

we have a reliable physician of the place in attendance. He must be recommended by some responsible people of the community in which he lives. We have been fortunate, however; we have had only two sick children during the year.

In our office the envelope system is used, and all bills and items connected with a case are filed in the envelope, saving time and clerical work. We take only such cases as can be cured; by cured I mean where the parents can be made self-supporting. We received applications for fifty-four children; twenty, which we found hopeless, we turned over to the city and state, and took care of thirty-two ourselves. Of the thirty-two we have been able to return twenty-four, as the parents have become self-supporting during the past year. The other eight are in a fair way to help themselves shortly. Our entire expenditure for caring for these children was \$940.06, which covers only about half the actual outlay for board, clothing and medical attendance; the balance was paid by the parents, who, after placing their children, were in a position to go out to work. Soon after establishing themselves they contributed part and later the whole amount of the board. A close supervision is kept over the parent, and as we place most of them at work, and are in touch with the employers, we manage to keep track of their circumstances. At first, they pay fifty cents, then a dollar, increasing as their income increases, until they pay the full amount of board, clothing and medical attendance.

In this way, not only have the children been cared for, but the ties of responsibility of the parents have not been severed. The burden has been lifted; still the responsibility has rested on the parents. Two of the parents died while the children were in our care, and they were adopted by private families—those who boarded them.

It is a pleasure to notice the attachment that springs up between the children and the families who board them. Whenever a child has to be returned to its parents, I think of the good home and care it is leaving to return to its home, at the best in a less healthful location.

In my opinion there is a large field for this work, and for the state of Massachusetts I have great hopes. It can not be expected that success will come without effort. My experience teaches me that children brought up in these families are more natural

than those brought up in institutions. They receive from the families love and care, which under more fortunate circumstances they would receive from their parents.

It has taught me that through this work we accomplish a triple education: we educate the children how to live; we educate the parents who visit the boarding houses and thus see the different modes of living, and at the same time educate those who wish to board the children to live up to the standard, so that they may be permitted to board our children.

Results prove that we were right to begin this work though it will take years to achieve success. It teaches that unless work is done by capable people it can do more harm than good, and that it requires personal service. You will find that in the history of almost every boarding institution it took years to establish a sufficient number of good families in which to place children, and so it has been with us. Some of our first applicants for boarding children have been weeded out and replaced by others more competent, and the applications made to us now are more fitted for our purpose. Again, after some experience, an association will be better able to select the proper homes for children of different temperament.

It also illustrates that there are numbers of married people without children who will take these children with the actual intention of adopting them later.

“THE ORPHAN GUARDIAN SOCIETY OF  
PHILADELPHIA.”

DR. BERNHEIMER, OF PHILADELPHIA.

I well remember some references to the Familien Waisen Erziehungs Verein that were made when I went to the religious school and the synagogue under the rabbinate of the late Rev. Dr. Samuel Hirsch, the founder of the society. At that time the references made but a faint impression upon me, for I was not particularly interested in the solution of charity problems. Nor, I must confess, as I grew older and social work began to appeal to me more strongly, did the activity of this society come much more into my consciousness. There was no finely appointed building, no periodical parade of the children under its care, no great hullabaloo about the magnificent showing it was making. For thirty-

four years this society has pursued its silent career. Its change of name to the present one of The Orphans' Guardians was in accordance with the spirit by which the organizations of our German parents were transformed into English-speaking institutions. Its formal object is simply stated in the words: "To foster orphans of Jewish faith, place them with respectable Jewish families, care for their education and enable them to enjoy the benefits of family life." Now, the principle of the society is one which, as I have studied the question, has impressed me more and more, and it is because of the principle of this old Philadelphia organization that we find it of interest and of practical value to examine into its workings.

The carrying-out of the society's object can best be stated in the terms of one who has been its president for a number of years, Mr. Arnold Kohn. In his report to the meeting of May 30, 1900, he said: "Our purpose is primarily to assist mothers in raising their own children when the circumstances surrounding them are such as to render that impossible without financial aid. When the children are unfortunately deprived of their mothers, or when a mother is not a proper person to raise her child, the little ones are placed in the care of some near relative or willing friend. Our theory is that those to whom a child is dearest are those who are best able to rear it. We believe that a good home, in the real and narrow sense of the word, is the proper place for a developing child, and as far as it is in our power, we keep it there. Instead of lessening a poor mother's burden by removing her child we help her bear it by paying to her the cost of the child's keep. . . . As an additional help and safeguard each child becomes the ward of a member of the society, to whom is assigned the duty of supervising its education and general development."

