

fun of the exercises. The illiterate and those who understand but very little English, listen to the piano recitals, and even to the stories read to them, with rapt attention, always carrying away impressions of a broader life than they ever dreamed of in their native lands. Many who can read are seeking to improve their knowledge of American history and literature. Glee clubs have been formed in several centres among both men and women, and one centre boasts of two orchestras. It has been found difficult to introduce industrial work, as the space for storing materials is all needed for the day work of the schools.

But the quiet hours for reading and study are proving very helpful. School children, unable to work in their noisy tenement homes, avail themselves of these comfortable rooms, where perplexities vanish under the light shed on the subject by excellent teachers. "I have seen young men studying French, German, Algebra and Geometry," says the Superintendent, "accept needed aid just as gratefully. Last spring about seventy took a civil service examination. They would hardly have undertaken it had they been obliged to study in the midst of the noise and confusion of tenement house life. Teachers in charge of these study rooms see that all books of reference required by the pupils are obtained from the school library." For general reading there is, at each centre, a table supplied with good magazines and illustrated papers. The pages of these are turned by many hands. Moreover, each centre has a traveling library which goes on its way at the end of the month and gives place to another. From September, 1903, to June, 1904, more than seventy-three thousand books circulated through New York Recreation Centres.

The work of New York's Summer Vacation Schools was but recently begun, but already its fame has spread to all the large cities of the United States. Some happily inspired person thought it a pity that school buildings, representing in the aggregate an enormous outlay should stand for two months empty and idle, while the neglected children of the hard-worked poor ran the streets, learning much evil and forgetting not only much of the knowledge gained at school but also the habits of order and industry partially acquired there. So, in some poor and thronged neighbourhoods the schoolhouses were opened, and children gathered into them from the streets were occupied with songs, marches and simple handicrafts. Thus the vacation schools began. They soon proved so helpful from the pedagogic standpoint, and the children of the poor found them so alluring, that there arose a demand for more such schools, in better neighbourhoods, for the children of the well-to-do.