

The Society for the Health of  
Women and Children of Victoria

Munket System.

— Third —  
Annual Report

1922-23



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Brunswick :  
Hickling & Powell, Printers.  
48 Lygon Street.

THE JOURNAL OF THE  
SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHITECTS

Vol. 10

# The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria.

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## PLUNKET SYSTEM.

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HER EXCELLENCY LADY STRADBROKE

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The Society for the Study of the History of the

University of Virginia

Vol. 1, No. 1, 1901

Published by the Society for the Study of the History of the University of Virginia

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# The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria.

(PLUNKET SYSTEM)

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## THIRD ANNUAL REPORT.

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To the Members,—

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with much pleasure the Council of your Society presents its Third Annual Report.

During the past year the Society has made steady progress. Its work is becoming more and more widely recognised, and its value to the community, especially in those districts where the Society's Centres are situated, is now very greatly appreciated.

### INFANT MORTALITY.

Although, as a Health Society, the organisation is more concerned in the rearing of healthy babies than in the infant mortality rates, it is, nevertheless, gratifying to be in a position to state that an appreciable decrease in the death rate has been maintained in those municipalities in which a Plunket Nurse is in charge of the Centre. The figures for last year per 100 births were:—Footscray, 4.8; Williamstown, 6.1; Coburg, 7.4; Preston, 7.6.

### PROPAGANDA.

Much time and attention has been given to this important branch of the Society's work. Its pamphlets have been widely distributed, and are much appreciated. Addresses and demonstrations have been given from time to time to mothers and others interested. Letters from mothers seeking advice in the rearing of their children have been received from all parts of the State, and full replies furnished.

There is a good demand for Dr. Truby King's publications, and the fact that this Society is in a position to say that they are carrying out his methods in their entirety inspires confidence in those desirous of learning how best to safeguard themselves and their infants. It is of interest to note that last year Dr. Truby King's book, "The Feeding and Care of Baby," was translated into Russian, Polish and the Spanish language, thus showing how widely recognised his system is.

Country Municipal Councils have been communicated with, and their attention drawn to the necessity of doing all that lies within their power to conserve infant life, and setting forth the value of the Plunket System. Several favourable replies have already been received.

For the fourth time, the Society had an educational exhibit and rest-room for mothers at the Royal Show. It is felt that the Royal Show offers a great opportunity for extending a knowledge of the Society's system and work. Demonstrations on simple methods of keeping the baby's milk cool during the hot months; the proper way to put an infant to rest; how to make a bed for a premature baby, and the correct way to clothe a baby excited great interest amongst crowds of spectators. Patterns of the simple hygienic clothing which the Society advocates were distributed free of charge. Diagrams and charts bearing on the welfare of mother and babe were all the time on view. Matron Moreland, Karitane Nurse Ross, and members of the Committee were in attendance to answer questions and distribute the Society's pamphlets. Happily a keen interest was shown by the public; a fact which makes the amount of labour involved well worth while.

#### HEALTH WEEK.

Owing to counter activities, the Society was not able to take as large a part in the Health Week Campaign as usual.

Following up their generosity of last year, the Melbourne Sports Depot again placed a window at the disposal of the Society for the week, and this was filled with posters, charts, diagrams, and a cot showing how to place baby to rest, simple directions for keeping milk cool, and many other hints for rearing normal happy children.

#### ANNUAL MEETING.

The Second Annual Meeting and Conference was held in the Queen's Hall, Collins Street, Melbourne, on Wednesday, 30th November, 1922, at 8 p.m. Dr. J. W. Springthorpe presided, and gave a most compelling address on "Our Greatest Need," wherein he pointed out that health is mankind's greatest asset, and is primarily a question of the individual and the home. He

called attention to the decreasing birthrate in Australia, especially in Victoria, and followed this up by saying, "Our Society stands fundamentally for healthy children, and the most possible. Hence we place educational and developmental work before even the actual lessening of infant mortality; though, of course, our efforts reduce this to a minimum. Safeguarding the health of expectant mothers, it does all possible for the welfare of the child—advocating breast feeding above all. It views all from the standpoint of health, not disease, preventing the latter by maintaining the former."

