

TRANSPORTATION DECISION

A Difference of Opinion

L. vs. M.

Consent given to receive wife and children of deserter—Agreement to accept responsibility not implied—Error of judgment not basis for cash claim—Failure to give notice not penalized.

The facts are stated in the opinion.

OPINION

Mrs. G. and her child who had been deserted by G. were dependent upon L. where they have lived for a number of years. Three years after he ran away G. was located at N. through the assistance of the society there. He was earning good wages and they endeavored to make him support his wife and child. He was willing to establish a home for them in M. and maintain them there, but refused to contribute toward their support in L. M. advised L. that Mrs. G. should join her husband believing that the family should be kept together, and they would "keep an eye on the situation and protect her in her rights." In order to induce Mrs. G. to go to her husband, L. refused further contributions to her and she finally consented to go to him. The effort to reunite the family was not successful, for in about six months Mrs. G. sued for divorce upon the ground of cruel and inhuman treatment, which divorce was granted and she received the sum of \$300 as permanent alimony. With this sum, or the greater part of it, she returned to L. within the period of nine months after she left it. Shortly after her return she applied for help and L. claims that M. should reimburse it for any expenditures it may have to make for her or that it may be permitted to return her to M. at its expense. These contentions are based upon the theory that when Mrs. G. was sent to join her husband at M. she immediately became a citizen there and L. was no longer responsible for her. M.'s answer is, that she was a charge on L. when she left, never was a charge on M. and that its consent to her coming did not imply an agreement to accept the responsibility for her future support.

All the correspondence between L. and M. prior to Mrs. G. joining her husband evidences a most praiseworthy desire on M.'s part to help all concerned, to render

efficient co-operation to L. and to bring about a reconciliation between the G.'s as the best solution of their troubles. It was with the approval of M. that she finally applied for a divorce, but they failed to notify L. of this step or ask their advice or approval of this course. M. in handling this case acted with laudable promptness and in perfect good faith. Subsequent events proved that their belief in G.'s promises to behave himself and support his wife was not well founded and they may have erred in their judgment in counseling divorce proceedings rather than prosecution for assault and non-support. It might have been better to have secured a permanent order for weekly or monthly support rather than a lump sum, which would be quickly dissipated. All this, however, is merely a difference of opinion and not a reflection upon the sincerity of M.'s efforts.

I can see no reason or justification for L.'s claim for reimbursement. When M. advised and agreed that Mrs. G. should be sent to her husband, it thereby waived its right to be indemnified in the event that she might become a burden or a charge, but its right to return her within nine months at its own expense was impliedly reserved. The fact that she went to her husband did not change the situation. We cannot apply the legal doctrine that the domicile of the husband is the residence of the wife, and the moment that she joins him she acquires his citizenship and loses her prior one. To decide upon this principle would mean that no city would give its consent to the furnishing of transportation of a wife to a husband who had either deserted her or left her to find work or for other reasons. It would prevent reconciliation or the reuniting of family ties, for a city would be justified in refusing to take the chances that the venture would prove successful. L.'s principal grievance seems to be that a divorce was obtained without its consent or approval. Granting that it would have been better to send notice of Mrs. G.'s intention to L., the failure to do so is not to be penalized in the manner contended. I cannot find that M. has transgressed any of the transportation rules or made itself liable in any way to L. by its conduct, and I therefore find in favor of M.

MAX HERZBERG.

I concur.

JULIAN W. MACK.

I concur.

MAX SENIOR

JEWISH CHARITIES

THE IMMIGRANT PUBLICATION SOCIETY

Rabbi Henry Cohen

Galveston

You ask me to give you an account of our new society. I am very glad to do so, particularly at this time, when the need of making all our immigrants a vital part of the nation is greater than ever before—a time when we should be making ready with all practical speed to receive and care for what will probably be the greatest immigration, above all the greatest Jewish immigration, in the history of the nation.

There was no whimsical purpose in the organization of the Immigrant Publication Society of 241 Fifth Avenue, New York—no educational fad, no philanthropic fad. It is to meet a definite and serious need. No one who has ever worked among immigrants that are literate, like the vast majority of Jewish immigrants, but has been constantly asked by them for books in their own language about America, its life, laws, social and industrial conditions; its means of travel, postal information, money; its history, citizenship, the learning of English—a hundred and one kinds of information hitherto impossible to supply. For our work in Galveston, (The Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau, one of the philanthropies of Mr. Jacob H. Schiff), we distributed some practical Yiddish leaflets prepared in simple form, giving a few rules of conduct important to be observed in the new land. There were also a few hints on civics and the basis of our Constitution.

