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SOME FIRST PRINCIPLES

IN

SOCIAL WELFARE WORK

BY

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From 21st Annual Report, Printed by Order of the  
Legislative Assembly.

1909



## Social Welfare

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**A** NEW NOTE is being sounded in public affairs—one that awakens hope in the breasts of many thousands, who on account perhaps of obscurity and lowly surroundings have not been regarded as entitled to more than a passing regard—it is that of **SOCIAL WELFARE**—the recognition of the rights of every human being no matter what the conditions of birth or material possessions. The spirit of **Brotherhood**—the desire to spread more generously over our race, the comforts and happinesses of life—is taking possession of the hearts of men, and is manifesting itself in a thousand ways—all tending to lighten the burden that rests upon the poor, and to make possible for them to enjoy advantages and opportunities that hitherto were beyond their reach. Because of this advancing tide of humane sentiment it is necessary that there should be wise legislation and administration, and that social work should be given the status of a profession, calling for ability and special preparation.

In social customs and in the administration of great public enterprises for the benefit of the poor, the unemployed and the unfortunate, we have been inclined to follow time-worn pathways that lead nowhere, instead of originating new and better highways to social happiness and prosperity. Charity has too often been made the excuse for social shortcomings, and a blind for the exploitation of human distress and weakness. That a better remedy is needed all will admit, and the following thoughts are merely by way of suggestion to those who have the interests of humanity at heart.\*

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\*This general review of Social Welfare work was written in 1909 at the request of a group of University students, but has not been published hitherto. J.I.K.

### CULTIVATE SELF-RESPECT.

**I**N the Administration of Charity the aim always should be to preserve normal conditions, to disturb the family relationship as little as possible, and to incite all who are in need to work out their own salvation with only such guidance and encouragement as will enable them to regain a position of independence. Self-respect is essential to true manhood; the gift of money in any form without adequate return is degrading; to patronize is to insult.

There is no man or woman, however humble their origin or surroundings, who has not some latent pride or ambition. It may be almost extinguished owing to discouragement, disappointment and wrong methods of relief-giving but it can be revived and it is the business of the true worker to fan the spark into a flame, and to make the environment such as will tend to the development of all that is best and most worthy in human character.

### SPECIAL TRAINING NECESSARY.

The need for systematic social work and the value of trained expert service has not been recognized in the past. There has been vast waste of effort and means because of inexperience and careless administration. Appointments as agents and secretaries of charitable and philanthropic societies have been made largely on the ground of friendship or to provide a place for someone out of work, or the office has been given out of sympathy for some worthy citizen who has been trained to no particular calling. "No experience necessary." "Anyone can do it," has been the general impression. Is it not true that many worthy movements have ended in failure or have struggled on under a burden of contempt because there was no guiding principle, no steady safe hand at the wheel, no definite knowledge as to results or adequate return for expenditure!

### A SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY.

There are of course exceptions to every rule and some men and women have, without special training, made a notable success of their work—good judgment and careful observation have taught them the better way. But to secure the best service an educated class of men and women should be encouraged to devote themselves to the serious study of social problems, and this can best be done in a School of Philanthropy affiliated with the University and working in harmony with existing philanthropic movements so that theoretical and practical training may go hand in hand.

A course of study could be outlined suitable to the capacity of all who desire to enter, for a prime requisite is that every student should feel the call to social service as imperative as to the ministry or the mission field—all heart and no head has characterized many failures heretofore; to substitute all head and no heart would be the greater calamity. The work could be entered upon in a small way until, as would certainly happen, some wealthy philanthropist felt inspired to endow the school as a worthy and much needed addition to university equipment.

## SPECIAL LECTURE COURSES.

In addition to this special course in philanthropy, there is no reason why all colleges and boarding schools aiming to prepare young people for careers of usefulness should not give instruction on such broad subjects as charitable relief, protection of children, housing of the poor, sanitation, causes of insanity, crime, pauperism, dependency and the care of the defective classes. A knowledge of these subjects is useful at all times and may have a far-reaching influence in checking human misery and promoting happiness and contentment throughout the

## THE MUNICIPALITY.

Every municipality should have a Social Welfare Department, either an adjunct to the Health Department or under a Municipal Committee. This Department would have the supervision of charitable and social endeavor, and guide both effort and expenditure so that the best results would be secured. In a large city the office might well be a distinct branch of the service, not so much to engage in active work as to gather the loose threads together, provide a medium of communication, a bureau of information, a centre of inspiration and encouragement to both paid and volunteer workers. To be effective there is the essential implication that the director should be a man capable of meeting all the needs of such an office, qualifying himself by special research for authoritatively advising all engaged in benevolent service. In the smaller cities and towns a committee of educated social leaders might be delegated by the Council to exercise supervision over organizations, and this committee, acting as a friendly critic, could bring about co-ordination of social effort. No municipality itself should undertake to dispense charity.