Dr. J. V. Griffiths, Medical Health Officer of Footscray, read an interesting paper on "The Value of Pre-natal Work," and spoke appreciatively of the work done in his district by the Plunket Nurses, which work had reduced the infantile death rate to the lowest point.

The Matron (L. C. Moreland), in her report, said that in reviewing the year's work, she was impressed by the amount of efficient practical work done by the Plunket Nurses in their several districts. In this she was not merely referring to the figures as embodied in the Annual Report, but what was more conclusive evidence, to the testimony of numbers of mothers who had benefited by the good, sound advice given by these Nurses.

### CENTRES.

Early in the year, Plunket Nurse Kirkland resigned from the Coburg Centre, owing to her approaching marriage, and Plunket Nurse Duff was appointed to the position. In consequence of the increasing amount of work in the Footscray district, it became practically impossible for one nurse to cope with it. The Municipal Council considered the matter, and decided to divide the district, so that Yarraville has now a Centre of its own. This was opened on May 23rd, 1923, and 31 babies under the Footscray Nurses' supervision were immediately placed under the Yarraville Nurse's care. The Nurse has been greatly appreciated by the mothers living in this part of the district, as is shown by the increasing number of attendants at the rooms for advice.

The Centre at Preston has experienced many changes during the year. Plunket Nurse Patterson resigned, and there being no Plunket Nurse available at the time, a trained Nurse with considerable knowledge of Plunket methods was appointed to act directly under the supervision of the Matron until such time as a fully qualified Plunket Nurse could be obtained. Plunket Nurse Hall next took charge for a short period. The former Nurse then returned to the position, and it has been arranged that she is to enter the Society's Training School and take the prescribed



course as soon as possible. Although Preston is down in the Society's list of Centres at the present moment, it cannot, until such time as it employs a fully qualified Plunket Nurse, be definitely claimed as a Plunket Centre.

To accommodate the mothers of Spotswood and Newport (who found the distance to the Town Hall at Williamstown rather more than they could manage), the Municipal Council opened a sub-centre at Newport, where the Plunket Nurse can be interviewed two afternoons a week.

**Summary of Work done by Plunket Nurses in their several Centres for the year ending 31st October, 1923.**

Name of Centre	Visits of Adults and Babies to Rooms	Visits paid by Plunket Nurses to Homes	Number of New Cases for Year, Babies only	Number of Babies Entirely Breast Fed	Number of Babies, Breast Fed, Complimented
Coburg ...	7866	520	494	347	10
Footscray ...	4256	1349	311	225	55
Preston ...	1349	751	183	123	36
Williamstown	2339	1772	173	104	26
Yarraville (established 5 months)	1383	765	86	71	13

Note.—The number of visits paid to Rooms only includes those who attended for advice, *visitors are not included.*

### WATTLE DAY.

As in other years, the Society undertook its full measure of work in connection with the Annual Wattle Day Appeal for Children's Charities. On this occasion it was allotted a portion of the City in which to operate, in addition to its suburban stands. Buttons and Wattle were sold by members and helpers generally; whilst, in addition, Footscray and District erected a kiosk for the sale of goods. As a result of the combined efforts, the returns were much improved.

### ATTEMPTED CO-ORDINATION OF BABY WELFARE WORK.

In response to an invitation from the Countess of Stradbroke, representatives from your Society attended at State Government House on the 13th March last to discuss the possibility of amalgamating the work of Baby Health Centres and of the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria. The State Treasurer, Sir William McPherson, was present, and assisted in an unofficial way to try and arrive at definite conclusions. Ultimately an agreement was arrived at, and signed by representatives of both organisations, as follows:—



1. *Name*.—Mother and Child Welfare Association.
2. *Executive*.—Three representatives of Baby Health Centres; three representatives of the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria; two representatives nominated by the Municipalities; one Government nominee.
3. *Chairman*.—The Government nominee.
4. *Humanising Milk*.—At the various centres: Present practice to obtain for at least twelve months.
5. *Training of Nurses*.—Certificate to be issued by or under the authority of the Executive.
6. *Nurses at Present Engaged in Baby Welfare Work* to be exempt, but to have the opportunity of qualifying later on.
7. *Assets and Liabilities*.—These to be pooled by both Associations.
8. On the Executive there should be neither Medical Men nor Women.

