

VI. BETTERMENT AGENCIES.

The cost of public relief to the city was \$3,097.98 in 1912. The relief giving of the churches and other agencies would probably be much greater than this amount. In most of our cities there is little or no co-operation between the city and private agencies in charity work, and the charitable agencies themselves seldom co-operate in their efforts to eliminate poverty. As a result, overlapping is common, and it is frequently discovered, after a period of years, that a family has been drawing support from several agencies, each of which thought itself the only helper. The waste of money is a lesser evil, not to be compared to the encouragement in pauperism which arises from such a system of promiscuous almsgiving. The civic authorities of Toronto have been so impressed with the necessity of overcoming this situation that a Social Service Commission has been appointed, one of the duties of which is to inquire into the city's relief system and to place it upon a scientific basis. In other cities the charities have been associated and one central bureau established. All applications for relief pass through the bureau, and it keeps records of all the cases dealt with, so that overlapping is avoided, the aim being to completely rehabilitate each case, even though the immediate expense be considerable, rather than to keep it on the books year after year by the old system of doles.

A study of this field would include:—

- (a) Charitable institutions of the city.
- (b) Public outdoor relief.
- (c) Relief work by churches, fraternal orders, women's clubs, immigrant societies, and business men's associations.
- (d) Opportunities for co-operation between agencies.
- (e) Opportunities for relating social work to the churches, and the churches to it.
- (f) The field for social settlement work.
- (g) The homeless man; cheap lodging houses; a municipal lodging house.
- (h) Study of such factors as disease, crime, drunkenness, wife desertion, uncompensated accidents and child labor as causes of poverty.

VII. THE USE OF "LEISURE TIME."

Under this subject the free and commercialized amusements of the city would be studied. At this point in its history Sydney would profit much by the organization of supervised playground work. It is a popular belief that the supervised playground is required only in the large cities where there are no other open spaces available for play purposes. This opinion is based on a mistaken view of the object of the playground. Where play is properly supervised it not only ministers to the all-round physical development of the child, but also to character building, since the evil influences are carefully weeded out. Sydney has its gangs of "bad boys," as the magistrates who have to deal with them know. An efficient supervisor with playgrounds and equipment at his command, would soon enlist the hearty interest of these boys and keep them out of mischief, while at the same time providing wholesome amusement for the other children of the city.

The character of the pool rooms, picture shows and theatres should also be learned to make sure these agencies are not undoing the work of the home, the school and the church in character building.

In this study there would be consideration of:—

- (a) Park facilities and their use.
- (b) The field for public playgrounds.
- (c) Land available for playground purposes.
- (d) Recreational use of the schools.
- (e) Theatres.
- (f) Motion picture shows.
- (g) Pool rooms and bowling alleys.
- (h) Opportunities for adult recreation.
- (i) The liquor trade as a factor in public amusement.