

in some measure a matter of police, and police authority is necessary to maintain the proper rules and discipline in a casual ward. Cases of wayfarers in need of passes to help them to their destination often occur, and the Mayor of such a city of Toronto has not leisure to attend to them : indeed the Mayor already finds it necessary to have special assistance in this part of his work, and it may be said that the principle of a regular relief officer has been adopted. There are also cases with which volunteers or private associations, from want of authority, are unable to deal. What is to be done, for example, where chronic destitution is the consequence of mental disease or infirmity, and where a private individual or charity can have no right to interfere ? Besides, a centre of guidance, information and observation is needed, and this nothing but a public office can supply.

One use of a centre of information would be the prevention of imposture, against which, in the absence of the means which such a record office affords of ascertaining the identity and verifying the stories of applicants, it is very hard, at least for those whose hearts are not fenced with the steel of experience, to guard. Several times have I been saved from imposition through information obtained from the Secretary of this Conference, Mr. Pell, who in this and other respects has really discharged in no small measure the functions of a relieving officer for many years past, but who has now reached the evening of a life dedicated to charitable work and to the study of the questions connected with it. It would perhaps be out of place to go into any personal details, and their publication might possibly bar a return to the right path. Otherwise I could narrate two or three remarkable cases of successful imposture which have come under my own notice. In each case an amount of ingenuity, tact, presence of mind and persuasiveness must have been exhibited which would have gone far towards making the man's fortune in an honest walk of