In due course this agreement was presented to your Executive for consideration, and, after full discussion, the following resolution was carried:—

“That, subject to the consent of Mr. J. T. Tweddle, by whose generosity the Training Home at Footscray was established, this Society agrees to the Amalgamation with the Baby Health Centres Association on the terms and conditions of the Agreement made at the conference called by Lady Stradbroke and held at State Government House on 13th March, 1923. Provided that the Municipal representatives be approved, one by each Society.”

Following upon the passing of the resolution, Mr. Tweddle was interviewed by a sub-committee appointed for the purpose; the position explained to him; and his opinion asked. After a number of questions had been asked and answered, he said that he would give his consent to the scheme. This he did in writing the next day; and thereupon the Countess of Stradbroke and the State Government were so informed. It was subsequently learned that the Baby Health Centres' Association declined to proceed with the proposals, and as a consequence the efforts made by the Countess of Stradbroke and the State Treasurer went for nothing.

Not discouraged, however, the State Treasurer later on called a conference of the Municipalities. To this conference he explained the Government's strong desire to co-ordinate all Baby Welfare Work, and to that end he suggested for their consideration and acceptance the following plan:—

1. A Nominee Board of seven members. The chairman and three others to be Government nominees—two at least to be ladies—the remaining *three* to be nominees of the Municipalities; two to be ladies.

2. The nominee Board to have attached to it a Medical Board of advice of three members; the members to be nominated by the B.M.A.

3. The Nominee Board to permit both systems of Infant Welfare Work to continue for twelve months, but, either before or at the expiration of that period, to submit a report as to the better one to the Government.

4. If the Government proposals be accepted the subsidies to continue; if not, the Municipalities concerned to find all the funds required.

What exactly happened to these proposals is not quite clear. It would appear that certain Municipalities accepted them; whilst others—a majority—rejected them. Thus a second attempt to bring the two Baby Welfare Organisations into agreement did not meet with an all-round acceptance. Nevertheless, the Government has appointed its four nominees, and, so it is understood, should the Municipalities fail to nominate representatives, the work will proceed without them. Just precisely what that work will be has not yet been made manifest, but it is generally believed that as previously decided the new body will exercise a general supervision over Infant Welfare Work, and advise the Government with regard to efficiency and finance.

In fairness to this Society, it has to be stated that, throughout all the efforts made, it has loyally supported the Government, notwithstanding the fact that it has thereby been prevented from making public appeals for monetary assistance, or from extending its operations as fully as it desired.

### TWEDDLE TRAINING SCHOOL.

The buildings for the Training School, Baby Hospital, and School of Mothercraft at Footscray are now completed. Their erection is due to the splendid generosity of Mr. J. T. Tweddle, who has been pleased to permit his name to be permanently attached thereto.

In readiness for the work of the School a Medical Consultant has been appointed, and also a Medical Advisory Board as under:

Medical Consultant: Dr. J. V. Griffiths.

Medical Advisory Board: Dr. J. W. Springthorpe and Dr. Allen Robertson.

Hon. Medical Consultant: Dr. F. Truby-King

*It is with very great regret, however, that your Council has to report that, largely owing to the events referred to under the previous headings, it has so far been found impossible to secure all the moneys necessary for equipment.*

#### SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR EQUIPMENT.

Owing to the truly magnificent efforts of Mrs. Springthorpe, Mrs. Totton, and the ladies of the various Centres associated with her, the recent Baby Show and Fete held in her residence and grounds was a very great success, financially and otherwise. There were nearly 400 entries, and, in addition to the various prizes, over 300 babies received a certificate for having obtained 75 per cent. and over of the total marks. The educational value of the Show is of the greatest importance, and promises to grow. The judges at the Show were Matron Moreland, Drs. C. Perry, Allen Robertson and Springthorpe, and they will shortly prepare for publication a report on the aims and basis of the examination, the causes of failure, and the way to success. Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Hume Cook, and other ladies have also been the means of adding materially to the Society's funds in various other directions.

