

SOCIAL SERVICE AND HOSPITAL EFFICIENCY.

alongside their physical condition, affect powerfully the continuity and practicability of adequate medical treatment. The follow up care given by the social worker is the most important step in assisting in carrying out treatment and in seeing that patients return to get treatment. The physician has, as a rule, neither the training nor the time to grapple with the conditions of poverty, industry and personality which lie behind a large proportion of the diseases of patients. Unless they are dealt with, however, neither patient nor physician can expect to get satisfactory results, and there is a good reason why the patient does not come back. The pressing medical work of diagnosis, teaching, and treatment, demands the whole time of the doctor, and yet, perhaps, because of ignorance, or home conditions inimical to the health of the patient, the cure will be only temporary, and the expense to the hospital; the work of the doctor and the burden on the charitable community will increase with each recurrence of illness, while the suffering of the patient is prolonged and the country loses a healthy and profitable citizen. And so, while recognizing the fact that the cure of disease is a public necessity, it has been borne in upon hospital authorities and doctors that the prevention of disease is not only a public economy and benefaction, but an economy which closely concerns their own institution— and that the responsibility of a modern hospital includes social service as well as medical--the after care of patients in their homes to prevent relapse as well as cures in the wards or clinics.

Dr. Cabot says of the Mass. Gen. Social Service "not until this year (1912) have workers been put in the clinics. That means that the workers had to take what cases were sent them, the medical men had to make the social diagnosis among the 40,000 sick people who visit the clinics annually as well as teach the students, diagnose cases, and advise treatment. Now the social worker is in three clinics where she can see all the patients and can select those most in need of what she can give. Furthermore, she can limit her intake according to her powers and put her strength and knowledge where it will