

WHERE THERE IS NO RACE SUICIDE



H OCH die kinder!
 Would you like to hear something of what it means to be a German baby? To be a baby in the fatherland is as different from being a baby in any other part of the civilized world as it is to be an Indian papoose. Here we are the whole thing. We are much wanted—how is it with you? A marriage without us (Kinderlose Ehe) is a calamity unspeakable. That we are the greatest thing in the world is agreed upon by our progenitors and elders both individually and corporately. We are the central pivot on which everything turns both from a conjugal point of view and a municipal one. The result is that the science of our health has been long and well thought out by all of the doctors and great men. Our welfare in public has been made an affair of state. Our domestic conveniences and accessories have long been and are more and more becoming the chief concern not only of our mothers but of all the women and many of the men in the fatherland. On this account we have acquired habits and belongings, to say nothing of accommodations, which you may like to hear about.

I will begin by telling you about our clothes. If you could see mine you would stare. My shirt is much like yours except that it is nearly always the kind which fastens with one button. My nainsook slip, which is elaborately trimmed with lace and run with endless ribbons, is as short as my shirt. Over this I sometimes wear a crochet sacque.

German Baby Dresses for Health.

To the bottom edge of my sacque I appear much like you American babies. But below this I am not bothered with any long skirts. My legs are incased in a loose blanket fastened around my body and turned up over the bottom of my feet, envelope fashion, which is known by the horrid name of a swaddling blanket. It feels better than it sounds and does not show, because I, my body, my feet, swaddling blanket, and all, are thrust into a swaddling pillow which looks more than anything else like a handkerchief sachet. It is oval shaped at the top,



Swaddling Pillow and Case laid Open



How the Baby is held on the Swaddling Pillow

where it comes up under my head and prevents it flopping around in the dreadful way I have seen the heads of one or two foreign babies do. It has a fine ruffled pillow slip with a fanciful piece hanging from the foot end which turns up over me like a sheet and makes the top of the pillow. This comes up to my arms, where it is tied with ribbons.

The part of the pillow case which comes up under my head is so elaborately trimmed with flounces that it is becoming, and when I go out it gives me the effect of having many sets of frills to my bonnet. This is called a "stech kissen," and we stay in them all the time until we are 3 months old. The result is that we are not jolted about when we are carried, and picked up, and laid down, and held in lap, and so we are none of us nervous.

I don't often cry—do you?—except that I howled at first when they gave me my bath—and you won't wonder when I tell you. But before I forget, there is one more thing that I want to tell you about the stech kissen. The old fashioned ones used to have the ribbons wound several times about the babies' legs and tied tight. It was supposed to keep their legs straight, but it only made them soft instead, and it is now entirely gone out. I am thankful to say. If you should see a picture of one put on in this way you may know that it is only on a doll, for even a halfway sort of doll baby would not be without a stech kissen.

Bath is of Tepid Water.

Now about our bath. For this we are laid on top of a table made for the purpose. Our sole outfit is a pad and a towel to lie on and sometimes a rubber pillow. The water is not too warm, and the room is not warm, either. You would call it freezing. Do you wonder I howled? When we get used to it, though, we like it—it is better than being twisted around in somebody's lap; they even wash us this way until we get to be 3 years old.

Everything is done with the most scientific ideas of cleanliness. We would scorn to have our heads and our heels washed together in the democratic fashion which I hear is done to the babies of some countries. I have my plunge in the tub, my face washed in the bowl, and there are three other little bowls—one for my mouth, one for my eyes, and one, my father says, for "that little absurdity they call my nose." These are each filled with sterilized water, with which is used a little piece of absorbent cotton. Every time I eat they wash out my mouth right after. That's another thing when I howl.

Everything disagreeable of this kind is soon forgotten, though, because early every morning, from the first day or two after we arrive in the world, we are off to the park. If you are a "Lahmann baby" (he is the most radical baby doctor there is) you go the next day after you are introduced to your mother and father. Unless it rains or is extremely cold you are not more than two or three weeks old when you go and stay out all day.

There is a mattress in the bottom of my carriage and little curtains to draw in front in case it gets stormy, and there is a little drop box let down under the floor, where are carried bottles and belongings.

My nursemaid is a pretty sight. I lie facing her so that I can blink at her if I want to. She flies streamers to her cap at the back and wears puffed sleeves clear above her elbows, even in winter.

