

A NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

During the winter of 1913-14 a study was made of the neighborhood of which the Council Educational Alliance of Cleveland is the center. A considerable quantity of data and statistics was secured, of which the following paragraphs are an interpretive summary:

DISTRICT

The district chosen for the study is bounded by Central and Croton Avenues on the north and south, and East Thirty-first and East Fifty-fifth Streets on the west and east, comprising an area of about 290 acres, occupied by approximately 30,000 people. Eighty per cent of the population is Jewish, with a scattering of Italians, Negroes, Bohemians, Hungarians and other nationalities. An analysis of the school census of the last ten years indicates a decided sweep of the Jewish population toward the east. Harmon School at East Twentieth Street, which enrolled 87 per cent Jewish children in 1903-04, reported only 17 per cent in 1913-14, while Outhwaite School at East Forty-sixth Street, reporting 37 per cent Jewish children in 1903-04, shows 95.3 per cent in 1913-14. At the west end of the district the Italians are rapidly replacing other nationalities.

HOUSING

The Alliance neighborhood is not a uniform district with the same housing conditions throughout.

It has both good and bad sections. The east end (from Fortieth to Fifty-fifth Streets, between Central and Woodland Avenues), where many of the houses are still occupied by old families, is as typical of good housing conditions as the remainder of the district is typical of the worst housing conditions. Therefore averages mean nothing.

In spite of the excellent conditions in almost one-half of the district, 17 per cent of the buildings are on rear or center lots; 40.3 per cent of the people of the neighborhood live in tenements, *i. e.*, buildings housing three or more families, in many of which the public parts of the building are in bad repair and unclean. There is much house and room overcrowding and there

are still a number of families that use sanitary facilities and water supply in common. Dark and poorly ventilated rooms are to be found. Rents are high, because of the accessibility of the neighborhood, though better housing accommodations for less money can be obtained in other parts of the city.

HEALTH

The Neighborhood is well provided with health agencies such as the babies' dispensaries; the East Fifty-fifth Street Dispensary, the Visiting Nurses' Association, and the District Physician. Perhaps as a result, health conditions are comparatively good. Tuberculosis claimed $6\frac{1}{2}$ per thousand inhabitants of the district. During the year of 1913 only 6.4 per cent of deaths of babies under 2 years of age occurred in the Alliance neighborhood.

EDUCATION

Five public schools minister to the educational needs of the children with a total enrollment in October, 1913, of 6,461 pupils, of whom 80 per cent were Jewish. Public Elementary Night Schools are maintained in three of the buildings with a total enrollment of about 1,300 pupils.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

In 1913, of all the Juvenile Court cases in the city, 8 per cent were in the Alliance neighborhood, 8.5 per cent of all the cases were Jewish and 44.3 per cent of the Jewish delinquency was in the Alliance neighborhood. There were fourteen cases of delinquency to every thousand Jewish children in the neighborhood, and three times as many per thousand among the non-Jewish children in this district.

RECREATION

The recreation facilities of the neighborhood may be divided into non-commercial or public agencies and commercial or private agencies. The non-commercial recreational facilities for the 30,000 people of the district, approximately 6,000 of whom are children, comprise three supervised playgrounds, open in summer only, three gymnasiums, two libraries and the Council

Educational Alliance. The playgrounds were open from June 23d to August 30th daily during the summer of 1913. The average daily attendance at the three playgrounds was 519 in a district in which the elementary school registration was over 6,000. This means that fewer than 10 per cent of all the children in the neighborhood

were accommodated by the public playground facilities during the summer of 1913. Private and commercial recreation facilities in the district included ten moving picture shows, eight dance halls, eleven poolrooms and a large number of saloons and candy shops, which, of course, are used more or less as gathering places.

SETTLEMENT IN SMALL SOUTHERN COMMUNITIES

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Every social worker, whether the professional or the volunteer, should make a complete study and survey of his or her community, so as to be fully informed as to which problems are purely local ones and which should receive "general treatment." He or she must rely for help on organized forces, State laws, local ordinances, city departments and many volunteer agencies. The social worker will find his particular problem "dovetailing" with other problems that must be studied and worked out jointly if anything is to be achieved. All social problems are interrelated and hang upon one another like limbs on the tree. It is true that small communities do not suffer from many of the things resulting from congestion of population and such as affect larger places, but often we find conditions and situations that are local ones and that can only be remedied by those who have given time and study as to what should be the best solution of them.

The economic, industrial, political and social life of small conservative Jewish communities in the South have undergone many radical changes during the last decade. The coming together of different groups of people, each one having their own group standards, has brought about chaotic conditions and misunderstandings of all sorts. Here is where the "social-doctor"—the one who can adjust and who can bring about a mutual and sympathetic understanding of each other's ways—is more necessary in communities of smaller size than in the larger ones. In a city of vast area, where different groups are not obliged to come in contact, where each group separately is large enough to maintain their respective institutions and organizations—the situa-

tion is far better than where each small group is constantly thrown in contact with the other, where they cannot meet on common ground, because, as yet, they have no common interests and where, alas! no leader can be found among them all who can adjust situations or bring about a harmonious blending of these different people. In these smaller conservative Jewish communities there are often to be found "self-appointed" leaders—those who claim they have the right to be such because of their priority of residence in that particular locality. The writer could not begin to relate the amount of conflict that these "self-constituted" leaders have brought about or the amount of discontent and unhappiness that they are responsible for. These "would-be" leaders have lived so long in their narrow, provincial environment that the incoming of a stranger is regarded by them as a positive intrusion.

The writer wishes to give a hint as to how to bring about a more orderly state of affairs in these small but growing localities, where new settlers continue to come in numbers. Here is the lesson for the social worker to learn, who comes to work in these places. The first requisite toward bringing about more ideal conditions is to establish a communal center—a common meeting place—where each group can adjust itself to an environment that will ultimately lead to perfect assimilation and a perfect whole. Group standards are justifiable, but a standard above these must be held up and this is usually the accepted standard of the country. An adaptation to new surroundings and the contact with the best and highest ideas, whether they can be gained through the medium of literature, art, music or other sources, are some