

A NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

During the winter of 1913-14 a study was made of the neighborhood of which the Council Educational Alliance of Cleveland is the center. A considerable quantity of data and statistics was secured, of which the following paragraphs are an interpretive summary:

DISTRICT

The district chosen for the study is bounded by Central and Croton Avenues on the north and south, and East Thirty-first and East Fifty-fifth Streets on the west and east, comprising an area of about 290 acres, occupied by approximately 30,000 people. Eighty per cent of the population is Jewish, with a scattering of Italians, Negroes, Bohemians, Hungarians and other nationalities. An analysis of the school census of the last ten years indicates a decided sweep of the Jewish population toward the east. Harmon School at East Twentieth Street, which enrolled 87 per cent Jewish children in 1903-04, reported only 17 per cent in 1913-14, while Outhwaite School at East Forty-sixth Street, reporting 37 per cent Jewish children in 1903-04, shows 95.3 per cent in 1913-14. At the west end of the district the Italians are rapidly replacing other nationalities.

HOUSING

The Alliance neighborhood is not a uniform district with the same housing conditions throughout.

It has both good and bad sections. The east end (from Fortieth to Fifty-fifth Streets, between Central and Woodland Avenues), where many of the houses are still occupied by old families, is as typical of good housing conditions as the remainder of the district is typical of the worst housing conditions. Therefore averages mean nothing.

In spite of the excellent conditions in almost one-half of the district, 17 per cent of the buildings are on rear or center lots; 40.3 per cent of the people of the neighborhood live in tenements, *i. e.*, buildings housing three or more families, in many of which the public parts of the building are in bad repair and unclean. There is much house and room overcrowding and there

are still a number of families that use sanitary facilities and water supply in common. Dark and poorly ventilated rooms are to be found. Rents are high, because of the accessibility of the neighborhood, though better housing accommodations for less money can be obtained in other parts of the city.

HEALTH

The Neighborhood is well provided with health agencies such as the babies' dispensaries; the East Fifty-fifth Street Dispensary, the Visiting Nurses' Association, and the District Physician. Perhaps as a result, health conditions are comparatively good. Tuberculosis claimed 6½ per thousand inhabitants of the district. During the year of 1913 only 6.4 per cent of deaths of babies under 2 years of age occurred in the Alliance neighborhood.

EDUCATION

Five public schools minister to the educational needs of the children with a total enrollment in October, 1913, of 6,461 pupils, of whom 80 per cent were Jewish. Public Elementary Night Schools are maintained in three of the buildings with a total enrollment of about 1,300 pupils.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

In 1913, of all the Juvenile Court cases in the city, 8 per cent were in the Alliance neighborhood, 8.5 per cent of all the cases were Jewish and 44.3 per cent of the Jewish delinquency was in the Alliance neighborhood. There were fourteen cases of delinquency to every thousand Jewish children in the neighborhood, and three times as many per thousand among the non-Jewish children in this district.

RECREATION

The recreation facilities of the neighborhood may be divided into non-commercial or public agencies and commercial or private agencies. The non-commercial recreational facilities for the 30,000 people of the district, approximately 6,000 of whom are children, comprise three supervised playgrounds, open in summer only, three gymnasiums, two libraries and the Council

Educational Alliance. The playgrounds were open from June 23d to August 30th daily during the summer of 1913. The average daily attendance at the three playgrounds was 519 in a district in which the elementary school registration was over 6,000. This means that fewer than 10 per cent of all the children in the neighborhood

were accommodated by the public playground facilities during the summer of 1913. Private and commercial recreation facilities in the district included ten moving picture shows, eight dance halls, eleven poolrooms and a large number of saloons and candy shops, which, of course, are used more or less as gathering places.

SETTLEMENT IN SMALL SOUTHERN COMMUNITIES

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By Miriam Blaustein, Norfolk

Every social worker, whether the professional or the volunteer, should make a complete study and survey of his or her community, so as to be fully informed as to which problems are purely local ones and which should receive "general treatment." He or she must rely for help on organized forces, State laws, local ordinances, city departments and many volunteer agencies. The social worker will find his particular problem "dovetailing" with other problems that must be studied and worked out jointly if anything is to be achieved. All social problems are interrelated and hang upon one another like limbs on the tree. It is true that small communities do not suffer from many of the things resulting from congestion of population and such as affect larger places, but often we find conditions and situations that are local ones and that can only be remedied by those who have given time and study as to what should be the best solution of them.