The system by which the society works can be ascertained from the following provisions in reference to guardians, taken from the Constitution:

"The board of officers shall elect two guardians, one gentleman and lady for each orphan adopted. When more than one child is adopted from the same family the same guardians may be elected for all.

"All guardians, in conjunction with the board of officers, shall

select respectable Jewish families of Philadelphia, and place with them their wards.

"The guardians shall enter into a written agreement with such families in duplicate form and lay such agreement before the officers for their approval.

"It is the duty of such guardians to visit the families with whom their wards are placed as often as convenient, and report monthly of the progress and health of their wards."

These extracts from the President's report and the Constitution give essentially the working basis upon which the society has been going. It will be observed that the society in its entirety is by no means an embodiment of the placing-out or boarding-out system, as most of its wards are placed in or kept in the families of which they are the natural members. The cases are mostly of instances in which the father has died and the mother is unable to maintain the care of one or more of the children. A weekly sum is paid to the mother until such time as the child is self-supporting or the mother no longer needs the aid, because of additions to the family income.

Of the thirty-six (36) children, sixteen (16) boys and twenty (20) girls, at present in the care of the society, all but seven (7) are with their mothers. This is a proportion of about one-fifth (1-5) placed outside their families. This proportion has been no larger in past years; that is, about four-fifths (4-5) of the total of one hundred and forty-one (141) different wards which the society has had in its charge during its entire existence have remained in their own families. Consequently, many questions which would apply to placing-out or boarding-out would not ordinarily apply to these wards.

The average sum paid for the care of each child is \$2.50 per week, which makes the average cost of maintenance of the present number of children, including the small incidental expenses of the society, in the neighborhood of \$5,000 per year.

As the name of the society implies, the individual officers who look after particular children are guardians, and the value and effectiveness of the organization depend upon the conscientiousness with which the guardians look after the children under their supervision. If a guardian is negligent and the mother or caretaker not competent, the child suffers. The entire system is volun-

tary and depends upon the devotion of those who promote its work. The President has general supervision and makes inspection of families from time to time.

Being thrown into such close personal contact the guardians can be helpful in many ways. When the children have been ready to work, they have in numerous instances secured them employment. Even after the close of any formal relationship the guardians often continue to be friends of the children and their families.

The question naturally arises, if the society is a good organization, why does it not grow? I am not prepared to answer that question as satisfactorily as I had hoped. It seems to me there is a lack of ambition on the part of the Jewish community to have it grow. But this may be merely because it has been educated in the idea of institutionalism. There appears, however, to be a somewhat similar lack on the part of those who conduct the society. This seems to be the result of a combination of causes: a reflex of the feeling of the community, an inability to obtain more funds, an inability, perhaps, to secure proper families in the city, and an inadequate working of the system through volunteer guardians.

We may, therefore, deduce for the purpose of our discussion on the general subject of dependent children, that the Philadelphia society practically acts as a relief-giving agency for the majority of its wards, retaining, however, a supervising and friendly visiting agency in the persons of its guardians; that, because of the difficulties of a volunteer system, there is no distinct encouragement for the boarding-out or placing-out idea; that, however, the continuance of the society even on the limited scale of its present existence argues no real discouragement to the essential principles underlying this idea, but merely a conservative, modified execution of it; that it would be possible to broaden the scope of such a society along the lines of child-placing agencies by adopting the system of such agencies through paid officials and the putting of children in homes outside of the city.

#### POSSIBILITY OF PLACING-OUT CHILDREN IN THE JERSEY COLONIES.

Coming now to the possibilities of extending the system of placing-out or boarding-out among children other than orphans, that is, dependent, neglected and delinquent children generally, we have a problem which Jewish communities of the larger cities must meet. In view of the general treatment of this subject in the report of the special committee, I shall restrict myself merely to some investigation on the subject which was not included in that report.

