

MOTHERING THE "HILL"

"We come home from our wedding, Miss Heldman, and I fixes for supper the finest herring that ever you seen. So what do you think that man says? My God, he says, that he don't like no herring, and he asks me that I should cook some eggs. With that herring all paid for, and eggs at forty cents a dozen! So I wouldn't do no such fool thing as that, so he leaves the house in a mad, so I wouldn't go for to take him back; no, never!"

The speaker was a rather pretty women in the early twenties, who was making no attempt to conceal her contempt for her young, clean-cut husband of a week, as he sat opposite her. She turned her back on him as he began to speak slowly in his own defense.

"I says, if a man's wife, y' understand, Miss Heldman, won't do him what he wants on his wedding day, y' understand, Miss Heldman, when will she ever do something for him? A man is ought to have some rights, which even if he is married." And so on, back and forth, tit for tat, for more than an hour.

Now all this conversation did not take place in the Domestic Relations Court of Chicago, nor yet in the Jewish Domestic Relations Court of Baltimore. It took place in the domestic *sanhedrin* of Pittsburgh. Yes, Miss Social Worker, you are quite right when you say that, so far as you knew, Pittsburgh has no such official body. But Pittsburgh, or at least the "Hill" district of Pittsburgh, has such an unofficial body. And the name of this body is Anna B. Heldman, R. N.

The conversation with which this article began is no novelty to "Heldie." Nor was the method of procedure, which this conversation compelled new to her skilled hands and tongue. In less than a week she had reunited the young bride and groom, and they lived happily ev—, that is, until the next quarrel.

For a social worker, nobody on the "Hill" seems to live without quarreling. "When it wasn't me and him, it was me and her." Saloons are in every block. "Speakeasies" abound. "Coke" can be bought by the cards of the ward politician, and sometimes without them. It is true

that there are few tenements, but the housing conditions are nauseating. It is true that the air is good, but there are no parks, and only one inadequate playground for the children. It is the Jewish quarter, and the people live with all the intense passion with which the Jews have always lived. And of this striving, humming, hopeful, despondent, hard-working, loving household, Miss Heldman is the mother.

She is the friendly visitor and the director of the district nursing of the Irene Kaufman Settlement. Everything which interests the domestic well-being of the "Hill" interests her. Her office hours at the Settlement are from 8 A. M. to 9 A. M., from 1 P. M. to 2 P. M. and from 7 P. M. to 8 P. M., and at these hours her waiting-room is always crowded. Do boarder and landlady differ about the rent, Miss Heldman acts as the Hague Tribunal. Does husband threaten a divorce, the wife sees Miss Heldman about filing her suit first. Does the oldest boy lose his job, Miss Heldman will see that he gets another. Will there be an addition to a neighborhood family, Miss Heldman sends one of her nurses to be on hand. Did the doctor say that an operation is necessary, confirmation of his decree is required from Miss Heldman. Cannot the defendant afford a lawyer, Miss Heldman procures one. Often she acts as lawyer herself, to the confusion of the plaintiff. She finds lodgings—and lodgers. She is a nightmare to tentative wife-deserters. She gets more money for alimony, and for support, than the cleverest lawyer. Without her, there would be 10 per cent. more lawyers in Pittsburgh than have offices at present. Her word is law and her authority is unquestioned. But she is a beloved judge, and her walks down Centre Avenue are lined with friendly greetings and God-speeds.

But the "friendly visiting" which "Heldie" does covers more such official duties. Her advice is asked and is given on almost every kind of private domestic difficulty. She does investigating for an anxious wife, and assures her that her husband's writing to "that woman" are quite of a business nature. She passes judgment upon pros-

pective sons-in-law; she quietly tips off saloon-keepers not to sell too much liquor to men whose wives register complaints with her. Her opposition is almost fatal to the issuance of a saloon license. She places and collects insurance; she sees that the money allotted by the husband to the wife for legitimate household expenses is what his weekly earnings warrant. Neighboring housewives bring their disputes to Miss Heldman for adjudicating, instead of quarreling over the back fences. Pyramus and Thisbe use Miss Heldman as the hole in the wall. She is the fairy god-mother to Cinderellas. In the home life of the "Hill" she is the guardian angel.

But it is at the meeting of the *Malbish Arumim* Society that she is at the zenith of her glory. The *Malbish Arumim* is called, never the Mothers' Club of the Settlement, but the Mothers' Club of Miss Heldman. It meets once a month in the Settlement, and requires the auditorium for its meetings. The paid membership is above 300, and a meeting rarely brings out less than 200 neighborhood mothers. When the society was organized, Miss Heldman wanted to keep aside from the direction of it. But her desire was not to be. For she was told that "only if you are treasurer, will there be no fear and no dispute about the money."

Which is the highest tribute the "Hill" could pay to anyone.

Bertram Benedict.

Advertising Charity

There is such a thing, I believe, as being too progressive, just as one may be too efficient. If a manufacturer were to throw out of employment every man who cannot work at the highest speed for the longest number of hours, thus producing the largest product from a given amount of overhead charges, he would have raised efficiency to the *nth* power, but he would be scrapping human material so fast that he would be a menace to society. And so with other methods of progress.

How about advertising charity? Magazine advertising has built up business; department stores would have to change their nature if they did not make free use of the papers. Why, then, should not charity adopt the methods that have brought "re-

sults" in business? Will not the "ad with the punch," illustrated by an expert in "drawing business," do the trick?

I believe that the advertisement campaign in behalf of charity subscriptions is doomed to failure, and it ought to be. Charity is not business, though some kinds of business make charity necessary. The appealing and pulling "ad" is bound to lose its effect, and the appeal and the pull will have to be louder and stronger every year. The pathos will be heavier, the tears thicker, the emotion smeared on to greater depths. The time will soon come, if this thing is kept up, when "Bargain Fridays" will have to be instituted, premiums promised, discounts allowed for cash. Meanwhile, no one will think of giving quietly simply because it is right and just to give. The public can be educated in many ways, and if it learns to demand a certain amount of pathetic story-telling before it digs down into its pockets, the charities will find that they have come upon worse, not better days.

It is better, though more difficult, to train the public to contribute dispassionately, unemotionally, but steadily, as it pays taxes. A man should get used to the idea that charity contribution is a part of his annual budget, and that it is not necessary every year to convince him that he ought to do his duty in this respect. Then if he can be gradually gotten to increase his subscription a steady and trustworthy source of income is provided with the least expenditure of energy—a really efficient system.

Nothing that Mr. E. T. Devine has written in a long time has been so unsatisfying as his reply to Dr. Holmes' letter in the *Survey* in regard to the advertisement campaign of the C. O. S. If nothing better can be said for collecting charity subscriptions by advertising, the scheme ought to see its finish soon. Meanwhile Jewish organizations ought to stick to their old principle, that every man is in duty bound to make his subscription to charity, and that it is not necessary to emotionalize the appeal to have him see and do his duty.

Common Sense.

MEMPHIS HEADQUARTERS

CHISCA HOTEL

Make Your Reservations Early