## CHARITY ORGANIZATION.

Before dealing directly with the problems of charity it is perhaps well to consider another branch of educational work, namely the Charity Organization Society, or as it is sometimes called, The Associated Charities. Thoughtful people are recognizing to-day more than ever before that indiscriminate charity and haphazard methods constitute a real menace, not only to the recipients, but also to the community at large. Generous instincts and a highly cultivated Christian sentiment prompt a ready response to the cry for aid. Throughout its whole history the world has never known such vast fortunes devoted to public benevolence as prevails to-day. Therefore there is urgent need for deliberation lest good intentions be turned to evil account.

The Charity Organization Society is not a relief-giving agency. Its mission is distinctly educational. It surveys the whole field; brings into play the business and scientific aspect of charity, rather than the emotional; advocates co-ordination among the multifarious charities, so that each may cover a distinct branch of work thoroughly; deals with causes rather than effects; directs attention to the value of friendly visiting without alms-giving; frowns beggars out of existence by

seeing that their excuse is unfounded; urges public care for the blind, the deformed and the defective; employment for the unemployed; and diffuses sound information on all the varying phases of modern philanthropy.

Such a society is usually composed of the most advanced social workers, and it can never be a popular organization with the masses since it does not aim to give anything away but good advice. For its support it must depend on the liberality of the few, and for those who wish to give a portion of their wealth to public uses, no better or worthier object could be found. The strength and influence of a Charity Organization society is a good indication of social efficiency.

#### CO-OPERATION ESSENTIAL.

Unless it has the hearty co-operation of all the specialized charities of the city, the Charity Organization Society cannot accomplish the best results. It aims to be the clearing house of all charitable and social effort; maintains a library and information bureau for all the workers and societies; and if it is strong enough should assist any deserving society to secure all the funds necessary for the maintenance of its work.

#### RECIPIENTS OF CHARITY.

The Charity Organization Society invites all relief-giving agencies to register in its office the names and history particulars of all, who, after receiving charitable aid twice, continue to apply for help. If properly carried out this method would effectually prevent imposition and the fostering of paupers. The accredited agent of any Society or the pastor of any church could apply to this central office for information concerning any particular applicant and ascertain at once how often a man has applied; how often he has been helped and how many different Societies are devoting their attention and money to his needs. Where this system is followed it is surprising how much chicanery and fraud is revealed. Or it may be the records will show that a continued effort to get suitable employment would obviate further charity; or a term in jail stop the brazen effrontery and mendacity of unworthy sots and drunkards.

#### REGISTRATION OF APPLICANTS.

The registration of these cases has often been opposed by well-intentioned workers and societies. They would rather go on helping blindly all who apply lest one should be wronged or offended. "Let not thy right hand know" etc., is often quoted in this connection. But there need be no undue publicity—registration is only intended for the habitual applicants; and they need not know that they are being reported for investigation. It is simply a reasonable business precaution and applies more generally to the drifting, shiftless class of population that prey on clergymen and guileless optimistic workers, and spend in drink the money obtained as charity. That the humiliation of respectable people who are temporarily embarrassed should be carefully guarded against will be referred to more fully under the heading "friendly visiting."

### GIVE ADEQUATELY IF AT ALL.

A cardinal principle in charitable relief is that when assistance is given it should be adequate to the need. Usually one Society gives so very little that the person or family in distress is compelled to resort to other agencies. Thus the charge of overlapping often arises. Better to help a fewer number and put them fairly on their feet than to partially aid a large number and leave none of them permanently relieved.

### DOORSTEP CHARITY.

Giving charity on the street or at the door is always unsatisfactory because the truly deserving will seldom resort to that means of obtaining aid. From a long experience it can safely be said that three-fourths of the money given to these applicants is won by deception and is put to unworthy uses. But there will always be this careless giving of largess because human nature loves to patronize and many excuse themselves with the plea that it is better to fee a dozen rogues than turn away one who may possibly have good excuse for begging. If people will persist in favoring the importunate mendicant let them at least resolve never to help a child in this way for in so doing they invariably perpetuate a wrong standard and destroy the character and future usefulness of the boy or girl.

### EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

To be out of work and to honestly desire employment is to live in the depths of despair. Many a man has committed crime and even taken his life because of this one thing. How important it is then that there should be nationally-organized depots so that men and boys having labor to sell can be quickly brought into touch with employers. Every municipality, every church, every moral agency should be in active co-operation with the labor exchange movement. When men are idle the whole social machinery is out of gear and charity has to step in and carry an unnecessary burden. The providing of employment should never be looked upon as a charitable undertaking for it is vital to the welfare of the whole community. In every large centre of population there should be a municipal committee or commission planning winter occupation for those whom cold weather deprives of their usual employment. Action is usually postponed until the problem is acute and then the only solution is charity.

### THE CHURCH AND CHARITY.

There seems to be a consensus of opinion that charity is best administered by a special organization covering the whole field rather than by an individual church acting on its own responsibility. Originally the great bulk of relief was dispensed by the church but conditions have been steadily changing. If one could get a socially-educated church membership then it would be safe to say that there should be parish districts allotted, and each church held accountable for the poor within its bounds, but with so many different denominations having no close bond of

union, and with lack of knowledge as to right principles so prevalent among the members, it is generally conceded that the less giving of promiscuous charity under church auspices the better. Frequently it has been found that families seeking aid as a regular income claim membership in two or three different churches and succeed for years in drawing pensions from these as well as other sources. There has, in fact, been widespread imposition upon clergymen and churches because of hesitancy in asking questions and thoroughly investigating the causes of poverty. The growing popularity of the deaconess movement and the appointment of a pastor's assistant to manage the business part of church organization will in time restore the church's prestige as the true friend and helper of the poor, for with education in best methods such workers will see the wisdom of maintaining records and uniting rich and poor in the common bond of brotherhood.

#### THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL SERVICE.

In every church there are employers of labor and there are young people out of work. There are the prosperous and happy and there are the sorrowing and afflicted. There are idle young women and there are over-burdened mothers. There are the old who have much experience of life and there are young people who would appreciate friendly counsel. In addition to the sermon should there not be, occasionally, a real church conference on Sunday to bring these elements together and do some actual Christian work as well as talk about it? Unemployment is recognized as one of the greatest sources of misery to the individual and loss to the community. The church can bring capital and labor together better than any other organization and fulfil its mission at the same time. A pastor in despair ventured to announce from the pulpit that two young men were in need of work and he was anxious about their welfare. As a result employment was offered at once. In another case a little boy was left homeless and was about to be sent to an orphan asylum when the pastor decided to tell his congregation about it and three excellent families expressed a willingness to take him. This is vital Christianity and can be multiplied indefinitely.

#### THE CHURCH AND RECREATION.

Without any loss of dignity or departure from its high calling, the church can also take an interest in the recreation of young people. Wordly amusements of a doubtful character are constantly seeking to lure the young away from church influence and they have the advantage that they are catering to an instinct that is not only natural but imperative. It is not necessary that the church edifice should be turned into a dance hall or gymnasium, but it is desirable that the church should be the powerful advocate of clean, wholesome amusements and neighborhood playgrounds, and should vigorously stamp out all that is low and sensual and unhealthy. Not long ago a leading church arranged for some special week-day meetings. Only a few middle aged people attended, while across the road a low place of amusement was crowded to the doors with young people and many were

unable to obtain admission. The world, the flesh and the devil were laughing at that powerful church that was too spiritually minded to cope with the evil. Might not the church imitate with advantage the Cromwellians of old who "prostrated themselves before their Maker but set their foot on the neck of kings," whom they believed to be enemies of their country and their religion. Happily there are signs that the church is awakening to a knowledge of its power and will ere long not only denounce but sweep out of existence the manifest social evils that confront and overcome the individual.

#### FRIENDLY VISITING.

The ideal friendly visitor is the one who goes into a home in the pure spirit of friendship without alms and without condescending airs. The mistake is often made by good people that the poor always want money whereas nothing could be further from the truth. Their very poverty usually makes the respectable poor keenly sensitive and they resent with bitterness of soul the thoughtless caller who with the best intentions in the world thrusts money or provisions on them. The world judges and honors a man according to the amount of money which he possesses. This should never be the standard of the church or the social worker. The poor are slighted, ignored and assigned the lowliest places, and yet the noblest manhood, the highest Christian life, the finest feeling, the most chivalrous instincts, are found more highly developed among this class than any other. It is for this reason that almsgiving is so delicate and dangerous a mission. To give money graciously and acceptably calls for the best judgment and tact of which a human being is capable. But the cordiality of greeting, the pressure of the hand, the sympathetic advice, the suggestion how to repair broken fortunes—these things are priceless and will be treasured up as the sacred confidences and grateful mementoes of life.

