

# Society Sheds Its Dignity and Does "Stunts"

*Bareback Riding, Side Show Barking and Other Un-sedate Antics Planned for New York's Crippled Children With Park Avenue as a Circus Lot*

"Riding the Waves." Learning how it's done so they will be experts at the Society Fair.



Left to right—Mrs. Grosvenor Nichols, Miss Estelle O'Brien, Mrs. Lyttleton Fox, Mrs. Barron G. Collier, Miss Margaret Trimble and Mrs. Finley Peter Dunne.

WHEN most folk put aside their dignity for hilarious pastimes no one pays any attention. But when matrons and younger women of society throw dignity to the winds and go riding bareback and cutting capers on horses' backs just as do the spangled and nimble "beauties" of the circus ring every one is interested.

Which is by way of saying New York "society," meaning the members of the coterie usually described as of the elect, are promising to stage a most amusingly undignified event to be called a "society circus." But it is not to be so much for their own fun as for the benefit of New York's crippled children.

A great deal has been said of this forthcoming event—the society circus and the street carnival, to be given on Park avenue beginning May 16—but not so much has been written of the cause which inspired these festivities.

For more than twenty years—since 1900, to be exact—there has existed in New York city an organization known as the Association for the Aid of Crippled Children. It has done its work quietly, with little or no publicity, but that organization has grown since 1900 from one that conducted a class for fifteen crippled children who were unable to attend public school to one that obtains medical treatment, convalescing care, elementary and secondary education, summer outings, vocational guidance and other help for nearly 3,000 such children.

As the work of the association has developed its most valuable service has proved to be the one which leads up to these other forms of help. It has done the work of scouting, of finding crippled children in the city who need treatment and of bringing them into the hospitals provided by the city.

Neither the hospitals nor the municipal authorities have the facilities for hunting up the children and it is required that they report for treatment. As a result thousands of crippled boys and girls discovered by the association's workers have been given the care they needed, which would otherwise have been withheld from them by suspicious or discouraged parents.

There is much distrust of hospitals and clinics, doctors and nurses among foreign born people who know little English, and who hear stories of brusque treatment at the hospitals from their friends. This attitude causes many of them to put off coming forward with their crippled children at the time trouble begins, and leads them to drop all treatments after they are started, under the impression that no good is being done.

The association works to educate these parents to the advantage of sustained treatment and sees that the proper medical, surgical and nursing service is obtained. A staff of sixteen nurses is maintained by the association itself whose duty it is to make visits in the homes, see that the right convalescent precautions are taken and in general to follow up all cases carefully.

The association estimates there are at least 36,000 cripples in New York and that about 50 per cent. of these are under 16 years of age. Thousands of them have never been treated in any way. Very few

of these cripples ever reach high school, and it is only through the work the association has carried on that thousands have been helped to obtain an education beyond the lowest grades.

It was through the efforts of this association that the Board of Education in 1906 started its first class for crippled children. The association provided transportation for the pupils, none of whom was able to walk to school. There are now nearly fifty such classes in the public schools, all of them specially arranged to meet the needs of crippled children. Specially constructed chairs are a part of the equipment. From 1900 to 1913 the association continued to provide both transportation and nurses for the children on the trips back and forth from school. Then in 1913 an appropriation was made by the city for carrying on the bus service. This was withdrawn last year, leaving the association with an additional burden, for the demands of war relief funds have been retarding its work.

Some of the cures which have been effected through the association's activities and the general improvement made in the value of the children as potential citizens have been nothing less than remarkable.

There was young Julius R., 17 years old, with a paralyzed left arm and an amputated right foot. His case was called to the attention of the association by the public school he had been attending. His arm was quite useless, due mostly to neglect, for if the boy had worn braces when he was younger the arm would not have become so contracted.

He was graduated from school when he was 16 and the association's nurse took him to the Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men to see what trade he might be fitted for. He has been provided with an artificial leg and has been taught telephone operating. He is employed at the institute as an operator and earns \$12 a week.

The case of a four-year-old Italian girl who had rickets affords an instance of the difficulties encountered in the homes of the children who require treatment. The mother brought Amelia to one of the association's district offices to make application for a summer outing. This was out of the question, as the child was the size of an eighteen-month-old baby and could not walk, talk or hear. Examination showed there was no organic trouble—her condition was due simply to a peculiar form of rickets.

She was taken to the Metropolitan Hospital and placed on a special diet, but she was no sooner there than her mother wanted to take the child home because she could not see her often enough. Frequent visits were arranged for her, but each time she came to the hospital she brought her seven other children with her, because there was no one at home who could take care of them for her. Amelia remained through the summer and went home much improved. Then one day the nurse chanced to visit Amelia's home at the noon hour and found Amelia eating red peppers for lunch. It looked then as if all the good work which had been done would be undone, and so application was made for convalescent care and the child is now at



Miss Isabel Pell receiving instruction from Mrs. Costello, the equestrienne at Luna Park. Miss Pell will be a bareback rider at the society circus. Above is Mrs. Langdon Geer, who is prominent among the committees directing the charity fair for the crippled children.

Campbell Cottage, White Plains, where she is improving rapidly.

