

PREFACE

THE following studies were made while in residence at Greenwich House Settlement during the winter of 1913-14, under the direction of Professor Henry R. Seager.

The purpose of the study was to find out, through a small intensive study of individuals, how well the aged poor are provided for, by their own efforts, by their families and by existing charitable agencies, and to see what further provision is needed.

One hundred people over sixty years of age, living in the area known as Greenwich Village (between Fourteenth and Canal Streets and lower Fifth Avenue and West Broadway to the Hudson River), near or under the actual poverty line, were selected for special inquiry and for as accurate delineation as possible.

Obviously one hundred people do not afford a basis for statistics or for sweeping general observations, but from such a group individuals can be chosen that are typical of larger groups. The classification of groups in Chapters II.-VII. are surely broad enough to include a large number of people, and the carefully selected types described in them and in the succeeding chapters are, I am convinced, normal and representative.

Since it seems fair to believe that the representative types of this study are representative of the old people in the city at large, I have put forth the conclusions which I have drawn from them with a good deal of confidence.

With the genuine desire to be fair, "unworthy" as well as "worthy" illustrations are given, though probably the people described, as a whole represent, in intelligence and morals, a higher standard than might be found in some other more crowded districts, or in districts less well supplied with churches and settlements, or in a regular house-to-house canvass.