Friendly visiting in a general way can be done as a branch of any charity organization but it can be best done as an adjunct of church work, for Christianity, whether acknowledged or not, is the inspiration of neighborly service. No guide to action can be better than the Golden Rule and the constant recollection of the fact already stated that the poor are not necessarily one whit less respectable or worthy of respect than the prosperous.

#### THE PAUPERISTIC SPIRIT.

The average poor family should not be confounded with that wretched class of people who seek to live by charity and who have long since lost all pride, self-respect or decency of conduct. We should pity rather than despise this class, for experience goes to show that they have been in nearly every instance reduced to helpless beggary by misfortune, oppression and unwise giving. The aim should be to restore them to self-respect by steadfastly withholding charitable aid and adopting drastic measures to force them to self-exertion and support. They should be provided with employment even at a loss until they acquire the habit of

work and gradually become more or less skilled. Even if it is necessary to send a few to jail for a time that would be a greater kindness than the continuance of charity. For pauperism is hereditary. Children are quick to learn that it is easier to beg than to work and they grow up to continue the same vicious life as their parents. Charity breeds paupers, fosters and pampers them and inflicts upon the community a long and ever-increasing succession of degenerates to fill the brothel, the poor-house and the prison. It is truly a deadly disease that can only be cured by extermination.

#### ORGANIZATION IN SMALL TOWNS.

All the widely-varying social needs are to be found in the small town, with the added difficulty that there is not sufficient demand in any one line to warrant separate organization. There might, with advantage, therefore, be one general society fairly representative of the whole community, with small committees to handle different branches of work. To ensure good results there should be one trained, experienced person employed to give all his time to the direction of social effort, and the municipality would find its money well expended if they gave a yearly grant of \$1,000 for operating expenses. Much more than that amount is frittered away in useless almsgiving, while a society properly financed would not only lift up careless families to a higher plane, but would materially benefit the town in a dozen directions. An experienced agent with the intelligence and benevolence of the town behind him would see that the right thing was done for the poor and the sick; maintain an employment agency; secure the admission of the insane and feeble-minded to appropriate institutions; reason with and endeavor to reform the erring; look after neglected and homeless children; supervise the sanitary condition of the town, especially the housing of the poor; direct and encourage friendly visiting; supervise the enforcement of the school law, and generally educate the community in all that makes for communal health and happiness.

#### SOCIAL WORK FOR WOMEN.

The importance of social welfare work is becoming so increasingly recognized in these recent years that there is bound to be a great demand for trained social workers in the future. Young women especially will find in this new profession of social service, ample opportunity for the development of their talents of heart and brain. They will be increasingly needed as pastors' assistants, school nurses, play leaders, health inspectors, school attendance officers, charity organization visitors and investigators, police matrons, park attendants, probation officers, and as officials in the various charitable and correctional institutions of the country. As already pointed out the need of the moment is a School of Philanthropy where those looking forward to social service as a profession can receive correct and adequate preliminary training.

## WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOR.

The opinion used to be commonly expressed that to shorten the hours of labor would simply be giving the workingman more time to spend in the bar-room. If there ever was ground for such a statement it is absolutely false to-day. The workingman has long since emerged from slavery and he is now through the diffusion of education, the strength and bulwark of the nation. It has been amply demonstrated that good wages and short hours stimulate men to build and own their homes, and to educate and maintain their families decently and respectably. Men who are crushed down by long and hard toil and mean wages become careless, drunken and cynical, and no wonder—despairing and hopeless, they find in the saloon their only solace. But with good wages, the day's work over at five o'clock and the Saturday half-holiday, they find some joy in living and the whole community experiences at once the benefit. The widespread recognition of the rights of the working classes is indeed one of the most hopeful signs of the times.

## COLLECTION OF CHARITABLE FUNDS.

There is much duplication and haphazard work in the collection of funds to carry on the charities of a large city. Certain men, whose generosity becomes known, are daily overwhelmed with requests for money; others equally wealthy, by a few curt refusals, are classed as hopeless and thenceforth they escape much of the begging that goes on. Some large firms never know a forenoon to pass without at least one call on them for a charity contribution, and various subterfuges have to be resorted to by heads of the firm to escape these wearisome and painfully pathetic interviews. Occasionally one sees in the vestibule of a large office building, the legend "No Charity Collectors Admitted" while in many large offices, the appearance of a good lady with her little book, immediately sends all the officials into the most hidden recesses. The ladies dislike it about as much as their victims, but the money must be raised somehow, and so they make themselves martyrs to the cause. Some charities pay as much as forty per cent. to hired collectors.

