

Illustrated Charity

Editor of Jewish Charities.

Sir: You have, no doubt, seen the picture in *The Survey* of January 24th, designated "Charity in Two Reels," showing "an every-day occurrence of our United Jewish Aid Societies" and depicting a group of poor Jewish men and women, who have come to the charity office for aid. This, according to *The Survey*, has been put into the motion picture circuits by a reputable Federation of Jewish Charities, supposedly for the purpose of acquainting the public with the work they are doing in their endeavor to increase their funds.

The writer knows that the columns of your estimable paper are not intended for petty and inconsequential fault-finding, and such is not the purpose of this communication. This novel method of stimulating generosity is so contrary to the principles of modern philanthropy that a candid opinion of this matter should rightly be expressed in JEWISH CHARITIES.

It is a cardinal principle of organized charity to aid the deserving poor in such a manner as to avoid the loss of pride and self-respect of the recipient, and with as little notoriety as the circumstances of each case permit. To photograph the unfortunate applicants and display them before the general public is contrary to the best ideals of philanthropy, and violates the very spirit and purpose of organized charity. The motive for so doing is not material, and the fact that this is used as a means for raising money does not justify it. A display of the faces of the poor wounds their tenderest feelings and brings disgrace upon their families.

Charles Strull,
Superintendent.

Louisville, February 9, 1914.

Editor of Jewish Charities.

Sir: While I fully concur in the view expressed that "photographing unfortunate applicants and displaying them before the general public is contrary to philanthropic ideals," I regret that the picture reproduced in *The Survey* was misunderstood, as they did not carry the article of explanation,

which we sent them together with the pictures.

I might mention that, prior to taking these pictures, we avoided any possibility of exposing any individuals, and *all the characters depicted in the film story are actresses and actors, and not relief applicants.* I also quote the following extract from a letter received by the Federation from Mr. Robert W. DeForest: "I warmly commend the example you are setting in using motion pictures to show the effectiveness of your charitable work." This is only one of many other similar letters received from prominent philanthropists as well as editors of the press and other channels of literature, endorsing the use of these motion pictures in an effort to bring the work of charitable institutions before the public.

I am enclosing, for your information, a copy of a letter which is self-explanatory, bearing on a private performance of these pictures; also article which was carried by the *New York Times* in its issue of the 28th ultimo. To demonstrate that the gentleman from Louisville does not voice the sentiments of all, I might add that we have received requests from federations and other charitable societies asking for these films to display in their cities.

Max Ábelman,
Asst. Secretary.

Brooklyn, February 22, 1914.

HUNTER AND WALLING

Two books by prominent leaders in socialistic thought are in press for early publication. These are Robert Hunter's "Violence and the Labor Movement," which deals with the mighty conflict that raged throughout the latter part of the last century for possession of the soul of labor, and William English Walling's "Progressivism and After," a study of what the immediate future of government and politics in this country is to be. Mr. Hunter's book will probably appear this month, while Mr. Walling's will come out early in March.

Seven sessions and fourteen papers, with ample and competent discussion, constitute the program for Memphis.

CITIZENSHIP CLASSES

A bulletin of the Census Bureau of the United States Government issued in 1912 contained the startling information that there were in this country at that time 3,612,700 foreign-born males of voting age who were not naturalized. And it is, accordingly, by no means an unusual experience for investigators to find sections of our large cities densely populated with foreigners who possess all the qualifications necessary for suffrage, but who have been unable to procure that right because of the constant interference of personal and business exigencies. It is, for example, a common experience to have a member of the citizenship class, who has been a most regular attendant and a diligent student, suddenly withdraw from the class and then appear after several months, with the explanation that sickness in his family or the necessity of working overtime forced him to give up a membership in the class that had been a source of pleasure to him. This situation presents a problem that is of more than academic interest. For every urban district, particularly those inhabited by foreigners, has its own pressing needs and urgent demands; none of which can be satisfied or met but by the remedy of legislative enactment. Legislative enactment, in turn, can be obtained only by the exercise of suffrage or by the influence of some non-resident group which can train the power of its votes upon the representatives from its districts in the support of measures destined to improve conditions in those districts where the majority of the residents have not yet been naturalized. There is little doubt, however, that the pressure which is exerted upon the representatives by their own constituents is both more desirable and more effective than the influence of citizens residing in other sections. With these facts in view efforts are now made in most larger cities to help new and old immigrants to obtain their citizenship papers.

