

# Settlement Bulletin



VOL. II.

DECEMBER, 1908.

NO. 7.

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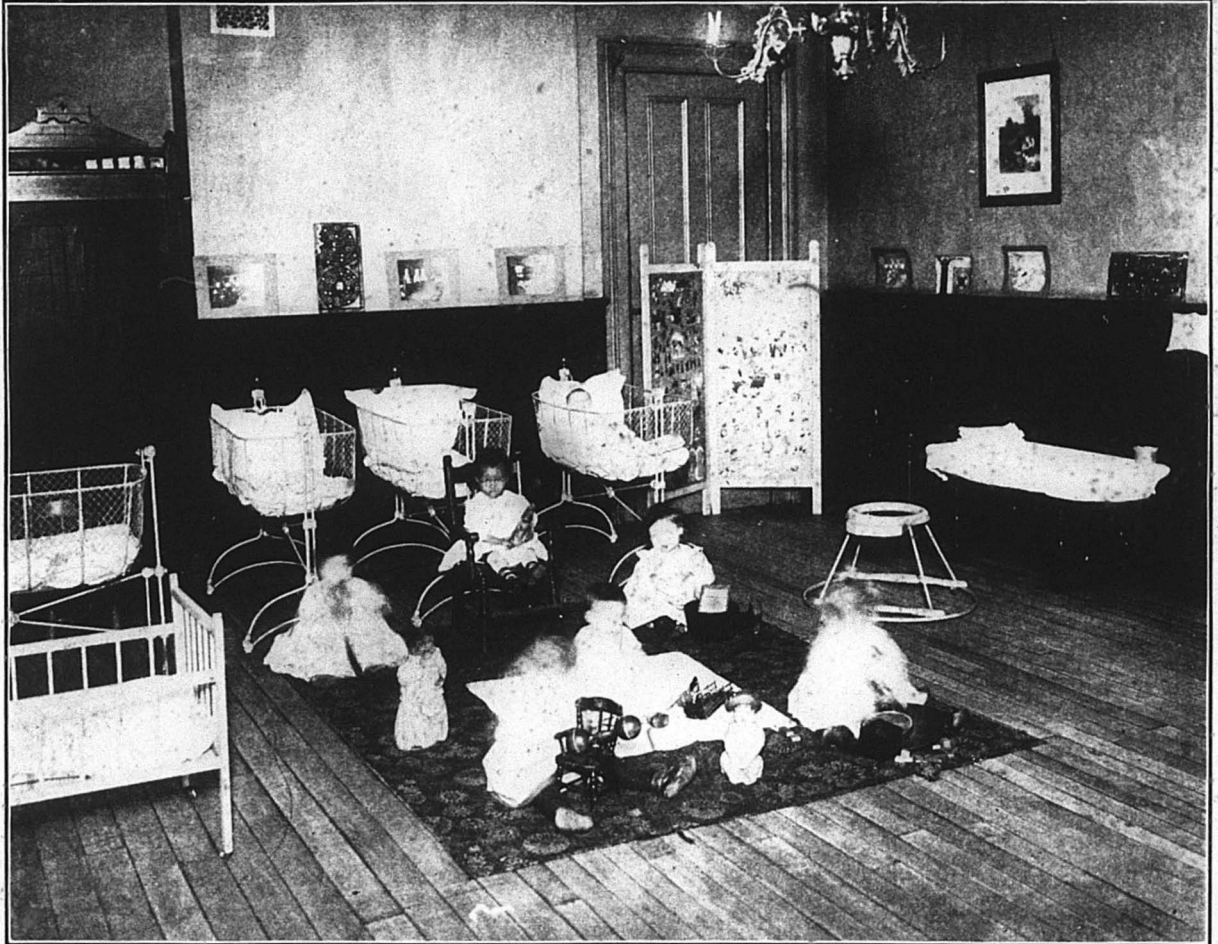
# Settlement Bulletin

ISSUED NINE TIMES A YEAR IN THE INTEREST OF THE SOCIAL SETTLEMENT

Vol. II.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1908.

No. 7.



## THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE DAY NURSERY.

The present industrial conditions in this country demand that mothers of families must put aside the conventional domestic idea, and go forth to earn money that they may assist in the support of their families.