Now, what is the remedy! Easier asked than answered, but there are two or three suggestions that might be thrown out. This is a day of over organization in charity. The humane sentiment is so highly developed that almost everyone wants to start some new enterprise for the good of humanity. Without unduly checking this kindly impulse there should be some central authority to sanction or stop new movements of this kind, particularly where charitable relief is the object. In a town where there were already four children's homes, a lady started out to collect subscriptions for a fifth, and an absolutely unnecessary institution was only prevented by a serious illness making it impossible for her to continue. In this way there are frequently several institutions doing the same kind of work, while another branch of charitable endeavor, not quite so popular, is ignored.

## ENDOWMENT FORGOTTEN.

Then again, some business man, who has perhaps not given much in his lifetime leaves say ten thousand dollars to found an orphanage in perpetuation of his memory. The newspapers laud him to the skies, forgetful of the fact that the citizens have to provide the yearly maintenance, and thus contribute for all time to the glorification of the individual. There are a dozen institutions ready to take the orphan, who rarely needs public care, while there is not one institution available for the defective or the cripple, who stands in pressing need of such protecting care. There should be a central board, not only to pass on the establishment of new institutions but also with authority to assign to each its distinctive work so that all the needs of the community may be adequately met.

## SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

But even under the best conditions there must be two or three hundred thousand dollars provided annually for the maintenance of legitimate charitable work. A good plan would be for all business men and wealthy citizens to pay whatever they are disposed to give to a central committee having power to allot to each charity its fair share in proportion to the work it is doing, taking into consideration the amount received from municipal and government sources. This plan has been adopted with success by church denominations. The abolition of house to house collectors would be hailed with delight by all concerned.

## FAMILY DESERTION.

There is no more prolific cause of child dependency and delinquency than the desertion of their families by able-bodied men, and yet, until quite recently, there was neither law nor adequate machinery to cope with this long-standing and growing evil. To secure justice for herself and helpless children, a timid and sensitive mother has to make a charge in open court against her recalcitrant husband, and if he leaves the city there is rarely any effort made to bring him back and compel him to shoulder his obligations. The consequence is that the poor mother has to struggle along in penury and toil, her children either in public institutions or neglected on the streets while she is trying to earn their support. If, as we often say, the family is the pillar of the state, should not every possible precaution be taken to prevent the wholesale breaking up of families by parental desertion. A drastic law, and its proper enforcement with a private court of domestic relations would save many families from ruin, for if society were more severe in its condemnation fathers would not so lightly shirk their responsibilities. Heavily handicapped though they are there are many noble mothers all over the land who, while they lack many things—often food itself—still strive to keep their children together, giving them that priceless boon of love which no money can buy or institution provide, God bless them all—their children shall rise up to call them blessed!

## FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND CHARITY.

Patriotic and fraternal societies do a great deal of charitable work among their fellow-countrymen and less fortunate brethren, and this is laudable and proper so long as it is confined within their own immediate circle and all the facts of the case are fully known. But when relief is given promiscuously and the needy poor are publicly invited to come and share the society's bounty positive harm is sure to result. Unfortunately the evil results are not apparent to the generous donor, any more than when a quarter is handed carelessly to a street loafer. It is in the weakening of moral fibre that the harm consists and only the close student of human weakness and social wreckage pauses to trace in the besotted life the contributory cause of downfall. If the benevolent society wishing to have a part in relief work would carry out their good intentions through a central relief bureau or charity organization society the worthy poor might be helped and the unworthy rigorously eliminated, bearing in mind, what cannot too often be emphasized—that the maintenance of self-respect and the cultivation of honest industry and thrift is a sacred duty resting upon every individual or organization that is truly loyal to the state.

## KNOWLEDGE THE BASIS OF POWER.

Every social worker, no matter what his or her position, should be fully acquainted with the social machinery of the community. Power for good is limited through lack of knowledge. Many officials and volunteer workers, while fully posted in their own particular line of interests, are quite ignorant of what other organizations are doing, and have never studied the laws and by-laws of their city and country to know just what powers they had in carrying on their work. An influential deputation of philanthropists waited upon the government to ask that a certain measure be enacted. To their surprise they found that for over twenty years there had been a law on the statute books fully covering their request. Many laws dealing with public health and with social work generally have never been put into operation through ignorance of their scope and usefulness. What is needed is not more law, but more careful research and more enthusiasm and determination in carrying out existing legislation. Through frequent conferences also, each worker and society should know what other workers and societies are doing and all should work together so that the best results may be obtained with the least expenditure of money and effort. Nowhere should the friendly spirit of co-operation have a higher exemplification than among social workers. Here there is absolutely no place for rivalry or jealousy.

