

"She didn't never give Tommy nor John pie an' not give you any, did she, now?"

"Oh, granpa! she give me some once when they didn't have any, 'cause, she said, I was the littlest."

"She did, hey? Did you have enough to kiver you up warm, nights?"

"I guess so."

"Well, there's another thing: did you have flapjacks fur breakfast every mornin', Sonny?"

"Yes, I did. Say, granpa, Aunt Hannah's flapjacks is better than yourn."

"Well, Sonny, you must allers be a good boy, an' mind your aunt Hannah. I guess she'll take real good care of you when granpa ain't round."

Daniel asked no more questions. Presently the child fell asleep in his arms; and he sat there for a long time, holding him, and looking straight ahead, with an expression as if he saw a bright future.

*Mary E. Wilkins.*

### THE COLLEGE SETTLEMENT.

**T**HERE is a little colony of philanthropic young women doing earnest work for the elevation of the masses in New York City, but so quietly have they established themselves and so modestly have they worked that few Gothamites north of the Bowery have even heard of their presence at 95 Rivington Street, where for a year or more they have been conducting a veritable "Palace of Delight" for the mothers and children of the east side.

The College Settlement, the name adopted by the colony, is composed of graduates from Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, and Bryn Mawr Colleges, who have organized themselves into an association for practical friendly work among the poor, on a basis which has never before been tried in this country, but which has a precedent in Toynbee Hall, London, the methods of which were thoroughly studied by two of the originators of the American movement, while pursuing a course at Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The house at 95 Rivington Street is a large, old-fashioned mansion, the interior workmanship of which proclaims it to have been at one time the residence of some of Murray Hill's ancestors. The rooms are large and high-pitched, with the lofty impressiveness which so delighted the dames of several generations back.

The location and size of this house having been found desirable, it was rented and put in thorough repair before the girls took possession. Although the exterior of the building is dingy and unattractive, the interior is all "sweetness and light." The visitor upon entering the parlor is impressed with the air of refinement which pervades the apartment as his eye makes note of the really fine engravings on the delicately-tinted walls, the well-bound books on the cabinet shelves,

and the objects of *virtu* scattered about with the careless grace that suggests the presence of cultivated women. The household, numbering from seven to nine members, consists of a housekeeper, who also performs the duties of *chef*, Miss J. G. Fine, who is known as the superintendent or Head Worker of the Settlement, and her co-workers the college girls, who come in relays, some remaining only two, some as long as ten months at a time, to help in the good work. Miss Fine, whose duties are arduous, is paid a salary for her services, she having resigned a much more lucrative position in an up-town seminary for the sake of becoming one of the Settlement.

All of the other "residents" give their labor, and also pay a regular board of six dollars a week to the house. Each graduate is her own maid, and not only makes her bed and keeps her room in order, but contributes her share to the general household work, thus practically demonstrating the theories taught by her. • The object of the Settlement residents is to meet the people among whom they work, to some extent, on their own plane. It is with this in view that these young women, brave of heart and true of purpose, forsake their comfortable and in many cases luxurious homes, and devote a portion of the year to teaching and helping their less fortunate fellow-creatures in the tenement-house section of New York City.

One of the most active and enthusiastic of the Rivington Street colony says, "Those who know the work best do not look for results other than this friendly relation in any near future. The work, if it is anything, is a process of education. Character is not formed in a year. In all the work the object constantly sought is helpful personal contact. All methods are simply a means to this end. If the higher is ever to give an uplift to the lower, must it not be through this method of friendship? Such a relation implies giving and taking on both sides, and the workers at the Settlement find one of the strongest points gained by residence to be that their neighbors have a chance to do something for them, a chance which is often improved. The Settlement is one of the influences which go to form the lives of the people in Rivington Street. If it shall create any higher ideals, or quicken any aspirations, if it shall awaken one soul to any sense of its own nature, the object of the College Settlement will surely be attained." Although organized less than two years ago, this little colony of volunteers has already made its impress upon the inhabitants of the east side and the Bowery. The "residents," as the young philanthropists designate themselves, began their good work by making friends with the children of the neighborhood. With the inducements of games and picture-books this was an easy matter, and it was not long before juveniles of all nationalities flocked to No. 95 and asked to be admitted. The parents, of course, soon became interested, and when the college girls called to see the mothers of their little *protégés* they were well received.

As the number of children increased, the members of the Settlement found it desirable to organize them into clubs, for greater convenience in managing them. Boys were not at first admitted, as the idea of the society was to work only among the girls and women.