Then there was Peter L. He was 9 years old, with a right arm and leg paralyzed. He had pneumonia and was taken to Mount Sinai Hospital, where his left leg became infected and had to be amputated. His mother took him away from the hospital before he was discharged and refused to return. When the association's nurse called he was crawling about the floor like a baby, almost completely helpless. The family was very poor, the father an epileptic and unable to work regularly; the mother a janitress. There were six other children. The nurse induced the mother to take the boy to the Hospital for the Ruptured and Crippled. He was operated on there, remained four months and was sent home in a brace leg. A visiting teacher was provided, so that the boy, after further treatment, will be able to take up his school work again without too much to make up.

There was Bertha H., 16 years old, an infantile paralysis case. It took months of persuasion before her parents would consent to the operation made necessary by the paralysis, which affected both her legs. The child was operated on and kept at a hospital for two months. She returned home in casts, which she had to wear for three months before it could be known whether the operation had been successful. When they were removed Bertha was able to stand without the aid of any appliances, and now she walks easily.

There were three Italian children

who could not walk. Their mother was anxious to have them treated, but was afraid of the father, who opposed it. He wanted the children to be home when he came back from work, although, according to his wife, he stayed just long enough to eat his dinner and then went about the business of getting drunk. Through the cooperation of an Italian officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children the association succeeded in getting the father's consent. The children were sent to the Metropolitan Hospital, where it was decided they should all be operated upon.

The father refused and all the children were taken home with the exception of the youngest, which is now able to walk. The family refuses to do anything more in the way of treatment.

Occasionally there are cases when the children themselves make treatment difficult. That was the trouble in the case of Dolores R., 14, who had infantile paralysis. She had received some treatment, but her feet remained very deformed, and an operation was advised. The parents gave their consent, but whenever a time was appointed for the operation Dolores ran off to an aunt in Brooklyn. When she went back to school this fall she was told she could not attend, as she could hardly walk.

Dolores was told she must submit to an operation, but even the threat that she would be sent to an institute for incorrigibles had no effect. Then the school principal visited her and promised

Dolores a new coat, which she needed badly. That did it. The operation was performed, her feet are now in casts, and when they are removed, the doctors say, she will have to wear a brace only a short time.

Just one more case, which makes plain

Hickox, Mrs. Bayard Litchfield, Mrs. Thomas S. McLane, Mrs. Gardner Millett, Miss Caroline Morgan, Mrs. Henry V. Poor, Miss Elsie Schefer, Mrs. Eugene Stetson, Mrs. Herbert Wilcox, Mrs. C. W. Williams, Miss Dorothy Collins and Mrs. William Gelshenen.

the necessity for such an organization as the Association for the Aid of Crippled Children. Mildred S., 6 years old, was referred to the association by the Board of Health. She was completely paralyzed, blind and almost deaf and dumb. After a year of treatment practically no improvement was perceptible. The mother said afterward that if it had not been for the encouragement given by the association's nurses she never would have had the courage to continue.

The sight, hearing and speech of the child have now been completely restored. She has begun to walk and she has the use of her arms.

The present income of the association is not sufficient for the extension of its service to the thousands who are in need of it, and it is for the purpose of stimulating interest in its work and obtaining adequate support that the street fair is to be held this week in Park avenue between Forty-sixth and Fiftieth streets.

The maintenance of the nursing staff is the largest item in the association's expenditure. Out of the \$37,010.53 that was spent during the year ended November 1, 1921, nearly \$25,000 was used for the salaries and expenses of nurses. During the year 1920-1921 the sixteen nurses on the staff made 27,511 visits to the homes of patients and 2,443 more to hospitals and dispensaries.

During the summer of 1921, through the efforts of a special group of contributors to the association's fresh air fund, it was possible to maintain a fresh air home, Happyland, at Tenafly, N. J. An average of twenty crippled children were maintained there throughout the season, most of them being kept there for two weeks. A few cases that required special open air treatment remained there all summer.

On the board of directors of the association are: Mrs. Edgar S. Auchincloss, Jr., president; Mrs. Charles F. Bound, first vice-president; Mrs. Walter Sullivan, second vice-president; Thomas S. McLane, treasurer; Mrs. Mark W. Maclay, secretary; Mrs. Gordon Abbott, Miss Margaret Armstrong, Mrs. Henry B. Barnes, Mrs. William Barnes, Mrs. M. M. Belding, Mrs. H. High Carleton, Mrs. Charles G. Child, Mrs. Frederick L. Collins, Mrs. Samuel L. Fuller, Mrs. Ralph

## Vegetables Principal Food of Homer's Ancient Warriors

RESEARCHES made by various scholars indicate that the heroes of Homer prepared their food with their own hands. In the happy simplicity of the Homeric ages the great heroes who dealt such terrible blows, leaving death and desolation behind them when they reposed after their exploits, partook of a blameless dish of beans or a plate of homely lentils.

It may be difficult to imagine Diomedes in the act of peeling onions or Achilles washing cabbages. But although the wise Ulysses roasted, with his own hands, a sirloin of beef, vegetables occupied the most conspicuous places at all the great banquets of ancient Greece.

Alexander found the onion in Egypt, where the Hebrews had learned to like it. He had it cultivated in Greece and gave it as food to his troops, in the belief that it excited martial ardor. Whosoever wishes to preserve his health, says an ancient saw, should eat every morning, before breakfast, young onions and honey! But this does not sound like a very tempting preservative.

Asia is said to be the native home of the asparagus. Yet the Romans cultivated it with such marvelous success that the stalks raised at Ravenna are said to have weighed three pounds each, and we are asked to believe that the African variety, grown in Libya, reached a height of twelve feet.