In order to be in a position to answer the question whether or not it was possible to place Jewish children with Jewish families amid rural surroundings, I paid a visit to the colonies of Norma and Alliance in New Jersey. I explained very clearly the purpose of my visit, stating that I did not come as the representative of a society which was ready to give orphan and other children into the charge of families, but that I merely desired to ascertain whether, should such a plan be adopted by a society, there were families that were willing to accept them. Directing myself first to the village postoffice and grocery store of Norma, my purpose was soon made known to several of the families roundabout, and I found them willing and anxious to take little boarders such as I had described to them as possibilities. I endeavored to explain that such children would have to be taken into the families and sent to school, cared for and treated like one's own children. The sum per week that could be agreed upon was difficult, as I had suggested \$2 and \$2.50, whereas those best able to take care of children wanted \$3.00. However, it was sufficient for my purpose to have discovered families of the colonists who, from all indications, seemed to be in a position to take children and let them grow up in the country atmosphere, away from the tempting inducements of city life.

I visited the homes of some half a dozen families in Norma and Alliance that expressed their willingness to take children and apparently understood the obligations that would be imposed upon them. Some of these families have had summer boarders and have therefore had some experience in providing for persons in addition to their immediate families. One of the oldest residents had half a dozen years ago five patients of the Montefiore Home for Chronic Invalids, of New York City, as inmates of his house

for nearly a year, this being prior to the establishment of the sanitarium of the Home. The farmer has a wife and four children at home and could easily accommodate one or two more. A widow who has but her grandson of ten living with her, expressed her willingness to take care of additional boys. A farmer of long residence in the colony, who lives with his wife and one boy, said he could give accommodation to others. Another old resident farmer living with his wife and two daughters (13 and 17 years of age, respectively) could also make adequate provision for additional inmates of his house.

The statements that I have made as the result of personal interviews and observation should be sufficient to convince the skeptic that if there is any real desire to put children with private families and let them grow up in salubrious surroundings, it would be worth while investigating the possibilities of the two colonies to which I have referred, and others adjacent to them.

Rosenhayn is not far distant from Norma and Alliance; and from information I have received I feel confident inquiry would show that there were equal possibilities there. I was told of one boy from New York City, who, because of misbehavior, was sent by his parents to this colony and placed in the care of a private family, that he was attending school and giving a good account of himself.

Carmel is another colony in the vicinity with a similar group of settlers, and an experiment would doubtless include it among the places to which children might be sent.

A small start in boarding-out has actually been made by the Young Women's Union of Philadelphia in the placing of two (2) children that had come into its custody through the Juvenile Court. They have been put with families in the colony of Woodbine, N. J. They have been there so short a time that it would hardly be fair to make much of an inference as to the result. One of the children, who was said to be incorrigible, has not done as well as the other, who has given satisfaction. Perhaps it would be expecting too much of a boy charged with being incorrigible to be suddenly transformed into a thoroughly well-behaved person simply because he was placed in Woodbine Colony. If, however, children charged with delinquency give fair satisfaction to families in New Jersey colonies, may we not give desti-

tute and neglected children at least a chance? The inquiries set afoot by the Young Women's Union at Woodbine, have developed the fact that places could be found for additional children. It will doubtless be necessary for this organization, to which the duty of looking after delinquent children accused in the Juvenile Court, has been assigned, to make further provisions for the maintenance of such whose home surroundings are in the opinion of the judges not proper, and for whom there appears to be no place in existing Jewish institutions.

According to the experience of other agencies it would be unwise to place a large number of children in any one vicinity. So the Jersey colonies would merely be an outlet for a limited number at best. It would, however, be well worth while setting in operation the necessary machinery to try an experiment with these colonies. Undoubtedly, those who want to find difficulties and obstacles to placing-out or boarding-out will be afforded plenty of opportunities for criticism, especially at the outset, for it will take knowledge, experience, energy and tact to put such a system into practice and carefully maintain it. The question of caring for Jewish children should be met in a broad spirit. Why not devise measures to ascertain good homes, arrange to place a small number of children, appoint a competent official to look after them from time to time, and if the results warrant, considering the difficulties of introducing a new system, proceed to develop the plan on a larger scale? Then we shall be in a position to know whether we can not, among Jews, establish and maintain a plan which has given satisfaction among non-Jews.

#### JUVENILE DELINQUENTS AND PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mrs. HANNAH SOLOMON, CHICAGO.

In presenting the subject of Delinquency I speak of a comparatively new field in Jewish philanthropy. This work is one that is not only new, but unpopular; and in order to establish itself those interested must be willing to overcome a very strong prejudice on the part of the older workers in charity as well as the indifference of the community at large toward those whom they regard as enemies to society, whether they are children or adults. What I shall say is largely the result of experience gained in the Bureau of Personal Service of the Ninth Ward of Chicago, the