

The Orphans' Friend.

VOLUME II.

OXFORD, N. C., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1876.

NUMBER 5.

CRECHES IN BELGIUM.

During the last thirty years quite a number of *crèches* (nursery-houses, in remembrance of the manger of Bethlehem) have been founded in most countries of Europe, but especially in France and Belgium. They are all managed and supported either by private individuals or corporations. A complete series of reports of the famous *crèche* Marie-Henriette, (named after the Queen of Belgium, at Antwerp, from 1867-'72, has come to hand, from which we extract the following:

During the year 1866 the cholera had made great ravages in Belgium, but especially in the city of Antwerp. The misery produced by this epidemic was very great among the poorer classes of the population. Many infants were deprived either of a father or mother, and, while the parent was obliged to be absent the whole day to earn a scanty livelihood, these poor little infants were left in the charge of careless neighbors, who wanted high pay for their services, but who, in most cases, let the infants suffer from cold and hunger. The same was the case in the family of many a poor working-man, whose house had escaped the dreadful scourge, but whose great poverty made it necessary for his wife to go out likewise during the day, in order to contribute towards the maintenance of the family. When these facts became known, a number of benevolent ladies and gentlemen met to propose a remedy, and this remedy was the *crèche*. This first meeting took place on the 4th November, 1866, and on January 23, 1867, the *crèche* was solemnly opened. Since that year it has continued to flourish, and has accommodated, in all, up to the year 1872, 942 infants of the tenderest age, viz, 477 girls and 465 boys. During the year 1872, the number of inmates was 149, viz, 90 girls and 59 boys. The receipts during the same year were 44,306.81 francs and the expenses 26,773.20 francs. To show more exactly the working of a *crèche*, the regulations are subjoined in full:

- (1) Every child aged at least fifteen days, or, at most, three years, whose parents are residents of the city, can be admitted to the *crèche*, if it is not afflicted with any contagious disease and if it has been vaccinated.
- (2) Persons who desire to place an infant in the *crèche* must furnish a paper showing the residence of the parents and their occupation and a certificate of vaccination.
- (3) After these papers have been shown, the name of the child is registered and the time indicated when it can be received.
- (4) The children are admitted to the *crèche* whenever a vacancy occurs, in the order in which they are registered.
- (5) Application for admission can be made every day from 9 to 12 a. m., but the admission itself only takes place on Monday.
- (6) All children admitted to the *crèche* are treated on a footing of perfect equality.
- (7) The charge for each child

is five centimes per day, or twenty-five centimes per week, in case of prepayment.

(8) When the time for admitting a child has come, the persons who bring it must answer the following questions: Are the father and mother alive? What is the amount of their daily or weekly earnings? How many days a month do they work? Have they any protectors who help them? Do they receive any aid from the poor-fund?

(9) The *crèche* does not receive sick children, and no child is admitted before having been thoroughly examined by the physician of the institution.

(10) The food of the children at the *crèche* consists—

(a) For babies that have not yet been weaned: Of bread-soup (*panades de biscuit*) made with white bread and arrowroot boiled in milk and water, every day at 10 a. m. and between the hours of 2 and 5 p. m.; and, for a drink, barley-water or gruel, with a little moist sugar. These drinks must be prepared fresh every day.

(b) For children of seven months and more who have not yet been weaned: The bread-soup will be given only in the morning, and at 2 p. m., by a pap of gruel; and three times a week by beef or veal-soup, (*bouillon*), from which the fat has been skimmed. This soup is to be prepared with semolino.

(c) For children who have been weaned: At 10 a. m., bread-soup, only a little thicker; at 12.30 p. m., beef or veal-soup, with rice and semolino, followed by vegetables, of which potatoes are not to form more than one-sixth part; at 5 p. m., slices of bread spread with butter; for drink, pisan made of licorice.

(11) The following regulations will be observed carefully:

VENTILATION.

There is to be a continuous ventilation in the *crèche*; the air will be purified by streams of fresh air as soon as impregnated with any odors, but the children must never be exposed to any draught; there are never to be any flowers in the *crèche*; as soon as the number of children in the *crèche* increases all the windows will be opened and the cradles, &c., be aired; the children will be taken into the open air whenever the weather permits.

TEMPERATURE.

The temperature of the *crèche* will always be about 15 Réaumur [about 60 Fahrenheit;] towards evening the temperature will be lowered a little. The parents are urged to cover up the children well when they are brought to the *crèche* in the morning and when taken away in the evening.

CLEANLINESS.

The greatest possible cleanliness is to be maintained in the *crèche*; every child will be washed and combed in the morning and before the first meal; after every meal its hands and face will be washed. While washing the children they will be kept far from the windows; they will be completely undressed, and after having been washed they will be rubbed with clean towels till they are completely dry. Every

child will be provided with a sponge, a basin, a handkerchief, a cup, and a spoon. From the beginning of May till the end of September, the children will take a tepid bath twice a week, remaining in the bath about 10 minutes; they will never be bathed till two hours after a meal.

VARIOUS REGULATIONS.

The children will be taken out as often as possible and be made to walk when they are able to do so; scolding is to be used but rarely, corporal punishment never, and altogether the greatest tenderness in the treatment is recommended; the children are to be laid sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, always with the head a little raised; they are to be covered sufficiently but not too much; no child is to be left in its chair for any great length of time; the child is not to be lifted up with one arm only; the feet of the children are to be kept warm, the stomach easy, and the head cool; no painted confectionery, or anything which might hurt the children, is allowed in the *crèche*; the children may be caressed but not embraced; their sleep is never to be interrupted; they are not to be excited in any manner; they are to enjoy their games, and are, if possible, placed near those for whom they show any predilection; whenever a child has convulsions it is to be at once removed from the sight of the others, and the physician is to be informed immediately.