These efforts have been exerted in Baltimore, under the auspices of the Jewish Educational Alliance, in two directions: (1) in urging upon delinquents the necessity and desirability of citizenship, a message communicated by means of a public meeting

addressed by a local public official, and (2) in preparing those who have responded to the message for their examinations in court. Last year there was an average weekly attendance of about 25 or 30. Of the members of that class all but a few, who have delayed submitting their applications, have received their citizenship papers. This year, because of the improved quarters and because two classes each meeting weekly have been substituted for the single semi-weekly class, the average weekly attendance has risen to between 50 and 60. And of those attending this year, 10 to 15 received their citizenship papers at the examinations held in December. Inasmuch as there has been a fairly regular attendance, the members of the classes have been advised to fill out and submit their applications at once; in this manner thirty, at least, should receive their papers at the next April or May session. In future years it should be possible to hold two semi-annual courses. Those entering the class in November could hand in their applications at once and would ordinarily be examined in the last part of January. The bulk of the class, those who pass the examination, would, consequently, stop the course when they receive their papers, and the same process might be repeated with a new group the second half of the term.

It must be remembered, however, that in addition to the regular attendants there are a large number of transients who drop in one or two weeks before the time when they are called to court to stand their final examination. This class usually consists of men who are unable to attend regularly, and who, therefore, seize the opportunity of supplementing their private study of the constitution with whatever additional facts they can collect in one or two hours. When their presence in the class is known to the instructor, and they usually see to it that it is, the point is made to direct the more important and fundamental questions, or those that are generally asked by the judge, toward these short-termed members of the class.

The character of the instruction is, of course, determined by the necessities of the class. The materials for lecture are taken

from the national and State constitutions, from the city charter, and are supplemented by illustrations drawn from newspapers and other sources. The daily accounts, now appearing, of the activity of our State Legislature are in this way used as illustrative material in the discussion of the legislative department of the State. Similar notices of the work of Congress and of the City Council vitalize the discussions of the bare provisions of the United States Constitution and of the Baltimore City Charter. The rejection of the United States Senate in the latter part of Taft's administration of his appointee to the post-mastership of Baltimore brings home to the class the power of that body in the ratification of Presidential appointments. The recent conference between representatives chosen from both houses of Congress to arrange disputed details of the Currency Bill furnished more illustrative material on the subject of legislative procedure. And, finally, the spectacular impeachment and removal of Sulzer presented a vivid and impressive picture of the mechanism provided in American Government for the removal from office of officials adjudged unfit by the representatives of the people. In a similar fashion the contemporaneous newspapers and periodicals afford data that can be employed to enliven the dry formalism of practically all constitutional rules.

It is to be recommended that some plan be devised for keeping in touch with the products of the citizenship classes. Indeed, it is a serious question worthy of careful consideration, whether or not it is advisable to adopt some such plan as the following: Every night during the two weeks preceding an election, particularly municipal and State elections, there should be held meetings open to those who have attended the citizenship classes and have received their papers. These meetings should be addressed by a person, notoriously fair and independent, who is to give an impartial and non-partisan account of the records of all candidates for important offices. In this way it should be possible to substitute for the influence of a partisan and frequently untruthful street-corner orator the influence of non-partisan, truthful and high-minded citizens.

Baltimore.

L. W.

Subsequent History of Sanatoria Patients

The report of the investigation carried on by the Council of Jewish Women is worth reading. The medical study reported by Dr. Bolduan shows that the mortality rate corresponds with the seriousness of the disease as it is regarded by those who come most in contact with it. While the figures give rise to grave reflections, it is unnecessary to say any more about them, as they form but a repetition—not uncalled for, however—of the result of similar studies.