These conditions may and should be criticised, but they are present, and the conditions which they, in their turn, create must be met. And aside from the change in the domestic ideal among the working classes, brought about by the mother's continued absence from home, matters might be much worse. The work done in the shops by women is often no harder than, or as hard as, the work done by farmers' wives in the country, or by overworked housewives everywhere. And

the evils of the idle class would indicate that the busier a woman is with steady though not grinding labor, the better off she is. The old saw, that a woman's work is never done, does not apply when it is done at a stated hour. However, I shall not attempt further to justify the working woman, but take conditions as they exist. The absolute financial need is present, and the remedy which appears to relieve this immediate and pressing need is that the mother must work.

When it is granted, therefore, that the best judgment of any community is that the women of that community should work, the appearance of the Day Nursery may be justified as follows.

The basis for the need of the Day Nursery is primarily, as we see it, for the need of the mother. The natural state of affairs is, of course, that the man of the family should work, and that

the woman should be the house—and homekeeper. The limitations of the uneducated mother are of course great, but the benefit to the children alone would never justify taking the children from home all day unless the mother's need for earning were present. The question of the neglect of children by ignorant and lazy mothers can be managed by district and friendly visiting; the question of instruction by the free kindergartens and public schools, and the care of the sick by the intelligent use of the free dispensary and the district nurse. Certainly, in some vicious districts, where drunken and profligate mothers leave their children to the streets, the children's need for the Nursery becomes the overpowering one, but under ordinary conditions the care of the children, and the assistance of the family, can be managed without breaking into the

(Continued on Page 5)



# Settlement Bulletin

Issued nine times a year in the interest  
of the Social Settlement of

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

## SUBSCRIPTION

Annually (Postage Paid) \$25

## TELEPHONES.

Printer, 36 Social Settlement, 3316  
152 Baden Street.

Vol. II. December, 1908. No. 7.

## Editorial

When a mother goes out to work by the day what is to become of the baby? "Oh, well," you say, "mothers shouldn't go out to work. A woman's place is in her home. Let the men do the supporting." That's all very well, but in hard times the man can't always earn enough to support the family, and his wife has to help out. Also there are all the widows to consider. They have to work, and what is to become of their babies?

There are two varieties of babies. There are the really infant-in-arms babies, and when their mother has to go out to work, she can't and she doesn't, and hunger and privation are the result. Then there are the babies old enough to go to kindergarten. Who is to get them dressed and ready for school and give them their breakfast, when their mothers have been away for work since six o'clock? Who is to give them their lunch? Where will they go if for any reason they are sent home from school? Where will they go when school is over and mother is still away from home? Clearly a "home and mother" must be supplied for all these little children that are made orphans through the working hours of the day.

When a home is overcrowded and a mother is overworked, and the air is bad and the floor is dirty, what is to become of the babies? True, they have a home and they are not left alone in the house, like their little cousins we were just discussing; but is their home the best place for them through the busy hours of the day, when they are in everyone's way and can have little or no care given them?

The Settlement is here to help out wherever it can, and this is surely a matter in which it can lend a helping hand. If a couple of rooms could be added to our present accommodations, there would be some space set apart in the world for these small babies to play in, that is not

under their mother's feet or in the way of their sister's broom. If a nurse could be maintained to look after them in these rooms through the day, then they could all receive the kind of care that every baby has a right to. And the kindergarten children, whose mother goes out to work, could be sent from these rooms to school, warm and clean and well fed, and could return for lunch at noon, and again, after school, for a few hours of play until their mother stops for them on her way home from work. And if some of the volunteer teachers could come for an hour or so each day and give the children in these rooms a good time and a little training of their infant minds—but we certainly are castle building. Castles in the air—and yet it is certainly pure hygienic air we're aiming at, isn't it?

△

There is a pretty modern drama which presents as its first scene a richly furnished nursery where five or six children are sitting around a table in various positions, pounding their small fists on the handsome damask cloth and raising their voices discordant and shrill with the chorus. "We want ice cream! we want ice cream!" There was something so decidedly human and natural about this childish outburst that the audience with loud applause showed its approval and echoed the wish of the children.

Now, all children are alike, and it's a psychological fact that they crave certain things in the way of sweets like ice cream, cake and candy, showing, really, a physiological demand for it. Many children have this craving satisfied at home, where an indulgent mother sees to it that ice cream is occasionally part of the menu, or a few friends are invited to share the pleasure of a party—ice cream; but we all know that there are homes where this is impossible, though the mother may have the same instincts of indulgence.