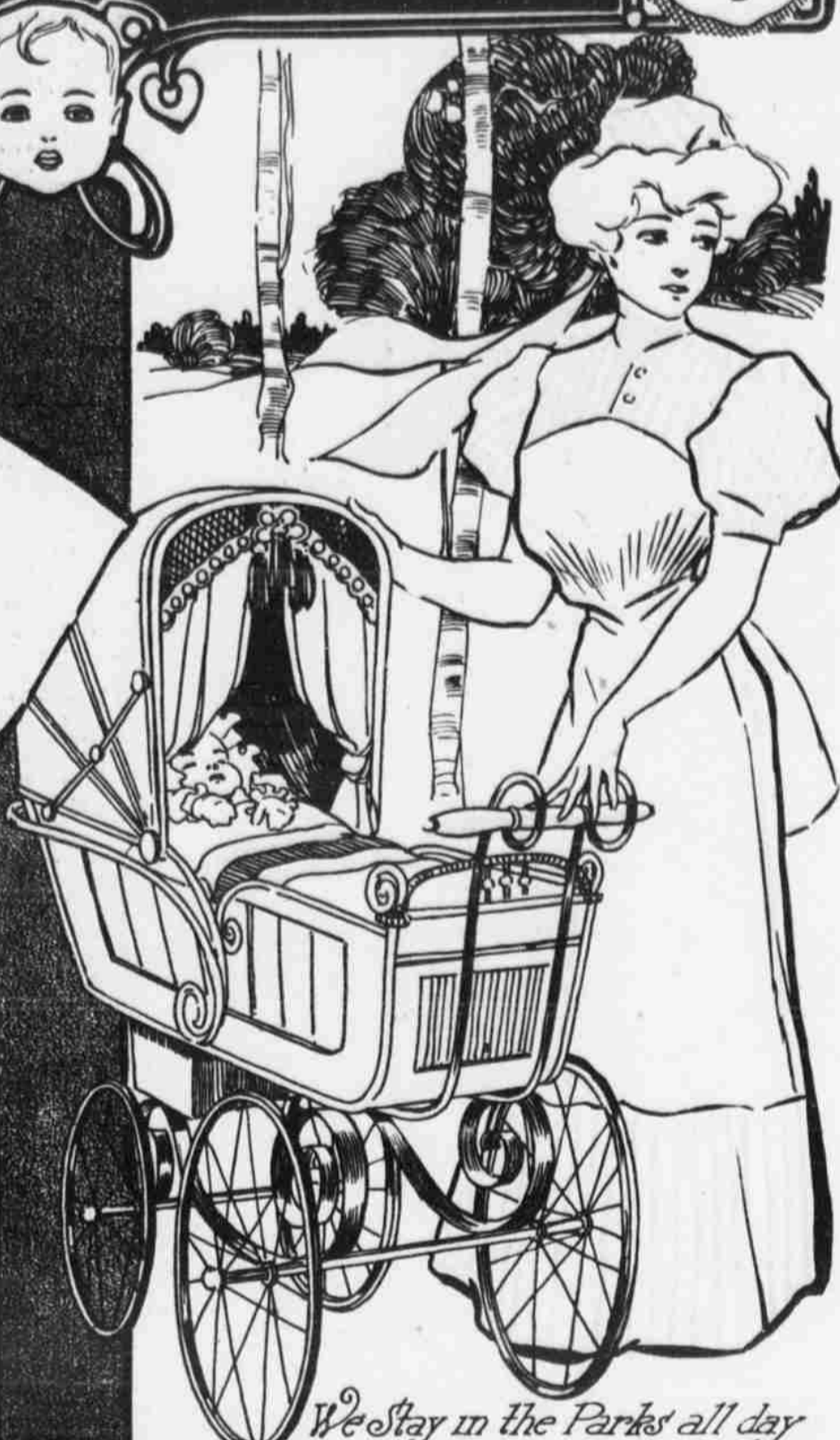
We have a beautiful time. We usually go to the Thiergarten. There are hundreds of other babies there. Everything is done for our convenience. There are large places set aside for us with benches—"Kinderbank" they are called—and they are all beautiful shady spots. There are little booths where our nurses can get the milk warmed to just the right temperature. There are four or five foresters' houses in the Thiergarten, where the maids sell milk for the larger children at five "pfennigs" a glass. The "Kindermilch" it is called. The grass in the Thiergarten is cut and saved for the cows which the city keeps to supply the public dairies for the benefit of the poor babies. So you see what I meant when I told you what the city authorities think of us.

As to our family life, our mothers only await the day when they can take us out on the promenade in state to show us. This is not done until we are big enough to wear a dress, and it is usually when we are about 3 months old and after we are christened. There is such pride in our arrival that our mothers wish to display us to envious eyes and receive congratulations. I shall have to go through it soon, and I am expecting to be dreadfully bored, but it is the thing, and I suppose I shall have to submit.

Baby's Debut a Triumphant Parade.

I have been listening to the details as they have been talking them over. My mother will be dressed in her best. Then we will go at the fashionable hour into the Leipziger strasse or Unter den Linden. I am to be carried by my

The Baby's Debut is a Triumphant Parade



We stay in the Parks all day

wet nurse, who is one of the famous ones from the Spree forest—"Spreevalderin" they are called. She wears a fancy skirt, with a black band around the bottom, a white apron, a black velvet bodice, which is cut low, and a fichu of thin white. She also wears a white cap with stiff corners, which stand out far on each side. Her hips are immense, and she wears six petticoats, and her dress turned in at the top to make them stick out still farther. She will walk in front of my mother, and she carries me on her left arm. She has a graceful way of doing it, because there is an open place in the seams of both my dress and coat for her to slip her whole hand and arm through so that she can put it around me comfortably. This does not wrinkle my dress and leaves it to hang gracefully.

