

Executive Committee Meeting

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Conference of Jewish Charities, held in New York on November 30th, was attended by President Low, Vice-President Cohen, Judge Julian W. Mack, Mr. Cyrus L. Sulzberger, Judge Nathan Bijur, Mr. Max Herzberg, Mr. Jules K. Hexter and Mr. Louis H. Levin. The principal matter that engaged the attention of the Executive Committee was the question of the desirability of obtaining a paid secretary to look after the affairs of the Conference. The business of the Conference has grown to such extent that it requires for its proper attention the entire time of a competent man. Charity affairs of national scope are being referred spontaneously by different agencies to the National Conference; organizations are seeking its advice and guidance; and it is being forced into a position of active leadership, which it must either accept or resign these important affairs into other hands.

It will require the sum of \$5000 annually to pay the salary and administration and traveling expenses of such a secretary, if he is to cover the country by personal visits, and \$3000 if he is to be an office secretary. This sum is far in excess of the present income of the Conference, and if the secretary is to be engaged, a serious attempt must be made to increase the Conference's revenue. A letter setting forth these facts is soon to be sent to individuals and organizations in touch with the Conference, and the replies received will determine whether the Conference can go progressively ahead with its work.

Another important piece of business disposed of was in connection with the Transportation Rules, which had been debated at Memphis and referred to the Executive Committee. It was deemed, too, desirable to have the views of professional workers on the Rules, which were referred to the Social Workers Conference to be held in 1915, with a request that the Rules be considered, and the result of the consideration reported back to the Executive Committee, which would then be better able to make its report to the National Conference meeting of 1916.

A committee consisting of Dr. Lee K. Frankel, Prof. H. L. Savsovich and Mr.

Solomon Lowenstein was appointed, in pursuance of a resolution adopted at Memphis, to confer with the officers of the National Conference of Charities and Correction in reference to the Retirement Fund for Social Workers, the plan for which has been prepared by a committee of the National Association of Jewish Social Workers. The time was not deemed propitious for the taking of a census of the Levantine Jews in this country, as resolved at Memphis, and the project was postponed for the present. As collections for the Palestinian Charities are now under way, it was not deemed advisable for the Palestinian Committee of the National Conference to take any independent action.

No action was taken on program for the next Conference, as the Eighth Biennial Meeting does not take place until 1916. In the meanwhile the informal conference under the auspices of the National Association of Jewish Social Workers will hold its conference and discuss matters of present interest.

Social workers everywhere will be glad to hear that Mr. Morris D. Waldman of New York has been made "Executive Director" of his organization, instead of "Manager," the position he has held for many years with distinction.

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MEMBERS of the National Conference of Jewish Charities and subscribers to JEWISH CHARITIES are requested to save the copies of JEWISH CHARITIES sent them monthly, as the proceedings of the meeting at Memphis will be published in JEWISH CHARITIES, and will not be issued separately in book form. An index will be printed with each volume of JEWISH CHARITIES, and those who will bind their volumes of this magazine will have the proceedings and other interesting matter in permanent form. It will not be possible for the office to supply extra copies, except in a case here or there; and we therefore ask you to

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JEWISH CHARITIES

ORGANIZED CHARITY WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE

It is natural that during times like these, when unemployment is general, for good-hearted and well-intentioned people to undertake movements for the relief of the needy. It is therefore not surprising that the press of the city of New York has been devoting considerable space to articles concerning the conditions of the poor, in some instances giving conspicuous and continuous notice to two or three movements undertaken as relief measures. One of these movements particularly affecting the Jewish people was started by a Jewish judge of the Second Judicial Municipal Court, located on Madison Street on the lower East Side. The judges of these courts hear cases of landlords vs. tenants, and in this court more cases of this character are heard than in any other in that city.