This same need of literature for the immigrant has been constantly felt in the large cities, and has been met in different ways. Much of the information offered to the immigrant is ill-suited to his use and taste; usually it is sectarianly religious. These religious helps are, it is true, exceedingly important, because the immigrant, among strangers in a strange land, often loses the religious and ethical, as well as the social, restraints of his old home, gets a distorted idea of American freedom, and

throws overboard his religion, discarding indiscriminately things good and things bad. But these religious leaflets would have had much greater effect were they accompanied by advice and information of practical use to the bewildered new-comer in the exigencies of every day life among us.

Here, then, was the distinct call of vital need for an organization that would be a business like and systematic adjunct to the general distributing plan of existing immigrant associations—an organization that would take the necessary pains to know the general aspects of the problem as applying to all nationalities and races, and that would then carefully adapt its efforts to suit the special needs of each. This obviously requires the most careful co-operation with men who have themselves been immigrants and with the different national immigrant societies. It means careful co-ordination of work in applying actual and practical knowledge, and not mere theory, to a difficult problem.

For the success of this work of Americanizing and educating the immigrant, one thing is essential. You must go to him first in a friendly and democratic way in his own language. This is the only way to reach him. Every stress must of course be laid upon the necessity of his learning English, and simple and practical books on learning it must be promptly offered him. But to the cleverest, the simplest English book is at first impossible. Not everyone has the gift of languages. Some few never learn any English at all, but, fortunately, experience gives abundant proof that the immigrant can absorb the spirit of the new country through his own language.

So much for the idea, which is already a proved success. What so far has been done? The first step in so essentially a patriotic American work was the preparation, curiously enough at the suggestion of

the Royal Italian Immigration Commission, of an Immigrant's Guide, telling the newcomer the things which he needs to know, and which he knows he needs. This first book was written by John Foster Carr, who for many years had lived familiarly with immigrants, particularly Italian immigrants, and had written many well-informed, popular and sympathetic articles about them. In its early editions the Guide was published under the auspices of the Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution.

The success of this "Little Green Book," as it was at once called, was immediate. With the cordial help of many interested Jewish societies, it was soon carefully adapted in every detail for the use of the English-speaking immigrants. Again its success was immediate. The Jewish press was unanimous in praise. Jewish Charities called it: "The best of its kind that has ever been published in this country." The schools and libraries took it up. Soon repeat orders began to come, with the first one the news that the copy in the Bridgeport Public Library had proven so popular that it had been "worn out completely." From Boston came the story of an old Jewish tailor who had committed the entire book to memory.

The National Jewish Immigration Council and the Jewish Immigration Committee gave the Guide their hearty endorsement, and recommended it to their constituent societies. The Federation of Oriental Jews of America requested the publication of Jewish versions in Ladino, Arabic and Neo-Greek. The Executive Committee of the Executive Grand Lodge of the International Order of B'nai B'rith by unanimous resolution have voted the book full sanction and support. Many Jewish organizations were soon making efficient use of the Guide.

The "Immigrant's Guide" was later published in Polish and in an English translation of the Yiddish, and its increasing success brought a great variety of demands for other sorts of help from the public libraries. The first need was suggested in this way: Wherever librarians had made the experiment of giving our "new immigrants" books in their own languages,

results had been most encouraging. It brought the man into a purely American atmosphere, perhaps for the only time in the whole day. It caused an immediate increased demand for books on citizenship. It constantly offered the temptation to learn English through attractive, illustrated papers, magazines and books, and, directly and indirectly, stimulated the circulation of English books.

In some cases the results of this new and generous work were extraordinary. Mr. Edwin H. Anderson, the director of the New York Public Library, and an active and earnest member of the Council of our new society, in his annual report of last year, shows that the increase in circulation of the Yiddish books amounted to 27 percent. This year the increase over last year was no less than 42 percent, far surpassing that of all other languages. This fully justifies the phrase of Mr. Legler, the librarian of the Chicago Public Library, in speaking of these immigrant peoples when he says: "They are storming the libraries."