The dress falls clear to the ground. It is trimmed with dozens of rows of needlework and lace around the bottom and with a wonderful perpendicular panel, which is a mass of fine work up the full length of the front. This is edged with little ruffles up and down both edges. Sometimes this parade is made in a carriage, and then they drive slowly so that everybody can see the baby and congratulate the mother. Then the nurse sits with her back to the horses and holds the baby on her arm in the same way.

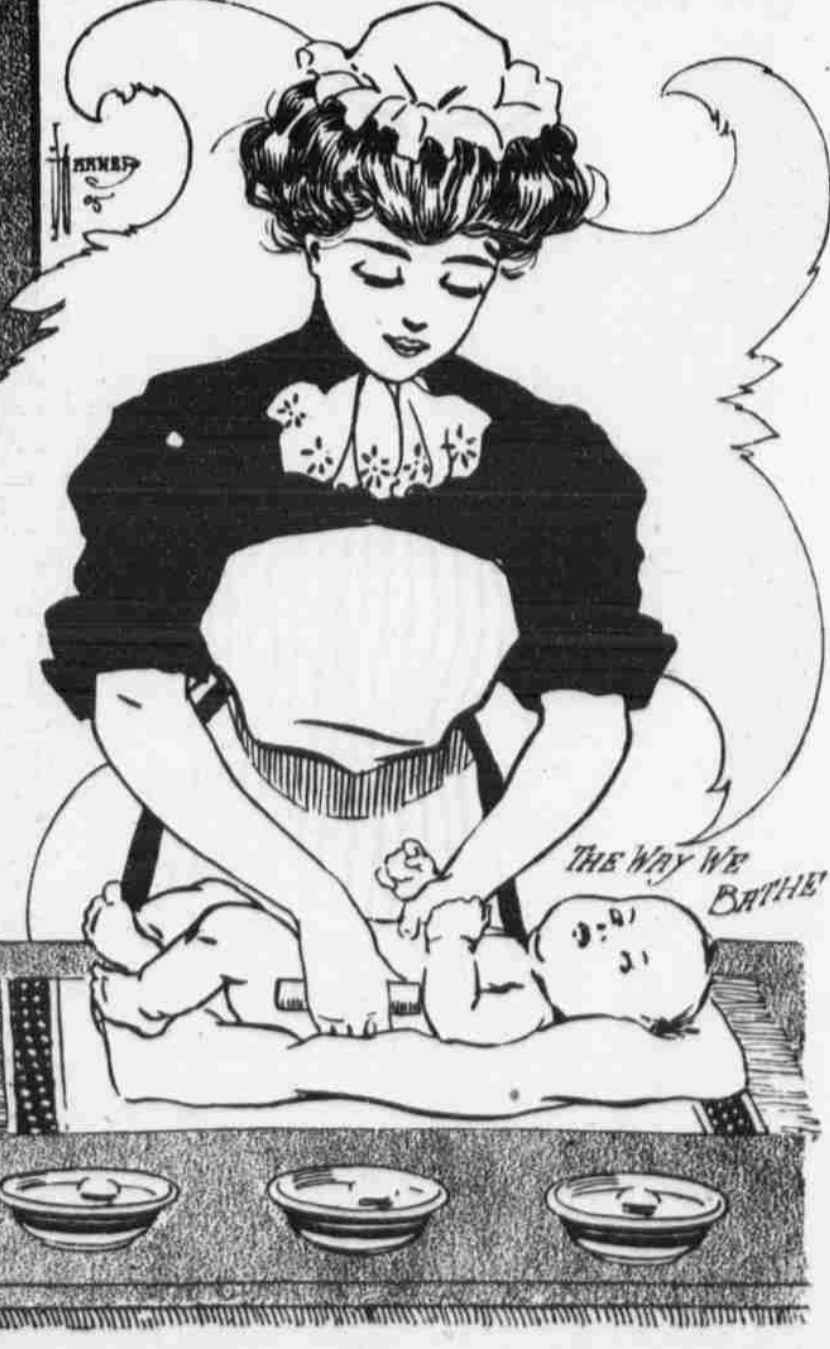
Poorer Babies Follow Same System.

Where a family is poor this event is not so ceremonious, but in the houses in which only one maid is kept and there is not even a real nursemaid the whole house is revolutionized in honor of the baby. The mother gets up and washes him at 6 o'clock. The little maid then takes him to the park. The mother gets breakfast, eats, and then goes to the baby. The nurse comes home, eats her breakfast, does the work, goes and buys all the things from the market, and prepares the vegetables, and puts things over for dinner. She then comes to the park again, and the mother comes home and prepares the dinner. After dinner she goes back with the maid, eats, and does up the work. They keep this up all day, so that the baby will not have to come in.

Do you wonder that this is considered a glorious country for babies? I never have a cold or sneeze. Do you?



SHIRT-SLIP-SACQUE WASHED HERE IN SWADDLING PILLOW FOR FIRST THREE MONTHS



This Way We BATH!