You may have noticed that in our "Good Times" column we record several parties, which almost invariably means ice cream, which stands for a good time. These parties are provided by thoughtful friends whose desire to make people happy prompts them to contribute sums of varying amounts to the altar of childish appetite, a sacred shrine which sends smiles like incense to cheer not only gods but men.

There is a special committee whose duty it is to accept these donations and put them in a form to render them digestible. This committee, like an altar guild, esteems it a great privilege to use its powers, realizing that its duty well done brings to so many faces a bright look of contentment and a glow of healthy satisfaction. Our parties are simple, but if you've ever seen about one hundred children who have just had something they've been wanting so much and for so long, you'll realize that they're always successful.

## FRIENDSHIP AND A BOY.

He did not have a friend; no one understood him, and the boy did not understand himself. Nobody cared for him. Can you wonder there was no expression of happiness in his face? What was there in his life to brighten his countenance? His actions may have been the cause or the result of his friendless condition—judge for yourself.

This boy was constantly doing unkind acts. He could not be trusted; if anything was missing he was suspected. In school he did everything else but study. He was considered stupid, and anyone who was required to endure his presence was to be pitied. Stated briefly, this was the atmosphere in which he lived. Was it any wonder that he was forced into the acquaintance of truant officer, policeman and of court?

"And then, again, the scene was changed," and oh, what a difference in this boy, for he had found a friend! Some one who tried to understand him, who showed interest and love. It was very slowly at first, but surely and gradually he began to understand himself. This friend believed in him and made others begin to trust him.

The manner in which the boy labored day after day was more than interesting. The realization of undeveloped powers was indeed wonderful. There was no time for anything but work, and how he, now, loved his studies. Everything had a different view, and the joy of finding he could do things began to come into his life, growing stronger day by day.

△

All the leaves have fluttered down.

All the flowers have gone to sleep,  
Faded are the gold and brown:

Sad November skies must weep,  
Sad November skies must weep.

Clouds before the winds are blown,  
Empty nests from branches bare:  
All the birds have southward flown,  
Guided through the trackless air,  
Guided through the trackless air,

Nature lays her down to rest;

In the hush of wood and plain,  
Snow-wreaths folded on her breast,  
Waits for Spring to come again,  
Waits for Spring to come again.

## THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE DAY NURSERY.

Continued from Page 3

ordinary home life. It is only when the absolute need for a regular addition to the family income arises, or when the woman is forced by circumstances to take up the whole burden of support for her children, that the real need for the Day Nursery arises.

Let us take for an analogy one individual case. Suppose that a woman, with a child of five, a child of three, and a baby of six months, finds that the amount her husband can earn is insufficient decently to feed, clothe and house the family. She considers first the plan of taking work home to do, but that soon proves an impossibility, with three children in the house requiring care and food, and quarters most unfitted for nursery and workshop combined. The regulations of the Board of Health also make this scheme very impracticable.

On the failure of this scheme the natural thing is to consider making arrangements with grandmother, sister or friend to keep the children during the day while the woman works in a shop. But houses and hands of grandmother, sister and friend are full of children already. Perhaps they themselves are working women. Perhaps the grandmother is old and cannot be responsible for proper care. Perhaps these kindly ones try to take on this added burden for a few weeks and find it impossible. Then multiply grandmother, sister or friend by twenty or thirty, and you have the Day Nursery in its inception—simply a kind friend to the needy working mother.

The urged objections, that the Nursery relieves the parent too easily of responsibility, and weans away the child from the love of home and family, do not hold in the light of years of experience. It will be found possible to throw a good deal of responsibility upon the mother in connection with the duties of keeping the child's body and clothing clean, of taking it herself to the dispensary when need arises, of bringing it to the Nursery and taking it away at the proper times, morning and evening, and in all possible ways continuing the valuable habits formed in the home. The gigantic proportions which these responsibilities assume in the eyes of the mothers will be productive of amazement.

The second point, the danger of lessening the child's love and appreciation of its home, will not prove intrusive unless called forth by unintelligent influences. Nevertheless, it is a point to be guarded. The Nursery must keep always in mind the family idea, and work toward that end as far as the present industrial situation will permit. It must keep alive every possible contact with each member of the

family, by judicious visiting, by keeping in touch with Nursery graduates who have gone to school,—in a word, by letting everyone feel the deep personal interest in his welfare, and making each individual conscious that the Nursery is the common and loving friend of himself and the family as a whole.