Lastly, a number of generous donors have, by their subscriptions and donations in goods, added very considerably to the Society's resources. In all, the strenuous efforts of the past two months has made some £700 available in cash and in kind towards equipping various sections of the Training School and Baby Hospital. But much more is required (especially for maintenance) before the actual training of Nurses can begin, and be successfully continued. The Society, therefore, confidently relies upon all its well-wishers to, as soon as possible, find the wherewithal to carry out this extremely important part of its work.

#### FINANCE.

A statement setting out the receipts and expenditure and the condition of the Society's funds is attached. A list of donors will also be found on the last page.

Members are reminded that their Annual Subscription is now due. The Council would consider it a favour to have as many as possible become life members at the fee of £5 5s.; and would be glad to have their assistance in enrolling other members, whether Life or Annual.

#### THANKS.

The Council wishes to place on record its warmest thanks to all those who have contributed, either in cash or in kind, throughout the year,

It also desires to express its appreciation of the work done by the Nurses in the several Centres and of their unselfish devotion to duty. It is largely due to their efforts that the merits of the Plunket System are becoming so widely recognised and approved. Above all, it expresses its appreciation of the devotion, skill and enthusiasm of Matron Moreland, whose services have been beyond computation.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, your Council is pleased to be able to record the fact that the Executive has regularly met and effectively carried out its duties. The ladies and gentlemen composing that body are all gratuitously giving their services to the cause, and it is particularly gratifying to know that their enthusiasm and their efforts are reflected in the Society's wider sphere of usefulness and greater measure of prosperity.

On behalf of the Council,

DR. J. W. SPRINGTHORPE,

J. HUME COOK, Hon. Secretary.

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## The Tweddle School of Mothercraft and Hospital for Babies.

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### PLUNKET SYSTEM.

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#### Trustees :

Dr. J. W. SPRINGTHORPE  
Hon. J. HUME COOK  
Mr. F. N. VINCENT

#### Hon. Medical Board :

Dr. J. W. SPRINGTHORPE  
Dr. ALLEN ROBERTSON

#### Hon. Medical Consultant :

Dr. J. V. GRIFFITHS



# The Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria

(PLUNKET SYSTEM)

## Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for Year ended 31st Oct., 1923

<i>Receipts</i>			<i>Expenditure.</i>		
To	Members' Fees	£10 0 0	By	Debit Balance, 31/10/22	£64 19 2
	Donations	541 5 1		Salaries	310 15 0
	Grant from Wattle Day Fund, 1922	30 0 0		Printing and Stationery	19 7 0
	Grant from Wattle Day Fund, 1923	60 0 0		Refresher Course for Matron, New Zealand	50 0 0
	Footscray Council, Rent of Room	13 0 0		Show Ground Expenses	23 15 0
	Linen Afternoon (Mrs. Anderson)	5 1 0		Fete Expenses	10 10 0
	Dance (Mrs. Hume Cook)	21 2 0		Petty Cash, Postages, etc.	27 0 0
	Garden Fete and Baby Show, Dr. and Mrs. Springthorpe, and Coburg, Preston, Footscray, Yarraville and Williams-town Centres	213 8 3		Incidentals	7 18 3
	Incidentals	14 11 6			£514 4 5
		£908 7 10		Credit Balance:	
				Commercial Bank of Aust/lasia	£358 16 11
				In hand	35 6 6
					394 3 5
					£908 7 10

## BUILDING FUND.

<i>Receipts</i>			<i>Expenditure</i>		
To	Proceeds of Bonds	£3434 5 0	By	Buildings	£3878 16 6
	Commercial Bank of Aust/lasia (Overdraft)	495 14 5		Furniture	27 9 0
				Insurance	11 7 1
				Telephone	5 0 0
				Interest on Overdraft	14 6 10
		£3929 19 5			£3929 19 5

## Statement of Affairs at 31st October, 1923.

<i>Liabilities</i>			<i>Assets.</i>		
Commercial Bank of Aust/lasia (Overdraft)	£495 14 5		Buildings, less 5 per cent. depreciation	£3678 5 0	
Sundry Creditors	34 13 7		Furniture, less 5 per cent. depreciation	54 15 0	
Surplus of Assets over Liabilities	3452 12 0		Equipment—Donations in kind	250 0 0	
	£3983 0 0			£3983 0 0	

Audited and found correct,

DAVIS & RAVEN, F.C.P.A., Auditors.