The economic, industrial, political and social life of small conservative Jewish communities in the South have undergone many radical changes during the last decade. The coming together of different groups of people, each one having their own group standards, has brought about chaotic conditions and misunderstandings of all sorts. Here is where the "social-doctor"—the one who can adjust and who can bring about a mutual and sympathetic understanding of each other's ways—is more necessary in communities of smaller size than in the larger ones. In a city of vast area, where different groups are not obliged to come in contact, where each group separately is large enough to maintain their respective institutions and organizations—the situa-

tion is far better than where each small group is constantly thrown in contact with the other, where they cannot meet on common ground, because, *as yet*, they have no common interests and where, alas! no leader can be found among them all who can adjust situations or bring about a harmonious blending of these different people. In these smaller conservative Jewish communities there are often to be found "self-appointed" leaders—those who claim they have the right to be such because of their priority of residence in that particular locality. The writer could not begin to relate the amount of conflict that these "self-constituted" leaders have brought about or the amount of discontent and unhappiness that they are responsible for. These "would-be" leaders have lived so long in their narrow, provincial environment that the incoming of a stranger is regarded by them as a positive intrusion.

The writer wishes to give a hint as to how to bring about a more orderly state of affairs in these small but growing localities, where new settlers continue to come in numbers. Here is the lesson for the social worker to learn, who comes to work in these places. The first requisite toward bringing about more ideal conditions is to establish a communal center—a common meeting place—where each group can adjust itself to an environment that will ultimately lead to perfect assimilation and a perfect whole. Group standards are justifiable, but a standard above these must be held up and this is usually the accepted standard of the country. An adaptation to new surroundings and the contact with the best and highest ideas, whether they can be gained through the medium of literature, art, music or other sources, are some

of the methods that should be used. The writer makes a strong plea for the establishment of settlements or communal centers—or call them what you will—that are necessary in communities of smaller size where problems affecting the social life of the people are more of an issue than those affecting their physical welfare.

The settlement never was intended for the immigrant alone, but for every American as well. It can be one of the greatest factors for presenting the best in American ideals and ideas and the real Jewish settlement, so beautifully outlined by Dr. Emanuel Sternheim, in a paper read before the National Conference of Jewish Charities—can combine all these and be the greatest factor of all for the advancement of its Jewish residents. The influence of such an institution on that part of the population with which it comes in contact can be one of remarkable power for righteousness and intellectual advancement.

Dr. Sternheim describes the ideal Jewish settlement as "one that breathes the Jewish spirit, which shall bring home to the Jew an historic consciousness * * * which shall bring home to the American Jewish youth of the sterner sex something of the glorious history of the Jew in the past and in the realms of art, science and literature, and which shall bring home to the Jewish youth of the fairer sex the consciousness of the superiority of Jewish domesticity and of the tremendous contribution of the Jewish woman to the upbuilding of the Jewish people. * * *" Dr. Sternheim further says that in the Jewish settlement there should be "a renaissance of things spiritual, of things cultural and of things intellectual, of things asthetic, for which modern America as a whole is crying and which the Jew in America is qualified by heritage, by ability, and by an innate love of things that are comprehended by these ideas, to give to the American people of the future."

"This conception of advance in settlement work," says Dr. Sternheim, "postulates a beautiful settlement house, which shall be a model and treasure house of things beautiful—both general and Jewish, not forgetting the Jewish."

A settlement renders a threefold service: to the country-at-large, to the community in which it is situated and to the individuals who come under its influences. Dr. Warner says: "Every neighborhood should have a settlement house, the center of social and civic pride of that neighborhood." The writer begs to assure the readers that the upper west side needs one as well as the lower east side.