The social study carried out by Miss Sadie American arrests interest on account of the evident emotion involved in the report, and the vigor and clearness with which the sociological inferences from the figures presented are reached. The sore points in our campaign against tuberculosis are well emphasized. Quite clearly the picture shows that we have so far been sweeping back with a broom the great ocean of evil resulting from the present economic structure of society. Society takes a small, very small, fraction of the profits of its industrial system and attempts pitifully and inadequately to compensate for the human damage and destruction at present implicated in that system; therefore, the need of what Miss American terms before-care. Especial attention is directed to the need of industrial colonies, industrial aid, and the medical and social supervision of the families of those resident in sanatoria. Extremely worthy as a palliative measure is the recommendation for a longer period of residence in sanatoria. Although the report does not analyze this period of residence, it is true that our tuberculosis sanatoria are strongly deficient, with a few honorable exceptions (*e. g.*, Jewish Consumptive Hospital in Baltimore) in this matter.

In the entire report Miss American shows herself well oriented in the essentials of the anti-tuberculosis campaign, and in some respects even ahead of it. She is to be commended, too, for not refraining from putting considerable blame for the high mortality rate on our economic social structure.

Samuel Wolman.

VOLUNTEER SOCIAL WORK AS VIEWED BY A VOLUNTEER

Voluntary labor of any sort has a tendency to develop the mind and character of the volunteer; since it is a failing of the human race to see more clearly, and take advantage more eagerly, of the opportunities which present themselves to all, when no warning voice of authority says "thou must" or "thou must not," this, of course, is true of voluntary social work. Social work in itself, voluntary or involuntary, offers countless chances of broadening one's ideas of life in general, since it brings the worker in close contact with so many people; so many different races; so many different classes, and so many conditions of life; and so we can say that voluntary social work is a builder of character and a developer of the mind.

Now the volunteer, from the very fact that she offers her services gratuitously, we can assume, belongs to that very fortunate or unfortunate class that we call the "leisure class," and her entrance into the world of social uplift may be attributed to several different reasons. Firstly, she may really feel a desire to help those less fortunate than she and have a real sympathy for them, in which case her work will be rather successful, inasmuch as sympathy and tact are its most necessary attributes. Secondly, as is the case a great number of times, she may enter into it as a means of having something to do during her leisure hours, and with no thought of the poor or her work among them. Thirdly, she may be suffering from ennui, a disease so common to the leisure class, and feel that she would like her life to amount to more than it has heretofore; the idea not being to uplift the poor, but to rescue her own mental qualities from the well of torpidity into which they have sunk.

In any of these instances her first appearance in the slums of the city fill her with an indescribable mixture of emotions. In the first instance, her sympathy may make her see conditions as they exist, from the viewpoint of the people themselves; but in the last two the volunteer cannot place herself on their plane. Her work seems to be a sort of lark, arranged particularly for her benefit; and poverty, with its grim companions—sickness, hunger and death—seems unreal. Her first few appearances into the

homes fill her with loathing for the dismal, cold halls, and dirt-littered steps, and the two or three rooms filled with noisy, half-clad children and untidy, greasy women. A sigh of relief heralds her exit from the slums, and her entrance into her own well-kept, clean home; and surrounded by her own luxury, the poverty of her sisters and brothers is as if it never existed before her. Her work has been just as mechanical as that of a bookkeeper or stenographer, who closes his books at the end of the day, no wiser than he had been before. These are the first few days of the volunteer's work, and then suddenly an incident occurs, which creates a mental metamorphosis, unknown to the volunteer. She is sent on an errand particularly to her liking—something in which she is really interested—consciously or unconsciously. It may be to take a child to school or to the doctor's, a thing very trivial in itself, but large enough to arouse a feeling of protection and love for this child, who places his hand so confidently in hers, in the heart of the volunteer. Mother love, which is an inherent quality of every woman's disposition, has been aroused in her, and yet she doesn't quite realize it yet. And each day she is sent on some errand of comfort and cheer, and each day some latent quality which she never knew she possessed evidences itself; until one day, when the weather is too bad to go out, she realizes with a start of surprise that she misses her work and her people, and she feels that the day is being wasted; that she misses the squalid homes and the noisy babies, and that to stand aside and think of them is not the pleasure that to stand with them and help them to look up to a newer, brighter day is.

And so the voluntary social work does more for the volunteer than any work could have done. It does not only develop her mind and character, but it arouses in her dormant qualities that she unconsciously possessed; it has made her realize that her life is only one among thousands less fortunate and less strong, and that she must be a bulwark of strength to them. It has made her what God intended she should be—a woman, and at heart what every woman is—a mother.

Baltimore.

Ethel C. Meyer.