And the advantages of the Day Nursery?

Watch, as I have watched, the burden of debt and hunger lifted from parents' shoulders by the possibility of the increased income, the untidy, shiftless mothers encouraged by the example set before her to keep her house, and herself and her children more like the ideals presented, living, before her; the children taught neat, cleanly, and helpful ways, their bad habits, caused by filth and imperfect sanitation, broken off, and their minds awakened to the joy of both work and play; and the sickly, "furnished-room," babies growing daily plumper and better tempered, and whole families brought into relation through their contact with the Nursery, with those who may inspire and uplift them into well-being. There is no easier way to gain a mothers' confidence than to take good care of her child. Let a woman see her children strong and happy and contented, and yet rejoicing to see their mother again at night, and to return to the home life, and you will have established a relation which will be of untold value in reaching those whom you would help.

Only keep their relation clear and straight-forward and friendly, and the result you will see in the improvement of the children, and the gradual rise in intelligence and worth of the families assisted, will make it apparent that under present conditions, your work is the most valuable that can be done. You will find yourself engaged in that most profitable and inspiring of occupations, the making of good citizens, both for this generation, and for that which is now growing up beneath our eyes.

—RUTH S. BROOKE.

## DO YOUR SHOPPING NOW.

We are coming to the time of year when whether we wish it or not we are expected to display in some material form how much we love our friends and relatives. The "spirit of the season" which sad to relate has been like a skeleton all the year is now brought out from its hiding place and clothed, alas, too often in the flesh and skin of those who serve us—most unbecoming raiment, you'll admit.

We are pretty busy most of the time to keep this neglected creature around us, as he should be all the time; but, since we think of it in time, it is just as easy to bring him to the light of day now, so that

by himself he may dazzle instead of waiting until the brief season of holiday glamor is upon us and he won't do any good. In other words, let the kindly spirit of love and good will begin its mission now in planning, so that when all the world should be gay together the other half is not weary and overworked because of the thoughtlessness of this half.

## THE ENGLISH VOYAGERS

They heard the voice of the vast that called  
From over the unknown sea:  
They manned the deck, and they hoisted sail,  
They trimmed the ship to the eastern gale  
With jubilant hearts and free.  
"Away, away, where the New World waits!  
Who teareth, let him bide!"  
The foam flew white from the rushing keel:  
Unseen of all, at the pilots' wheel,  
The Life of the world was guide.  
They little recked of the task was theirs,  
Those sons of the Vikings old,  
Who vainly sought for the Northwest way,  
The spicy isles of the far Cathay,  
Or an El Dorado's gold.  
And some were lost in the stormy deep,  
And some on the barren shore,  
And some were slain by the savage bands,  
And some fell into the Spanish hands,  
But ever they thronged the more.  
They heard the voice of the vast that called  
From over the unknown sea:  
They trimmed the ship for the wonderous quest,  
And pushed the prow to the mystic West,  
With jubilant hearts and free.

## GOOD TIMES.

The Harvest festival on the afternoon of October thirty-first combined the spirit of Hollow'een with a rousing good time. The girls first of all listened to some weird old English tales; then there was singing and dancing and refreshments of cookies and apples. Twelve big girls then took their places behind the table upon which were placed baskets lined with dainty paper napkins and ready to be filled. These girls sent their messengers to the big table at the other end of the room, which was piled high with many colored fruits and vegetables, and the messengers brought back the fruit or vegetable desired for the filling of each basket. The baskets, which are to be given as presents, looked very gay and pretty when they were all neatly filled.

Hallow'een was a weird event for the Sunshine Club. They entered a hall lighted by Jack-o-lanterns and red lights and as they turned to look at one another they seemed to see only tall white spooks instead of well-known human friends. The ghosts however indulged in bobbing for apples and all the good old Hollow'een stunts and even partook of such refreshments as cookies, peanuts, cider and marshmallows, which are quite substantial for ghosts, you'll admit:

The afternoon classes and the kindergarten had a party together on the afternoon of the thirteenth of November. It was mostly a dancing party but the girls also sang quite a few of the songs they have learned together, the little children following them as best they could. Ice cream and cake were served. It was very enjoyable.