A settlement is sure to make better and broader neighborhoods by co-operation and keeping in touch with its neighbors. At the present moment, the writer has in mind the Chicago Hebrew Institute, which comes nearer being an expression of the highest ideals of its neighbors—a true "people's institute"—than any other she can recall at this time. A settlement must never be regarded as a charity (it dispenses neither food, money or clothing), neither should it be looked upon as a school, a church or a mission. Its aim must be, however, to develop the best and highest types of manhood and womanhood. A trade sometimes suitable to an individual's taste prepare him or her for an honorable and independent living. That is why industrial training should be included in settlements. There should be a definite plan of work carried on always in these institutions, and so it is necessary to place this work under the direction of one who has had experience along these lines.

We are now confronted with certain situations existing today in our smaller Jewish communities. As Jewish workers, looking forward to the ultimate amalgamation and assimilation of *all* Jewish peoples—one with the other—living under the flag of this "glorious republic"—we should put our shoulder to the wheel and apply the remedy. When once we make an effort to establish communal centers—a common meeting place—where all can gather, each one ready to imbibe the best and highest in Jewish and American culture, where we are ready to realize that in order to affect perfect assimilation, that we must have a mutual and sympathetic understanding of each other's ways—then and only then can we hope to have "Utopian" conditions in Jewish communal life in the smaller localities in the South.

PROCEEDINGS

Eighth Biennial Session National Conference of Jewish Charities

Memphis, May 6-8, 1914

WEDNESDAY EVENING—Continued

THE CHAIRMAN (MR. D. STERNBERG): "The National Conference will now come into its own. It would be presumption on my part to even informally present to the Conference its able presiding officer, but to the citizens of this community I esteem it not only a pleasure, but a great privilege to present the Permanent Chairman, the distinguished President of the Conference of Jewish Charities, the Honorable Cyrus L. Sulzberger. [Applause.]

[President Sulzberger read his address, "The Problems of American Jewry," which will be found on pages 10-15, of Volume IV, No. 10, of JEWISH CHARITIES. Readers will kindly note the following correction: On page 14, the statement of the cost of the Arpin colony, instead of reading "\$25,000," should read "a considerable sum besides what it cost the people themselves."]

The presidential address was followed by a paper on "Rabbi and Social Worker."

RABBI AND SOCIAL WORKER

Rabbi George Fox

Fort Worth

Many new problems have confronted the Jewish communities in these latter days of immigration. From the time that charitable endeavor was first undertaken to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands who were made homeless by medieval persecution, until today, new situations have called out solutions, some good, some bad and some in the process of trial. In the largest center of Jewish immigration, and therefore of Jewish activity, many of the older problems have been met successfully and their solutions have become the norms by which similar difficulties have been elsewhere met. Organization to a large extent has been the key to all perplexities. With organization there has come that differentiation and specialization which now characterizes the social work of every large community.

Where the needs are great enough, the income large enough and the organization strong enough to maintain in separate divisions each in charge of a social welfare specialist, everything goes well, except the occasional wrangle with the board to which the particular worker is responsible. There is, of course, in the large communities a certain amount of jealousy and enmity among the workers themselves, but tact, sometimes the necessity of having to earn a livelihood and other things keep these from creeping out, and matters run smoothly along, without any grave detriment to the work as a whole.

But there is a particular problem in the smaller cities, where the budget, the needs and the field in general are not large enough to have specialists in the various departments of a well-organized community. I refer now to the cities which support, say, one rabbi and one social worker, or perhaps two rabbis and a social worker. And right in this statement I have touched upon the whole question. I mentioned, you see, the rabbi first. I wonder whether there are not many here who believe that the social worker should have been first mentioned, if the order of importance is to be observed.

If an official poll were to be taken of those workers who have at some time or other been in communities of the size referred to, and their relations with the loyal rabbi ascertained, I am firm in the belief that we would get one of two responses. We should either be told that the rabbi knows nothing of social work, and hinders the work of the social worker, or we should be told that the rabbi takes no interest at all in the work, except to sit on the board and pretend to advise. We should find the fewest only telling us that the rabbi has any social sense, and that he really meets the requirements set for him by the worker. On the other hand, should you ask the rabbis about the workers, you will find that the greatest objection on their part to the

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