On October 1st Judge Hartman, who had a short time prior thereto been appointed to fill out Judge Sanders' unexpired term, had a meeting called at the office of the City Chamberlain, at which he proposed the establishment of a City Committee to deal with the subject. It was clearly explained to him that the relief organizations, though not perhaps in a position to provide that generous relief which their high standards dictated, had been able and were still able to prevent destitute families from being evicted. In spite of this assurance, the zealous young judge made several futile attempts to organize a separate committee, calling on men like Jacob H. Schiff, Isaac N. Seligman and Felix M. Warburg, who all declined to become identified with the movement.

Finding his colleagues on the bench and the philanthropists out of sympathy with him, he corralled some of the prominent clergymen, who, being unfortunately not as familiar with the work of charitable organizations as the above named men, appointed a committee of clergymen to call on the Mayor. The latter agreed to be present at a meeting which they desired to call. In

the meantime, His Honor had an investigation quietly made by the trained investigators of the Commission of Accounts, and both he and Chamberlain Bruere, who submitted a detailed report at this meeting, "found the United Hebrew Charities well able to cope with the problem. 'It would be unwise to raise a special fund for these cases,' said Mr. Bruere. 'Paying the rent does not fill all requirements of the needy by any means. To handle this problem in the right way the machinery of the charitable institution is needed.'"

This gratuitous endorsement, from an unexpected, though highly authoritative, source, of the work of the relief organizations will, it is hoped, make the people of the city realize that organized charity possesses ample and effectual machinery with which to deal with all kinds of problems of distress, including those produced by even so extraordinary a situation of unemployment as prevails at this time.

Another phase of the situation of destitution which has harrowed us at the breakfast table has been stories of starving school children. The director of reference and research of the Department of Education sent a very questionable questionnaire to all of the public school teachers, which was to be employed as a means of determining how many children were suffering from lack of food. Extensive and intensive inquiries that were made recently by the Board of Health along the same lines disclosed only one definite fact, namely, that it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to determine the real causes of under-nourishment. Non-nutritious food is likely to have the same effect as under-nourishment, and frequently, where school children have been found under-nourished, the parents of such children have been in well-to-do circumstances. Under-nourishment in these cases was due to dietetic ignorance.

This inquiry has precipitated long lists of children upon the relief organizations,

accompanied by requests for their relief. The first list received at the United Hebrew Charities was of twelve children in one class. Upon inquiry, it was learned that the teacher had secured this information not from an investigation, but upon bare inquiry in the classroom. In quite a number of cases, when the visitor from a relief organization called at the home, resentment was shown by the family because it had been reported in distress. Nearly all of the few cases found in need were already under the care of the relief societies.

The situation above described is quite remarkable, in view of the fact that these movements have been undertaken by individuals from whom irresponsible action would not ordinarily be expected, a judge, on the one hand, and a high official in the Department of Education, on the other. Had these movements been launched by them after organized charity had been found wanting, no fault could have been found. But the machinery of organized charity has not broken down. And though it is being strained and taxed severely, it is not in danger of breaking down, so long as the contributing public keeps it well oiled. What has transpired demonstrates, however, that the people are "keyed up" perhaps as never before and the charitable societies are wisely utilizing this awakening social conscience by appeals for funds.

The Coming Conference

of
National Association of Jewish Social
Workers

In response to a letter of inquiry, a score or more replies were received from the membership throughout the country indicating the preference for a meeting place of the next conference, and at the same time making suggestions as to what subjects should be discussed at that conference. These replies were carefully considered at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Association, and a tentative program outlined. As a majority of the letters favored Baltimore as the conference city, this selection was voted upon favorably by the Executive Committee, and it was decided that the date of the conference be

immediately prior to the meeting of the Conference of Charities and Correction, which, we understand, is to be held in the early part of May, 1915.

The following subjects were tentatively decided upon:

(1) The protocol in the cloak and suit industry; an analysis of its significance and a history of its operations.

(2) To what extent shall a settlement program take cognizance of nationalist ideals.

(3) Are the problems dealt with by Jewish social workers sufficiently unique to warrant the establishment of a central Jewish school of philanthropy? And as a sub-division to this question, what should be the general educational qualifications of a Jewish social worker?