But ordinarily the librarian in opening a department in a foreign language is forced to depend upon a chance adviser, with consequences that are sometimes amusing, sometimes really disastrous. The problem presents serious difficulties. How can the librarian be sure of giving the immigrant the best books and papers in his own language, not only for his pleasure, but very practically to help him, explaining America and its opportunities, putting before him the means of learning English, of becoming an American citizen, and of satisfying many of the most important necessities of his new life? How can the librarian be sure that she is not innocently placing on the shelves books that are atheistic, anarchistic, propagandizing, indecent or simply "trash?" What books should she buy first? What size are they? What do they cost? How shall the foreigner be taught the privileges and rules of the library?

So Mr. Carr's next book was a librarian's manual, meeting this great need for the Italian language. It was welcomed with such enthusiasm by librarians that it was at once issued with the co-operation of the Publishing Board of the American Library Association, which undertook its free ad-

vertisement and its distribution. A similar book for Yiddish is now in preparation with expert help. Nearly fifty public libraries have called for it, and this, too, will be published under the auspices of the national association. How remarkable a thing it is that the first popular Yiddish bibliography published in America should be printed at the insistence of American librarians—one of a series that Mr. Anderson, with the practical experience of New York, says, are: "Exactly what we need to help us make the immigrant understand America and its institutions."

These two books formed a substantial basis for the beginning of work, and the new society secured its charter as a membership corporation, with Mr. Carr, whose books have given so much promise, as director. The publication of the "Immigrant's Guide" and of these librarians' manuals is to be continued and extended so that they may be of the widest usefulness. Two new books of a different sort that were urgently needed have already been published, winning a rapid success. One is a simple book on learning English, the first book of the sort published that gives the proper emphasis to the neglected matter of practice in pronunciation. It was written by a successful Boston school teacher of Armenian birth, who by practical experience knows the difficulties of our English for the foreigner, and who has also learned to teach others how to surmount them. The second new book, that already promises to become the most popular of all the publications of our society, is "Makers of America: Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln." In simple English, for the man who has already made some progress in the language, it is America's message to the world given in the stirring story of the lives of the founders of our Republic. And other new books are in prospect. An attractive "Guide to Citizenship" will be published this autumn. A history of the United States, already in manuscript, it is hoped will be printed and ready for distribution before the new year.

All of the publications of our society are of great simplicity, but they are all intended to interest and help, first of all, the intelligent adult. Yet the "Jewish Comment" says of the "Yiddish Guide:" "Any Jewish immigrant from Russia, Galicia or Roumania, who knows the Hebrew letters

can easily understand it." And the "Jewish Exponent" wrote: "Full of indispensable information couched in a most sympathetic tone."

It seems to me that the Immigrant Publication Society has entered upon a field of service of large possibilities for the benefit of the country and of our people. We are all a part of each other, and rise and fall together. Ignorance is criminal—"en bor yere 'het"—even as Aboth says. If we can help our immigrants with the elements of American education, mentally, morally and politically, we shall also do away with the necessity of a large amount of costly and difficult charitable work. Medical and social science have brought back into its own that old-fashioned proverb: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The work of the Immigrant Publication Society is essentially preventive, and I hope that it will find such support among our people that its service will be nationally effective with our Jewish immigrants.

The announcement is made of the marriage of Miss Lillian Davis of New York to Dr. Charles S. Bernheimer, superintendent of the Hebrew Education Society of Brooklyn. Dr. Bernheimer is one of the best known settlement workers in the country, and is an authority on certain aspects of settlement work. Under his administration, the work of the Society has greatly broadened, and a new building erected. Dr. Bernheimer is in charge of the Book Reviews for JEWISH CHARITIES.

Mr. H. J. Hyman, who for a number of years has been in charge of the Jewish Educational Alliance of Atlanta, Ga., has resigned that position to take up work in Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Hyman occupied the post in Atlanta for a number of years, where his efforts resulted in the rapid development of the activities of his organization.

EXCHANGE BUREAU

The Jewish Educational Alliance of Atlanta, Georgia, desires to employ an experienced, competent superintendent to take charge of its activities. Address V. H. Kriegshaber, president, Atlanta, Georgia.