

Playing Mother and Father to His Baby Brother



This is a common sight in Poland today, eight and ten-year-old children mothering and fathering their baby brothers and sisters. This photograph, secured by an American Jewish Relief worker at Brest-Litovsk, shows an eight-year-old boy feeding his little brother from a bowl of hot soup just secured at a feeding station supported through American funds. The relief workers found 10,000 children, mostly war orphans, living in deserted dug-outs at Brest-Litovsk.

It is to aid such waifs as these that the European Relief Council has been formed by merging the relief activities of the American Relief Administration, the American Red Cross, the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers), the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Knights of Columbus, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A.

VIENNA DEATH RATE BECOMES APPALLING

Condition of Children Even More Harrowing, Declares Authority on City's Desperate Plight.

Five years of famine have resulted in greatly increased mortality and morbidity in Vienna which before the war was counted as one of the healthiest cities in Europe. Figures prepared by Dr. Gustave Bohn, head of the Vienna Health Department, show that in 1913 the death rate was 15.3 per thousand. In 1918 the rate was 22.5 per thousand, an increase of more than 47 per cent.

Professor Hans Spel of the University of Vienna, says that "even more terrible than the mortality statistics are those referring to the condition of children and their mothers. Owing to under-nourishment few mothers can nurse their babies, and the milk shortage affects not only infants, but all children in spite of all that has been done to help. At Professor Clemens Pirquet's clinic in the university some 54,849 children were examined in 1918. Only 4,637 of these or about one-thirteenth were passed as skin good, fat good, 23,000 were pale and thin, or very pale and very thin.

"The health of these children shows most disquieting features. Skin disease, rickets and Barlow's disease are rife. "The chief medical officer of Vienna asks, 'What is going to happen to these under-fed children, in whose bodies the germ of tuberculosis is latent, when they reach the twenties, at which time it becomes active?'

To combat these conditions the American Relief Administration of which Herbert Hoover is chairman fed last winter in the city of Vienna some 800,000 of the destitute and under-nourished children, supplying them with a substantial meal of American food, served in a number of large kitchens opened for that purpose.

The conditions in Vienna are more or less typical of those in Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Last year the Relief Administration was able to reach some 3,500,000 under-nourished children and this winter the program calls for the feeding of a like number, but eight of the great charitable organizations of America have united under the name of the European Relief Council, of which Mr. Hoover is the chairman. The child feeding task will be carried out not only by the American Relief Administration but by the American Red Cross, the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers), the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, the Knights of Columbus, the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. An appeal for \$33,000,000 has been made and the organizations named have joined in raising the sum.

Edgar Rice Burroughs



This writer has had a life experience calculated to develop imagination and the ability to delineate adventure and romance. He has been a soldier in the regular army, a gold miner in Oregon, a cowboy and storekeeper in Idaho, a policeman in Salt Lake City, a sales manager in Chicago and in 1917 was major of infantry in the Illinois Reserve Militia. About 1912 he took up writing as an experiment and produced the first of the "Tarzan" stories. It was instantly successful as have been some six or eight novels which succeeded it. Today, he stands alone in this country as an author of thrilling, purely imaginative fiction. "A Princess of Mars," one of his most fascinating creations, has been selected for serial reproduction in this publication. Do not miss the opening installment.

DR. O. H. CRESSLER.

Graduate Dentist

Office over the McDonald

State Bank.

Star

By BESSIE HARRIS

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Long before Joe's fishing boat came within sight of shore he watched for the distant speck of light from the window, and as he neared land the speck of light grew and shone with his own delight in coming. Home coming was a never-failing delight to Joe. He loved to warm his heart at the thought of the picture there, big blonde Elizabeth, the elder sister, briskly busy about the shining cook-stove, preparing for his evening meal the things he liked best—and Star, the small wraith of a sister, curled up in the couch corner, where she could easily part the curtains and peer out over the dark waters. For Star watched for Joe's white fishing boat as eagerly as his eyes searched out the light from the window.

"Lisbeth was a born grumbler, and perhaps sometimes the work did fall too heavily on her broad shoulders, for though Star might be wistful and willing, her strength was insufficient for many tasks.

The cozy cottage on the shore had been handed down from grandparents to the three children. And now all their plans to beautify the cottage was made in the hope of pleasing Star—the prettiest clothes were hers, and it was Elizabeth who still grumbling arranged for her many pleasures. And Star was radiant and grateful; her love for the big bronzed brother and the sister whose own life had known but the happiness of service, was beyond expression. As for Joe, the mere thought of her there in the lamplit corner—brought a strange lump in his throat, in an emotion which dimmed his clear eyes as he steered toward the light. It was Elizabeth, who held open the door for him, her rosy cheeks and white apron always a pleasant part of his welcome home picture. But it was to little Star that he turned breathlessly, as she slipped from her couch to stand laughing softly and holding out eager hands. "I watched you," said Star, "since I first saw you far against the sky, and could not tell whether you were wave or really boat."

"And while you watched," grumbled Lisbeth, "I rolled cookies and biscuits 'til my arms ached, and they will burn in the oven this minute unless they are attended to. Star, you might at least take the pans from the oven while I talk to Joe."

"I will take them," Joe offered quickly, and was off to the kitchen. That evening, when the girl had bidden them good night, lingering, her shining eyes enmeshing them both from the doorway, Elizabeth turned abruptly to her brother.

"Joe," she said, "I have something to tell you. Something that I only learned today. I was hunting in the old Bible for my birth date; thought I'd made a mistake of a year, and looked it up. And there, folded in the birth and death place was an old letter. Seemed queer as I looked that Star's birth had never been registered with ours—but the letter explained that Mother had written it before she died, and left it there for safe keeping. Thought perhaps I'd find it when I went to write the date of her death. But I didn't think to do it. Joe. I will give you mother's letter in a minute, but this is what it said: Star isn't our sister at all; she never has—belonged. One night when we were away at school a boat came drifting along without any folks, or any oars, and in it all wrapped and quiet, lay a baby. First, mother thought the tiny white face was a reflection of one big star that seemed somehow to keep shining down on the boat. But when she found what it was, mother sent father out to bring in the boat, and the baby's eyes stared up at her she said, steady and shiny like the star. And so she named her. No one ever came to claim the baby, and though father tried to learn at the time, there was no word of accident or loss. That's all, Joe; but I've given my young life to the care of a child not birth or kin. And I have kept from marrying Jed Warren because of what I considered my duty."

Lisbeth paused. "I shall marry him now," she said determinedly.

Joe made no reply. When at last his sister went sulkily to bed, he read the letter slowly through. Then with face aglow, big Joe jumped to his feet.

"Star," he called softly. "Oh, my little Star."

There was no answer. Vaguely troubled, Joe went out to the sands standing where the water, stretched silvering before him in the moonlight. Not far from shore he saw a drifting boat. Star's own little boat, with the blue Star at its side that he had painted. The girl sat in the stern, a dejected figure, he could see her dark hair rippling over her shoulders as it used to do when years ago she came at bedtime for his good-night kiss. Joe strode out into the water. When he reached the boat's side the water was still beneath his strong arm. Star turned to him calmly.

"I heard it all," she said, "and I am going to drift out of your lives as I drifted in. Some day I shall find—"

"Big Joe had her by the arm, and said, 'Star, harbor the boat.' 'I'm going,' he said. 'Don't you know, she's my sister?'" "I heard it all," she said, "and I am going to drift out of your lives as I drifted in. Some day I shall find—"

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