The boys, however, plead so earnestly that it was not long before they too were made welcome, and divided into various clubs which meet in the evening at the Settlement for instruction and entertainment.

Who can estimate the good done by keeping these idle, susceptible youths, ranging from ten to eighteen years of age, off of the Bowery at night? Many a weary and erstwhile anxious-hearted mother has been made happy by the knowledge that her boys are at the College Settlement, where gentle women are teaching the "Knights of the Round Table" to be chivalrous and noble, while the members of the "Hero Club" are listening to the lives of great men who have made the world better. Who can guess the results which may spring up from the good seed sown by the way as these earnest young women impress upon their hearers that it is possible for them to be good and true and become perhaps heroes in the battle of life?

The Settlement is gregarious, and hence readily co-operated with the Neighborhood Guild in the management of two girls' clubs which were already in existence when the Rivington Street house was opened. Since then several other clubs for little girls have been organized by the college girls.

In these the children are taught sewing and cooking, how to sweep and dust, to make beds neatly, the proper way to set the table, and in fact to be helpful to their mothers and fitted to earn their own living when they are older.

The larger girls are instructed in dress-making and in all the domestic arts. Lessons in hygiene, history, and science are also given them.

Gymnastic exercises are taught to all. In connection with these the boys have also military drills. Music and singing, games and reading, make every evening attractive at 95 Rivington Street, where many little ones are learning the new lesson of happiness.

There are six rope swings in the yard in the rear. The ground is covered knee-deep with sea-side sand, and here from three to four hundred children hold high carnival every Saturday during the spring and summer. Of course only a limited number is allowed in the yard at one time, and, as one of the girls generally remains within sight, good humor and order are preserved.

A noteworthy fact in connection with the clubs of the Settlement is that each member pays a small fee and each club is self-governing, thus instilling in the children a feeling of independence and self-respect. A pleasant outgrowth of these little societies is an occasional entertainment given by the members, to which they invite their parents and friends. One of the favorite rooms in the house is the front basement, which has been converted into a most delightful library, reading-rooms, and music-room combined. Book-shelves encircle the walls, crowded with one thousand volumes of substantial, moral literature. A long low reading-table is in the centre of the room, heaped with copies of the leading periodicals and pictorial papers. All the juvenile weeklies and monthlies are there, and are eagerly devoured by the boys and girls who have the *entrée* to this charming nook. A wicker lounge, easy-chairs, and an upright piano add to the comfort

and pleasure of the library. There are seven hundred persons who enjoy the privilege of taking out books, for which no charge is made, as the "residents" are anxious to encourage the growing taste for reading in the neighborhood. Over six thousand volumes have been distributed during the past year.

Realizing that books have been the formative influences in the lives of most persons, the members of the Settlement give a strict supervision to the reading of each one taking books. The boys are eager for history, biography, and comprehensive science, while of course tales of adventure are greatly in demand. The girls show a decided preference for fiction. The library is largely made up of contributions from those interested in the work in Rivington Street; and surely here is an opportunity for many to help a good cause by sending the books and magazines no longer useful to themselves.

Next in importance to the library, if not surpassing it, are the baths for the use of the neighborhood. The eagerness with which these have been patronized by the women and children of the east side is ample proof of the need for public baths in all large cities where the limited accommodations of the tenement-houses make privacy impossible. Although ten cents is charged for the bath, it is no unusual thing for forty to be taken in a single day during the summer,—women frequently walking several miles and spending their car-fare for the rare privilege.

It was found that the baths, like other proffered pleasures, were more appreciated and popular when the recipients were allowed to pay for value received. Hence the nominal fee. Dr. E. W. Higbee, of Northampton, last year donated a heater for the public bath-rooms, thus making it possible to continue their usefulness during the winter months.

Among the many good lessons taught at the College Settlement, that of economy is not the least important, for, although in a poor section of the city, many of the people make good wages, which they spend without thought for the morrow. The Penny Provident Bank, under the direction of the Charity Organization Society, is proving very helpful in teaching how to save.

The "Good Seed Society," which meets every Sunday afternoon, has a large membership of Jewish children. This is a sort of kindergarten class, in which the little ones are instructed about their spiritual and natural growth by means of plants and flowers which they can see and handle, and the development of which they can notice from week to week. The love of flowers among the city poor is strongly demonstrated in this neighborhood, where mothers and children alike cherish every flower or bit of green given them by the girls of the Settlement, as long as there is a vestige of life or color left in it. The baskets of bright blooms sent for distribution last summer were greatly appreciated by the people of Rivington Street.

