it while hot to the mixture in the double boiler, beat well, and gradually stir this mixture into the beaten eggs. Now return to the double boiler, cook for a few minutes, remove from the fire and add the vanilla. Chill and serve with plain or whipped cream. A delicious dessert for any time of year. It's also a good emergency dessert in case of unexpected company.