### ON THANKSGIVING.

It seems to me as if each day I ate as I can eat,  
But mother says my appetite is one that can't be beat.  
I can't see why—it seems so queer—  
That just one day in all the year,  
When we have twice as much on hand,  
My hungriness can still expand.

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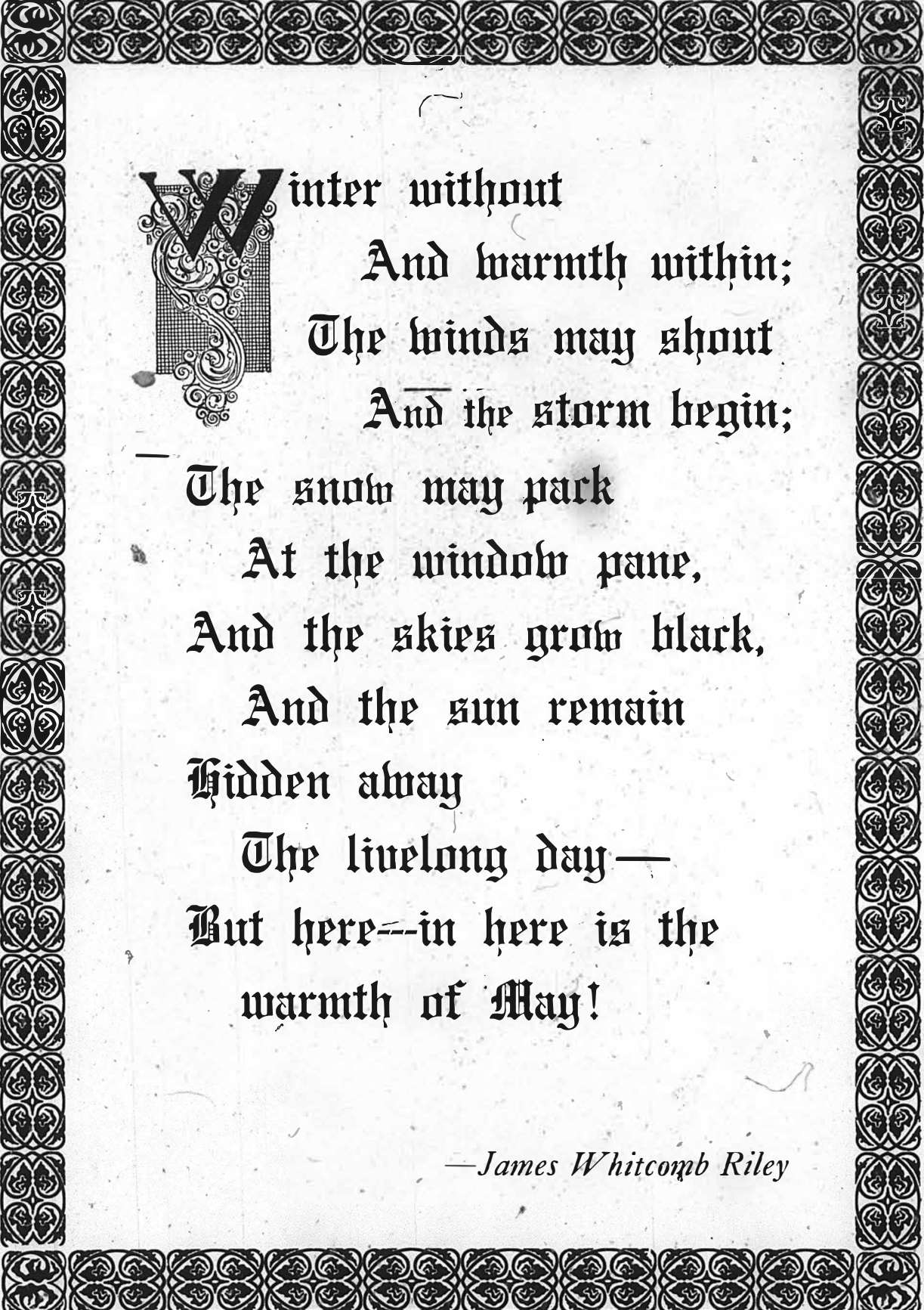
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And warmth within;  
The winds may shout  
And the storm begin;  
The snow may pack  
At the window pane,  
And the skies grow black,  
And the sun remain  
Hidden away  
The livelong day—  
But here—in here is the  
warmth of May!

—James Whitcomb Riley