During the warm weather the college girls give weekly excursions for the sick and worn-out women among whom they work. A day spent at Manhattan Beach, Staten Island, or Coney Island has proved a great blessing to many of these overworked creatures.

Last summer Mr. Atwater, of Germantown, Pennsylvania, offered to the Settlement for the season the use of a large house beautifully situated on the New Jersey coast. The residents gladly availed themselves of his generosity, and the money donated for summer expenses was at once appropriated to furnishing the house for occupancy. Miss M. P. Waterman, of Wellesley College, was delegated to take charge of the country home, which was filled to its greatest capacity during the two months it was open. The children belonging to the clubs were allowed to go for two weeks each. The entire expense of the trip was one dollar apiece for the little ones, two dollars each for the large ones, and five dollars for those earning full wages.

About seventy-five young persons were by this means given two weeks in the country, where they gained in vigor with astonishing rapidity. It is expected that a permanent summer home will soon help to broaden this feature of the work of the College Settlement. Dr. C. F. Hamilton was the resident physician at the College Settlement last year. By giving her services free she opened up a large field of work among the sick poor. Miss Helen C. Rand, chairman of the executive committee, says this is the work the Settlement cares most to do,—helping the sick, befriending those in trouble, finding work for those whom illness has deprived of the means of support.

It is often through the physician that cases are discovered where it is possible to make connection between one who needs help and a person or an organization ready to give it.

Be it said to the glory of the College Settlement that it works without the intervention of a circumlocution office. Where help is needed it gives it promptly. Many a poor woman has starved for bread while some one of the numerous charitable societies has been "looking into her case."

Another unique characteristic of the ways and means at the Rivington Street house is that the girls have no air of my Lady Bountiful, or of the patroness. Their *protégés* are their *friends*, and are always treated as such. Every week or two they give afternoon teas to their neighbors who have so little time for recreation. They are received with all cordiality, and in the enjoyment of a social chat over a fragrant cup of tea or coffee harassing care is forgotten for a while.

Here German Jew, Russian, and Pole meet together in friendly concourse, and find life better for the kindly words and sweet music which always make memorable the reception-days at the Settlement.

An effort is being made by the residents of the Settlement to better the condition of the public schools on the east side, by exposing the abuses and evils now existing among them. Here the accommodations are so meagre that, although the law of compulsory education is enforced, children are expelled from the primary and grammar schools for *a single day's absence*. The task of elevating the masses will ever remain hopeless if the lever of education is withdrawn from them, which is fast becoming the case when the children are turned off without just cause. More school-buildings should be erected to meet the requirements of the overflowing population in the tenement-house districts.

There is little enough ambition for education among the youth of the east side under the most attractive conditions, as is proven by the fact that but two girls (both Russians) have availed themselves of the opportunity of going to college, extended them by the members of the Settlement, who contributed liberally to their expenses. Since the love of knowledge is not natural to great numbers of our population, the sooner it is instilled into them the quicker will come the time of their uplifting.

Men have dreamed dreams, have written books, and preached the "new religion of socialism," for centuries, and still the condition of the masses has not been materially changed. We hear much about the "brotherhood of man," but it has remained for women to establish a sisterhood which means more than words, words, words. We find that Christian socialism is a possible thing among women.

The women of the College Settlement make no profession. They are living their creed. Each day finds them lighting the lamp of hope in some long-darkened home, each evening finds them happier in the knowledge that by their own sacrifices they have made easier the burdens of others, and have led a step higher some weak sister who without them might have fallen by the way.

Ask these girls at the College Settlement if life has any charms left for them, and they will tell you that never has it been so full, and never has existence been so sweet, as since they opened their doors at 95 Rivington Street and welcomed into their hearts and home their east-side neighbors.

*Hester Dorsey Richardson.*

### BEFORE THE HOUR.

UNTIMELY blossom! Poor impatient thing,  
That, starting rashly from the sheltering mould,  
Bravest the peevish wind and sullen cold,  
Mistaking thine own ardors for the spring,

Thou to my heart a memory dost bring  
Of hopes once fair like thee, like thee too bold  
To breathe their fragrance and their flowers unfold,  
That drooped, of wintry rigors languishing.

Nor birds, nor bees, nor waters murmuring low,  
Nor breezes blown from balmy Arcady,  
Found they, earth's welcome waiting to bestow.

Yet sweet, they felt, sweeter than dreams, would be  
The summer they had sought too soon to know,—  
The summer that they should not live to see!

*Florence Earle Coates.*