(12) When a child is admitted to the *crèche*, the parents are informed with regard the following regulations, with which they must comply:

(13) Mothers must nurse their children whenever their work permits.

(14) Children must be brought to the *crèche* before 8 a. m. in summer and before 9 a. m. in winter, and must be taken back in evening after day's work has been finished.

(15) Parents owe due respect to the directress and all the employés of the establishment.

(16) Parents who neglected their infants, and who after having been duly warned, do not comply with the regulations, lose all their privileges, and their infants are sent home.—*Bureau of Education.*

WONDERFUL MEMORIES.

Pliny says that Cyrus had a memory so prodigious that he could name every officer and soldier in his armies; and that Lucius Scipio knew every Roman citizen by name when that city contained more than two hundred thousand capable of bearing arms. Seneca speaks of a friend, Pontius Latro, who could repeat *verbatim* all the speeches he had heard declaimed by the Roman orators. It is said that Joseph Scaliger committed to memory both the Iliad and the Odyssey in twenty-one days. Sir William Hamilton tells us of a young Corsican of good family who had gone to Padua to study civil law, in which he soon distinguished himself. "He was a frequent visitor at the house and gardens of Muretus, who, having heard that

he possessed a remarkable art or faculty of memory, though incredulous in regard to reports, took occasion to request from him a specimen of his power. He at once agreed; and, having adjourned with a considerable party of distinguished auditors into a saloon, Muretus began to dictate words, Latin, Greek, barbarous, significant and non-significant, disjointed and connected; until he wearied himself, the young man who wrote them down, and the audience who were present;—"we were all," he says, "marvelously tired." The Corsican alone was the one of the whole company alert and fresh, and continually desired Muretus for more words, who declared he would be more than satisfied if he could repeat the half of what he had taken down, and at length he ceased. The young man, with his gaze fixed upon the ground, stood silent for a brief season; and then, says Muretus, "Vidi facinus mirificissimum. Having begun to speak, he absolutely repeated the whole words in the same order in which they had been delivered, without the slightest hesitation; then, commencing from the last, he repeated them backward till he came to the first. Then, again, so that he spoke the first, the third, the fifth, and so on; did this in any order that was asked, and all without the smallest error. Having subsequently become familiarly acquainted with him, I have had other and frequent experience of his power. He assured me (and he had nothing of the boaster in him) that he could recite in the manner I have mentioned to the amount of thirty-six thousand words. And what is more wonderful, they all so adhered to the mind, that after a year's interval he could repeat them without trouble. I know, from having tried him, he could do so after considerable time."—*E. S. Drone; Scribner for Nov.*

OUR SPARE MOMENTS.

It is not long since that John Sharp, an awkward-looking and shabbily-dressed boy, came to the front door of the house where lived Mr. Wiseman, the principal of a celebrated academy, and asked to see him. The servant, supposing him to be a beggar, told him to go around to the back door, where, having arrived, she allowed him to come into the kitchen.

"I am very anxious to see Mr. Wiseman," said John.

"It is more likely that you want your breakfast," replied the servant, "and I can give you that without troubling him."

"Thank you!" said the boy; "I have no objection to a piece of bread, but I should like to see Mr. Wiseman, if he can possibly see me."

"Some old clothes you want, perhaps. I guess he hasn't got any to spare. He gives away a good many,"—and the servant went about her work.

"I did not come either for my breakfast or for clothes," replied John; "I only wish to see Mr. Wiseman, and I must see him."

"Well, he is in the study; if he must be interrupted he must;

but he does like to be alone sometimes," said the girl. She seemed to think it very foolish to admit such an ill-looking fellow into her master's presence; however, she wiped her hands and bade him follow her. Opening the door of the study, she said, "Here's somebody, sir, who is dreadful anxious to see you, and so I let him in."

After conversing with John a few minutes, Mr. Wiseman put aside the volume which he had been studying, and took up some Greek books, and began to examine him. Every question which Mr. Wiseman put to him, John answered quite readily. "Indeed," exclaimed the principal, "you certainly do well! Why, my boy, where did you learn so much?"

"In my spare moments," answered John.

"Now, here was a poor, hard-working boy, with but few opportunities for study; and yet almost fitted for college, by simply improving his spare moments! How precious these short spaces of time should be! There are many boys in the jail, in the house of correction, or in the tippling-shop, who, if you would ask them when they began their sinful courses, might answer,—In my spare moments I gambled for marbles;—in my spare moments I began to smoke cigars and drink rum;—it was in my spare moments that I associated with wicked companions.

Now, I hope all who read this will commence by asking the Lord to give them a new heart, without having which their minds will apt to be led astray. Improve your leisure time, and ask God's blessings upon all you undertake. The book that you should study in preference to all others is the Bible; for it will give you information which can not be obtained elsewhere,—information which is of more importance to us than any thing which can be found in all the books ever published.

Finally, if you wish to prosper, if you desire to drive away wicked thoughts, and if it is your intention to have your mind well stored with useful knowledge, improve your spare moments.—*Episcopal Recorder.*

A little five-year old boy over-head a workman who was repairing the sitting-room, drop the exclamation "by gosh," over some slight mishap. "That's the first swear word I ever heard in my father's house," was the grave rebuke of the little fellow. It so touched the rough man that he went to the mother of the boy and confessed his fault. While engaged on the job he never again lapsed into vulgarity or profanity.

The boy, now a tall lad, wields the same influence over his mates. They understand that his part in the game is ended soon as bad words are introduced. The knowledge that his father's tongue was never polluted by profanity, together with his mother's precepts, and a child's natural desire to be like his father, have given this salutary bias to his early life.