## WOMEN AND POLICE COURTS.

An evil that is almost universal in the administration of police courts is the public trial of female offenders at the same time, and in the same manner as men. This imparts a salacious flavor to the proceedings and accounts in some measure for the motley throng of spectators that gathers day after day in the expectation

of hearing something spicy. The practice is degrading in the extreme, not only to the unfortunate women who are still further humiliated and dishonored, but to the male audience whose fine sense of chivalry and respect for womanhood is blunted if not destroyed. There should be a complete and radical change in this respect. Greater privacy of trial and more thorough effort to shield and reclaim erring women is one of the reforms that should engage the attention of the many influential women's organizations throughout the land. (Since the above was written a Women's Court has been established in Toronto.)

#### WHITE SLAVE TRAFFIC.

One hears a great deal about the white slave traffic and vigorous efforts are being made to protect women from the insidious attacks made against their honor by unscrupulous men. The fact is usually overlooked, however, that the low class theatre, with its suggestive and sordid portrayal of life, is responsible for much of the lustful tendency that characterizes its patrons. This great evil flaunts itself boldly in our large cities and until there is a more vigorous stamping out of indecency in public performances there will be a necessary continuation of immorality and the white slave traffic.

#### SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS.

It is a significant fact that the idea of a social settlement first originated among university men who realized the potency of education and culture in solving some of the intricate social problems that affected the daily life of the poor. There was, first of all, the influence of example: a little group of educated workers of high vision and purpose might, by taking up their residence with the poor, raise the standard of living and inspire even the lowliest to an effort at self-improvement. Then there was the power of initiative. The poor need leaders to secure and maintain their rights. Civic rules of health and cleanliness that are scrupulously observed in aristocratic neighborhoods are scandalously abused and ignored in poor districts. With leadership and effort, good lighting may be obtained—more prompt and efficient scavenger service, less crowding and better sanitary conveniences; a limitation of the saloon evil, etc. Then, too, there is the great opportunity to create a social atmosphere. The Social Settlement becomes the centre of attraction for young and old, because the varying social needs of all are catered to in a spirit of comradeship and goodwill, and with an entire absence of the charity or patronizing spirit.

In these days of eagerness for social service there should be a well equipped social settlement in every poor district, for no other agency is so well calculated to touch fundamentally and yet acceptably the problem of congestion, poverty and social distress. There is a great work here for cultured men and women. It is well to bear in mind also that the social settlement is not a dispenser of charity. Worthy cases may be referred to the proper authority, but emphasis must always be laid on the neighborly spirit.

## THE CHILD.

In no branch of philanthropic endeavor is sanctified common sense more essential than in work for the care and protection of children. Many a life has been rendered hopelessly unhappy; many a girl or youth has drifted into profligacy and crime through the unwise breaking up of the family, and the consequent loosening of the most sacred and helpful ties of affection and kindred. An all-wise Providence has decreed that not only should parents be the natural guardians and protectors of their children, but that the children themselves should be powerful agents in the saving and upbuilding of parents. Conversely, it is equally true that many children, by education and example, have grown up to follow the parental footsteps into the bar, the brothel, the poorhouse and the prison. Just as on the one hand it is sometimes the worst thing imaginable to break up the family, so on the other it is necessary at times to have the firm hand of the surgeon that cuts deep in order to save. Only after the most painstaking effort and when other remedies patiently and persistently applied have resulted in failure, should children be removed from the parental roof. There should be the fullest investigation, warning, entreaty, friendly assistance, constant supervision, and when all these have failed then there should be drastic action. For this special and all important work Children's Aid Societies ought to be well organized and equipped, and a trained director appointed at adequate remuneration to guide well meant effort. Improving the social condition of the family is the best way to permanently help the child. Nearly all these organizations are at present struggling half-heartedly along because of the lack of generous financial support. It is far easier to get money for six additional policemen than for the salary of one man to save children from wrongdoing.

## WIDOWS AND THEIR CHILDREN.

Bitter in the extreme is the fate of a mother who is left a widow with young children to rear and her entire source of income cut off. Even though she may have been delicately reared she is forced to go out and work for her children's support and usually the only employment open to her is washing or scrubbing— toil that soon tells on her health and makes her a subject for the hospital. In the meantime her children are left without care or home training, and to her other sorrows is added the great sorrow of seeing her loved ones learn evil ways and drift into prisons or reformatories. Fully fifty per cent. of dependents and delinquents are created under just such conditions. Surely the time has come when public aid should be given to widows with young children so that they may remain at home as the natural guardian and protector of these future potential citizens. There are admitted dangers of pauperization, but a wise and careful policy could surely be devised so that incidental evils might be minimized.

