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THE COLONY AT LA RADE

by

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On September 8th, Helga Holbek and I went to La Rade, the colony of 62 Spanish and French children in the city, but which is in such spacious grounds that it seems like open country. The little girls were helping to cook dinner, laying the table in the dining room. The boys clear and wash the dishes. It's an hospitable place with frescoes drawn but not yet painted in the school room. The children are painting them - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The house is crowded with children, even though many of the Belgians have now gone off and the beds are close together because it's kinder to do that than to refuse help.

We have used La Rade also as a day nursery and after dinner two little brothers, 8 and 6, started home - 5 kilometers away. I wish you could see the weight charts to see how the numbers rise after a month in this house. We know something of the need in the city and it was brought home sharply to us when one of the teachers in the school where we take many of the children as are of school age said: "Your children look so well. Their bodies are almost round as children's bodies should be. See the others, how pinched their faces are. We dread the winter." If you can get us money we can give these other children milk, for all over France fathers are among the 2 million in prison camps or have come home tired and discouraged and without work. There are the children, too, of the dispossessed and every day we have calls for milk for them and every day we hear about new colonies of forgotten children who need help.