## DONATIONS.

Allen & Sons, Richard	£5	5	0	Hollings, D., & Sons	2	2	0
Angliss & Co., W.	25	0	0	Johnson, Mrs. J.	1	1	0
Anderson, Mrs. F. J.				Kneen, Mrs.	1	0	0
(Linen Afternoon)	5	1	0	Kronheimer Trust	5	0	0
Anderson, Mrs. F. J.	5	0	0	Larcher, Mrs. Alice	7	7	0
Arnold, Best & Co.,				Larcher, Mrs. Alice,			
Sydney	2	2	0	proceeds Afternoon			
Aronson & Co.	0	5	0	Tea	1	10	0
Ball & Welch	5	5	0	Levy, H. L.	1	1	0
Bedgood & Co.	25	0	0	Levy, Mrs. L. J.	5	5	0
Bell & Co., James	5	5	0	Levy, Miss Laura	5	5	0
Billis, Miss	0	10	0	Meyer, F.	25	0	0
Bingle, John	2	2	0	McPherson Pty. Ltd.	5	5	0
Borthwick & Co.	3	3	0	Napier, Theodora	10	10	0
Brooks, Robinson & Co.	10	10	0	Newstead Bros.	1	1	0
Brodie, Malcolm	5	5	0	Northcote Brick Co.	2	2	0
Barnet Glass Rubber Co.	3	3	0	Poolman, Mrs. H.	2	2	0
Brunton & Co., Thos.	1	1	0	Parker, Mrs. Hubert	5	5	0
Burrell, Watkinson &				Reid & Co.	5	5	0
Co.	1	1	0	Rowlands, Mrs.	0	10	6
Cliff & Bunting	0	5	0	Robertson, Dr. Allen	5	5	0
Cornibere Bros.	25	0	0	Simpson, L.	0	5	0
Cumming, Smith & Co.	10	0	0	Springthorpe, Dr. &			
Cook, Mrs. Hume	1	1	0	Mrs. J. W. (proceeds			
Cook, Mrs. Hume (pro-				of Fete)	213	8	3
ceeds of dance)	21	2	0	Stephens, J. H.	2	0	0
Crocker, Mrs.	0	10	0	Stott, Mrs. Harold	2	2	0
Danks, A. T.	25	0	0	Stock, E. J.	25	0	0
Davies, Doery Pty. Ltd.	5	5	0	Truby-King, Dr. F.	50	10	0
Frame & Co.	1	1	0	Trustees Edward Wil-			
Fuller, W. P. C.	0	10	0	son Estate	100	0	0
Greer, James	1	1	0	Trustees Felton Bequest	20	0	0
Griffiths, J.	2	2	0	"Wattle Day" Grants	90	0	0
Hallenstein, Mrs. Lucie	3	3	0	Western District Co-			
Hatt, Mrs. H.	0	5	0	operative Co.	0	10	6
Haughton, Wm., & Co.	5	5	0	Whybrow, A.	25	0	0
Irving, Misses, proceeds				Young, Mrs. Jean S.	5	5	0
"Lauriston" Enter-							
tainment	40	0	0				

## DONATIONS IN KIND.

Footscray Ladies' Linen Afternoon, pillow slips and sheets; Mrs. Martin, Linen Afternoon, towels; Mrs. Anderson, Linen Afternoon, sheets and towels; Craig, Williamson Pty. Ltd., carpet and surround; Patterson, Laing & Bruce, towelling, crepe; Myers Pty. Ltd., blankets; W. Liddell & Co., sheets; Chambers & Seymour, saucepans; McNaughton, Love & Co., blankets; Hicks, Atkinson, casement cloth; Bernard & Co., pictures; Barlow & Jones, sheets; Walker & Hall, spoons and forks; Bussell, Robson Pty. Ltd., tablecloths; George & George Pty. Ltd., sheets; D. & W. Murray Ltd., towelling; Webb & Sons, dinner set; Mrs. Larcher, linen; Williamstown Centre, cot and chair; Zevenboom & Co., brooms.