(4) What should constitute an adequate curriculum for Jewish orphan asylum schools?

(5) The revision of the Transportation Rules of the National Conference of Jewish Charities submitted in Memphis in May, 1914, and referred to the National Association of Jewish Social Workers for report to the National Conference in 1916.

(6) Round-table discussion to include the following topics:

(1) Case Work—

(a) Relief

(b) Employment

(c) Methods of investigation

(d) Pensions

(2)—

(a) What will be the effect of the great war on immigration?

(b) On social service programs in this country?

We invite the close thought of the membership as to the program submitted, and their suggestions either for changes in the phrasing thereof or for new subjects.

DAVID M. BRESSLER, *President*.

New York, Dec. 15, 1914.

The Jewish Children's Bureau of Baltimore has closed its first year with marked success. Its work has surpassed the expectations of those who organized it, and it has demonstrated its usefulness in many ways. Mr. Sidney Hollander is chairman, Miss Mabel Hutzler executive secretary.

Y. M. H. A. IN DAYTON

David Goldzwig

Our Young Men's Hebrew Association, of which I am at the head, has been organized one year and two months, out of what was formerly a Young Men's Hebrew Club, which was conducted for social purposes only. We have progressed wonderfully during the above period. The club which I mentioned weakened the latter part of 1913 by resignation of several of its best members, because outside of social times nothing beneficial was being aimed at for the good of our Jewish young men. Fifteen of us at once agreed to pledge amounts and thereupon formed what we proudly call the Y. M. H. A. of Dayton. We met in private for a short time, so as not to incur expense until we prepared as needs be. It was but after a few meetings that we were able to add quite a number of young men to our list, some of the former club members and others whom we interested. All was enthusiasm and a desire to do things. With such spirit prevailing, success was bound to come. Quarters were then taken, two rooms, fitted up in a small way, including, besides furniture, a library, with all the leading English and Jewish papers and magazines, also a piano and pool table and checker boards. Debates, talks and lectures by prominent men were arranged for, the result of which increased our membership to twice its number. Dances were given which helped our treasury considerably and advertised the organization socially and otherwise. A few months thereafter a ball was planned on an immense scale for the purpose of enriching our treasury to enable us to secure more spacious quarters and equipment, also we planned a gymnasium and other athletics. The ball was held and proved a tremendous success, socially and financially. It was a means of bringing together all classes of our Jewish citizenship and thereby at the very beginning established an ideal, I might say, which all our social leaders and workers are striving for. It also was a feeling-out process, as to whether our Jewish community were in accord with a Y. M. H. A. movement and what moral and financial assistance would

be given. Thanks to a committee of our best known and influential Jewish women, who when called upon immediately undertook the task of making the affair the success which we wished. So much so that annual affairs of this kind are being looked for. We were enabled therefore to take and fit up new quarters and in a more complete manner. We aimed to succeed as far as possible without approaching our business men for donations and subscriptions. Firstly, because all sustained great losses during the flood, which proved incidentally a sad blow, and since a great hindrance for our Y. M. H. A. as well as our Federation. Nevertheless, later at the dedication of our new quarters, quite a number of our best spirited men pledged themselves to support the organization to the best of their ability and without strenuous efforts contributions were received when the men were called upon. We have since formed a literary club, established a school for instruction to our foreign element in citizenship, to enable the passing in examinations quickly, an employment bureau, and organized a basket-ball team. Twice a month, on Sundays, meetings are held, one business, the other open for the full membership and their friends. Good and welfare is in order at this time and generally a prominent lecturer or speaker is on hand. We recently removed from our last established quarters, which was a house of twelve rooms. We were forced to do so because of limit set to occupy the same at a said figure and then was rented for more money. Also there was a desire on the part of most of the members to locate more in the center of the city than we were. Temporarily we occupy a few rooms in the center of the business district. More spacious quarters are anticipated in the near future. We are everlastingly planning new and good things, working might and main for success. We realize we are still far from the standard which is necessary; however, with continued activity our realization and dream must come true.