

# The STREET the MOTHER of THOUSANDS of CHICAGO CHILDREN



"We Should Worry."



A Lucky Baby.



Warming Up.



A Lull in the Play



A "Little Mother."

**The Tenement Parents Have No Time at Home—They Are Too Busy Making a Living—Hence the Babies Must Furnish Their Own Fun. They Find Enjoyment and Health in Outdoor Play—They Learn to Be Quick and Self-reliant.**

WITH hundreds of women tending to stands and pushcarts and engaging in all sorts of little businesses which take them out of the house from early morning until late at night, the street has become the mother to thousands of children in Chicago's tenement districts.

The shouts of polders, the clatter of wheels, the rattle of the street cars, the shouts and din of the thoroughfare form the modern fairy tales for the child of the slum from the moment he is old enough to crawl out of the house and find his way into the street.

In the street the child gains health frequently by keeping away from the foul air of the tenement house. But in the streets likewise he frequently is exposed to illness. In the street his senses are sharpened and he may be better fitted to grapple for success later on in life. But in the street, too, his moral fiber is contaminated and often destroyed.

Nowhere are children given as much freedom and as to do as in the street. This freedom is not given to the child with any sort of a motive, but simply because the mother cannot take the time to look after him. And to leave him alone is the easiest way out—easiest at least for the time being.

From the moment the child is able to toddle about he comes and goes as he pleases. The mother has no definite hour when to put her children to bed. In fact, in the tenement districts children are hardly ever "put to bed." They go to bed themselves when they are tired of the street.

In the summer the youngsters will not willingly imprison themselves in the dingy, ill ventilated bedrooms, and they often stay in the street until they fall asleep on the sidewalk or in the hallway. In the winter they don their sweaters and "big brother's" cap and stand in the street until their little noses become blue and their limbs numb from cold. Then they limp into the house and submit to the inevitable—eating supper and going to bed.

So accustomed have the tenement mothers become to trust their children to the street that even in the face of danger they remain calm. With her child playing in the middle of the street and an automobile tooting frantically a dozen feet away the mother of any other part of town would be frightened into hysterics. But the mother of the tenement will trust to her youngster to clear out of the way in an instant of time and then come back to his usual spot and continue his game.



**The Income More Needed Than the Care.**

Who can afford to bother with them in the middle of the day? said a woman of 40, the mother of six children, who peddles fish for a living. "If women here would do nothing but tend to their children I think about this, would make a bad job of it all around. First the income of the family would be cut in half, and the want of shoes and clothing and sometimes even food which would result by a cut in the income would not be made up for by the better care the children would get."

"Of course accidents will happen," the woman said when reminded of the child who runs in the crowded streets. "But then the children soon adapt themselves and become experts at dodging wagons and autos and avoiding dangers and accidents. The children of the street develop a peculiar quickness such as you won't find among children kept in the house and not given the opportunity to look out for themselves."



A Ghetto Belle.

Many a mother will ask what is the matter with her oldest girl. Why is she so fat chested? Why is her eye so lustreless? Why is her gaze so serious? Why is she backward and why does she never take part in any games? Poor woman, she does not see that she has taken the very life blood of the child and transfused it into her younger children.

The mother sacrificed her older daughter's chances and happiness in life by cutting short her childhood and putting the burdens of motherhood on her mind and body when she should have been out in the street dancing to the music of the organ grinder and sometimes even be playing with a doll instead of tending to real children.

The mother who is so busy that she has no time to devote to her children, is not alone. There are thousands of mothers who are so busy that they have no time to devote to their children. They are so busy that they have no time to devote to their children. They are so busy that they have no time to devote to their children.

These little girls are compelled to take off a day from school to look after their mothers. They are frequently with all of their frail young members of physicians and nurses. They are so busy that they have no time to devote to their children. They are so busy that they have no time to devote to their children.

These little vendors of the street hunt the restaurants and saloons and push their business with equal zest whether they actually need the money to help round out the family budget at home, to help pay rent and buy coal, or merely to spend for themselves.

Another class of boys go to the extreme opposite of these street vendors. They become voracious readers and

**There Are Pleasures in the Street, but There Are Also Perils. Chief Among Them Is the "Gang," Which Is Ever Present.**

The influence of the street which is trying to supply to the children of the tenements that which the home lacks—the space, chance, and opportunity for amusement—is not without its positive and horrible danger.

While the street may be the making of many excellent business men, while it may teach the children of the poor tenacity and perseverance which will be useful to them in the struggle for success on the one hand, and while it may turn other children of the poor to the public library and toward the channels of idealism on the other hand, the street has also—the gang.

And for the great mass of children who emerge from the street pure and strong and ready to face life squarely there are here and there little but significant groups that the street drags into the gang, and thence into the current of the underworld.



A Mother's Double Duty



West Side Types.



A Wagon Load of Fun



Youthful Gossips.

"Line 'Er Out, Heine!"