## THE CRÉCHE A COMPROMISE.

The Crèche is society's apology for compelling poor mothers to go out working by the day to support their children. It is fundamentally wrong to take a

mother away from the little family circle that depends so much on her guidance and inspiration. Fathers should be rigorously required to maintain their offspring, even if it is necessary to follow them to other districts and garnishee their earnings. Widows should be given financial aid until the boys and girls are old enough to do their share in maintaining the home. An absentee mother means untrained and delinquent children. Ask any juvenile court judge or reform school superintendent if this is not correct. The Crèche is merely a compromise and while it may be necessary as a temporary expedient social workers should not give it too much prominence, but continue to plead for the rights of the children and the struggling mothers.

#### YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS.

The widespread popularity of the juvenile court movement in recent years is the reflection of public sentiment that the suppression of crime can best be accomplished by more advanced methods of dealing with the first offender. Too often the child is made the victim of wrong social conditions and is punished by law when what he needs is sympathetic study and education in right living. Parents and guardians are not held sufficiently accountable, nor is the environment that created the wrongful act given sufficient consideration in devising a remedy. Before sentence is passed on any child the agents and committees of child-protection societies should be given every possible latitude in their laudable efforts to reclaim and befriend, while at the same time attention should be steadily directed to the contributory causes of youthful delinquency. Where this is faithfully done it will be surprisingly evident how much the youth demands compassion and protection rather than punishment. The child heart is always open to good impressions and success or failure depends very largely on the class of persons who undertake this greatest of all responsibilities.

#### THE JUVENILE COURT.

The principle underlying the Juvenile Court movement is one of love. Without this the most perfect law in the world will prove a failure, while with it the poorest law may be attended by satisfactory and permanent results in young lives reclaimed from error. It is not the law but the administration that is effective. The fatherly spirit should prevail throughout the procedure and all who have to do with the administration should be chosen for their special fitness as child experts. The mission of the Juvenile Court is to reach the heart of the child and to so influence his affections and ambitions that he will henceforth be guided and controlled by forces within himself rather than by outward bondage or punishment.

Improving the homes of the poor and providing better social conditions will help childhood and the family generally to attain health, happiness and a reasonable degree of prosperity.

## INSTITUTIONAL LIFE.

Institutions for children abound, not because that is the best method, but because it is the easiest. Ordinary children who are left homeless and dependent from any cause are better provided for in village and farm homes. A hot house existence does not produce a thrifty, industrious type of citizen nor does it supply the freedom of action and simple pleasure that the period of childhood requires. The safe rule to follow is: first, to keep children in their natural homes if at all possible; and second, to replace such as are unavoidably homeless in family homes, under careful supervision. Even for delinquents boarding in country homes would be better for the average child than the herding together that is inevitable in the institution. Such children always learn more badness from each other than they can possibly learn good from their teachers. In the family home, with its great variety of interests and occupations, the thoughts are diverted from evil and the examples of those around them help to reshape the life and character.

But as there is no likelihood that institutions for children will ever be entirely abandoned, they should be built and conducted on the family plan, imitating, as nearly as may be, the natural home.

## SLUMS AND PLAYGROUNDS.

The congested slum districts in large cities are responsible for much youthful wrongdoing. Deprived of their reasonable share of home comfort and happiness, parents as well as children become discouraged. Discontent leads to carelessness and drunkenness. The streets are more attractive than the hovel or crowded flat. The saloon and the cheap theatre cater to the craving for sociability and amusement, and an indifferent community pays dearly for its neglect of the poor. Decent sanitary homes on streets and not in lanes and alleys; playgrounds and recreation centres; fair wages and shorter hours of labor; more friendly intercourse between rich and poor—these and other social advantages, will, when systematically undertaken, lessen very materially the work of the juvenile and criminal courts. Many more small neighborhood playgrounds in charge of responsible persons are needed in towns as well as large cities. Numerous social settlements should be established where educated and devoted men and women of unselfish purpose could live with and among the poor, to inspire them by noble example. Churches everywhere should lend their great organization, wealth and influence to a more practical study of social needs, and to a defence of the poor against the aggressions and tyranny of avarice and greed.

