

The thought of a *palace* for the little ones of these toilers was a refreshment, and I eagerly looked forward to the end of my excursion. Presently an immense mass of red buildings appeared in sight. These belonged to the velvet factory of Linden—an industry to which Linden owes its fame, and a large number of its people their daily bread.

The thud of machinery, the hum of business came to us through the open windows. We passed the length of the huge factory, and, at the end of it, aided by the directions of three officious street-boys and a fierce-looking, but soft-voiced workman, we arrived at the gate of the "Krippe"—manger—as this nursery for the factory children is popularly called (the name is generally adopted for institutions of this description, and is to be found in France in the numerous "crèches" of that country).

A relievo over the portal, representing a woman surrounded by children, was the *first*, but by no means the *last*, graceful sight we had in Linden.

A few minutes later we were with the babies. Our first visit was to the latest arrivals, the tiny beings whose lives counted by weeks. They had pleasant quarters here; a huge nursery ventilated on the best scientific principles, elegant perambulators on tall wheels, with draperies of blue and white muslin to keep the light from their eyes, while the gorgeous frills of crochet lace that decorated their frocks and underclothing astonished me. Each perambulator contained a miniature feather-balloon by way of coverlet. This is German fashion, and the working mothers would probably consider their infants neglected if they were not assured of their being buried under a feather-bed.

"We have lighter ones in the warm weather," explained the Sister in Charge—for the nursery is superintended by Sisters, who have had the training of Deaconesses.

As a rule, German children of this class are swaddled, but here they wore frocks of red cotton, short enough to allow them to kick their legs. Some of the babies were engaged in this pastime on a large mattress in the middle of the floor. As they rolled and kicked I observed that they wore long stockings beautifully knitted in ornamental patterns. I asked whether the crochet and knitting was machine or hand work.

"Hand work, of course," said Sister. "We do most of it ourselves. We like to make our babies pretty." It was pleasant to see what pride they all took in the clean and neat appearance of their charges; pleasant to observe that there were sufficient Sisters and Nurses for the work, and that none of them looked haggard with fatigue. At another nursery I had recently visited this had been the case, and the exhaustion of the care-takers, re-acting on their charges, naughty tempers and disorder had been the consequence.

The Superiors and Sisters of the nursery at Linden (and various similar institutions) are professional trained Nurses of the Deaconesses' Order, while the greater part of the staff, who work under their directions, consists of maids who have no further qualifications than those usually demanded of nursery-maids. The Sisters regard their devotion to the future generation as one of the most sacred and valuable duties of Deaconship. The Superior of the Linden nursery is a Sister of the Henriettenstift in Hanover.

The company of the Linden velvet factory, to whom the nursery belongs, reserve it exclusively for the

children of their work-people. The latter are bound to send their children to the Krippe or Warteschule (care-taking school in literal translation) from early infancy till they are fourteen years of age, and leave school for the factory or the workshop. The children under six remain here twelve hours of the day—from six in the morning till six in the evening. The school children take their meals here, are superintended while they prepare their tasks for school, and play in the enclosed play-ground of the institution. The company exacts from parents a fee of 1 mark, 60 pfennigs (1s. 6d.) a week for children up to six years of age. Older children contribute half that amount. On their arrival the younger children are washed, and dressed from head to foot in institution clothes, underclothing included. The clothes are pretty, and likely to give pleasure to the mothers. The elder children are expected to arrive properly washed and combed. They are supplied by the company with over-all pinafores. Before the hour of departure all the children are washed again. The same process has to be gone through before meals.

Altogether the 200 children present a cheerful, well-fed appearance, and it is evident that the authorities' directions are to the effect that nothing necessary to their health and happiness is to be withheld from motives of economy. Above all they learn to appreciate soap and water—an appreciation that may have a beneficent influence on the health of a future generation.

A qualified medical officer attends to the physical well-being of the children.

Every two hours the mothers busied in the factory are allowed to come to the Krippe to nurse their infants. A separate apartment is reserved for their use.

All farinaceous food required for the infants is cooked in a small kitchen adjoining the nursery, under the superintendence of the Sister in Charge. All milk used for the infants is preserved in a separate room, and is prepared according to prescription, being, to begin with, the best of its kind.

Food for the elder children is prepared in the basement.

There were twenty babies in the infants' room, and most of them found out before we left that they preferred being nursed and noticed to lying in bed. On the whole our visit here had a demoralising effect, for whereas we entered a dignified calm, we left a powerful quartette remonstrating with the full force of very healthy lungs. Here, as in several other rooms, hangs a beautiful portrait of the Empress of Germany, a souvenir of a recent visit to the "manger."

The babies we next visited had arrived at a far more pleasing state of existence. They were on the "balcony," as it is called, really a large room under cover, open on one side only to the air, and overlooking the playground of the children next in age. All the little trots on the balcony were between 1½ and 3 years of age (and sweet pets some of them were!) They were all clothed in red and white, with crochet lace frills and lace-trimmed underclothing. Nothing could have been neater. Four nurse-maids were guarding them. They looked delightfully happy. "Do the mothers like to send their children here?" I asked of the Sister who was showing me round. "Very much, indeed. Some of them have been nurslings in the 'manger' themselves, and retain a great affection for it." We stopped to watch the children. In all that crowd

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