## PROBATION.

In order to bring about the reformation of law-breakers without the necessity of imprisonment a system of probation in all criminal law courts is advocated and has been successfully tried in many countries. Probation means the conditional release of the offender after conviction in order to enable him by restitution and

good conduct to earn a complete discharge. It is held that many offenders against the law are already sufficiently punished by the exposure and disgrace of conviction and that the intention of the law has been vindicated if they show real contrition and a willingness to compensate the person they have wronged, since the great bulk of offences are theft. The ancient Jewish law, which is the foundation of modern jurisprudence, laid great stress on restitution, but this has been largely lost sight of. The probation system implies the appointment by the court of special agents who act as guardians, and see that the terms of provisional release are properly carried out, reporting regularly to the court concerning the person so dealt with. Under this humane system it is claimed that reformation is the rule and that the benefit to all concerned is infinitely greater than the fixed sentence of imprisonment. The more general adoption of probation is advocated by many leading social workers, and significantly also by prison wardens and officials who come most in contact with the criminal class.

#### PRISON REFORM.

We are gradually coming to see the futility of the fixed sentence as a cure for crime. If it is necessary to send a man to prison then the one aim should be his rehabilitation as a good citizen with as little delay as possible. This is not a matter of time but of treatment. One does not dream of requiring the cure of physical diseases in a fixed time, and in dealing with moral malady the time required for cure is even more uncertain. Judges are not as a rule sufficiently familiar with a man's character and antecedents to fairly estimate the length of imprisonment he should undergo, and the inequality of sentence involved in this guesswork is regarded by students of penology as one of the main factors in the prevalence and repetition of crime. In the industrial school legislation of most civilized countries we have a guide that should prevail also in the case of adults. A boy whose conduct indicates his need of discipline is committed to an industrial school without definite sentence. He thus becomes a ward of the Institution until twenty-one years of age. Full provision is made for early release under supervision and every inducement is offered pupils to earn parole. A visitor's record is maintained and if there is evidence of relapse the lad can be returned to the school without further warrant or trial. Properly carried out this law is an undoubted success and conscientious prison officials everywhere would rejoice if they had the same kind of law for adults. At present they are compelled to detain reformed prisoners for an unnecessarily long term, while at the same time they are forced to release on a given date impenitent criminals who immediately resume their warfare against society. The indeterminate sentence of three months and under two years, with the parole system is now in force in Ontario and should be advocated for adoption in Canadian penitentiaries.

#### THE WEAK-MINDED AND DEFECTIVE.

It should be borne in mind that a large percentage of habitual criminals are defectives who drift into crime from sheer inability to take care of themselves.

These should be carefully sifted out and placed in custodial institutions where with suitable employment they could earn at least a reasonable share of their cost of maintenance. They are now sent to prisons and penitentiaries, not because they ought to be there but because no other provision has been made for them. Their frequent arrest, trial, conviction and re-incarceration constitutes one of the heaviest items in the cost of criminal administration. It would be a great relief from constant menace and great economy to the state, as well as simple justice to those unfortunate creatures if special institutions were provided for them.

#### THE DRUNKARD.

The thirty day sentence for habitual drunkards has been amply demonstrated to be perfectly useless as a deterrent and yet it continues to be administered in many places. Drunkards often come under the heading of defectives and should be given indeterminate sentences in special homes as already outlined, and there should be in every large community at least one institution for the mentally sound victims of alcohol, where they could be sent for a sufficiently long term to enable them to overcome the habit. As a matter of business it would pay the distillers and brewers to maintain such institutions at their own expense but as this is not likely to be volunteered the state would be fully justified in imposing such an obligation.

#### MORAL HOSPITALS.

When the problem of crime, poverty and human misery is more thoroughly and scientifically grappled with the daily police court will be re-organized into a moral hospital—not as at present to merely punish guilt, but primarily to study the causes of wrong doing, and to attempt the restoration and upbuilding of those who have fallen, often from causes beyond their own control. Then will the constable be given a higher status as a moral and social reform agent, and not regarded solely as the avenger of a broken law. Less publicity will also be given to human frailty and the weak and defective more fully regarded as adult children needing guidance and protection instead of punishment.

#### THE MOTIVE.

In all work for human beings, whether of a preventive or reclamatory character, the thought should run through all our efforts, like a golden thread, that it is not law, or system or institutions that save, but only the personal influence of good men and women, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of love and compassion for the children of misfortune and temptation. As the Christ of Calvary gave his life for mankind, so must the successful social worker be inspired by that great example to fully consecrate his life and talents to the fulfillment of his Divine Task—and with such a consecration who can doubt what the results will be?