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HULL HOUSE, CHICAGO: AN EFFORT TOWARD SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

HULL HOUSE, Chicago's first Social Settlement, was established in September, 1889. It represented no association, but was opened by two women, supported by many friends, in the belief that the mere foothold of a house, easily accessible, ample in space, hospitable and tolerant in spirit, situated in the midst of the large foreign colonies which so easily isolate themselves in American cities, would be in itself a serviceable thing for Chicago. It represents an attempt to make social intercourse express the growing sense of the economic unity of society, to add the social function to democracy. It was opened in the theory that the dependence of classes on each other is reciprocal, and that "as the social relation is essentially a reciprocal relation, it gives a form of expression that has peculiar value."

Hull House stands on South Halsted Street, next door to the corner of Polk. South Halsted Street is thirty-two miles long and one of the great thoroughfares of Chicago. Polk Street crosses Halsted midway between the stock-yards to the south and the ship-building yards on the north branch of the Chicago River. For the six miles between these two dignified industries the street is lined with shops of butchers and grocers, with dingy and gorgeous saloons, and pretentious establishments for the sale of ready-made clothing. Polk Street, running west from Halsted Street, grows rapidly more respectable; running a mile east to State Street, it grows steadily worse and crosses a network of gilded vice on the corners of Clark Street and Fourth Avenue.

Hull House is an ample old residence, well built and somewhat ornately decorated after the manner of its time, 1856. It has been used for many purposes, and although battered by its vicissitudes, it is essentially sound and has responded kindly to repairs and careful furnishing. Its wide hall and open fires always insure it a gracious aspect. It once stood in the suburbs, but the city has steadily grown up around it and its site now has corners on three . or four distinct foreign colonies. Between Halsted Street and the river live about ten [end page 226] thousand Italians: Neapolitans, Sicilians, and Calabrians, with an occasional Lombard or Venetian. To the south on Twelfth Street are many Germans, and side streets are given over almost entirely to Polish and Russian Jews. Further south, these Jewish colonies merge into a huge Bohemian colony, so vast that Chicago ranks as the third Bohemian city in the world. To the northwest are many Canadian-French, clannish in spite of their long residence in America, and to the north are many Irish and first-generation Americans. On the streets directly west and farther north are well-to-do English speaking families, many of whom own their houses and have lived in the neighborhood for years. I know one man who is still living in his old farm-house. This corner of Polk and Halsted Streets is in the fourteenth precinct of the nineteenth ward. This ward has a population of about fifty thousand, and at the last presidential election registered 7,072 voters. It has had no unusual political scandal connected with it, but its aldermen are generally saloon-keepers and its political manipulations are those to be found in the crowded wards where the activities of the petty politician are unchecked.

The policy of the public authorities of never taking an initiative and always waiting to be urged to do their duty is fatal in a ward where there is no initiative among the citizens. The idea underlying our self-government breaks down in such a ward. The streets are inexpressibly dirty,

the number of schools inadequate, factory legislation unenforced, the street-lighting bad, the paving miserable and altogether lacking in the alleys and smaller streets, and the stables defy all laws of sanitation. Hundreds of houses are unconnected with the street sewer. The older and richer inhabitants seem anxious to move away as rapidly as they can afford it. They make room for newly arrived emigrants who are densely ignorant of civic duties. This substitution of the older inhabitants is accomplished also industrially in the south and east quarters of the ward. The Hebrews and Italians do the finishing for the great clothing-manufacturers formerly done by Americans, Irish, and Germans, who refused to submit to the extremely low prices to which the sweating system has reduced their successors. As the design of the sweating system is the elimination of rent from the manufacture of clothing, the "outside work" is begun after the clothing leaves the cutter. For this work no basement is too dark, no stable loft too foul, no rear shanty too provisional, no tenement room too small, as these conditions imply low rental. Hence these shops abound in the worst of the foreign districts, where the sweater easily finds his cheap basement and his home finishers. There is a constant tendency to employ schoolchildren, as much of the home and shop work can easily be done by children. The houses of the ward, for the most part wooden, were originally built for one family and are now occupied by several. They are after the type of the inconvenient frame cottages found in the poorer suburbs twenty years ago. Many of them were built where they now stand; others were brought thither on rollers, because their previous site had been taken for a factory. The fewer brick tenement buildings which are three or four stories high are comparatively new. There are few huge and foul tenements. The little wooden houses have a temporary aspect, and for this reason, perhaps, the tenement-house legislation in Chicago is totally inadequate. Back tenements flourish; many houses have no water supply save the faucet in the back yard; there are no fire

escapes; the garbage and ashes are placed in wooden boxes which are fastened to the street pavements. One of the most discouraging features about the present system of tenement houses is that many of them are owned by sordid and ignorant immigrants.

The theory that wealth brings responsibility, that possession entails at length education and refinement, in these cases fails utterly. The children of an Italian immigrant owner do not go to school and are no improvement on their parents. His wife picks rags from the street gutter and laboriously sorts them in a dingy court. Wealth may do something for her self-complacency and feeling of consequence; it certainly does nothing for her comfort or her children's improvement nor for the cleanliness of any one concerned. Another thing that prevents better houses in Chicago is the tentative attitude of the real-estate men. Many unsavory conditions are allowed to continue which would be regarded with horror if they were considered permanent. Meanwhile, the wretched conditions persist until at least two generations of children have been born and reared in them. Our ward contains two hundred and fifty-five saloons; our own precinct boasts of eight, and the one directly north of us twenty. This allows one saloon to every twenty-eight voters, and there is no doubt that the saloon is the centre of the liveliest political and social life in the ward. The leases and fixtures of these saloons are, in the majority of cases, owned by the wholesale liquor houses, and the saloon-keeper himself is often a bankrupt. There are seven churches and two missions in the ward. All of these are small and somewhat struggling, save the

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large Catholic church connected with the Jesuit College on the south boundary of the ward and the French Catholic church on the west . boundary. There are but three out of these nine religious centres in which the service is habitually conducted in English. There are seven Catholic parochial schools in the ward, accommodating 6,244 children; three Protestant schools care for 141 children. A fine manual-training school sustained by the Hebrews is found in the seventh ward just south of us. In the same ward is the receiving shelter for the Jewish refugees.

This site for a Settlement was selected in the first instance because of its diversity and the variety of activity for which it presented an opportunity. It has been the aim of the residents to respond to all sides of the neighborhood life: not to the poor people alone, nor to the well-to-do, nor to the young in contradistinction to the old, but to the neighborhood as a whole, "men, women, and children taken in families as the Lord mixes them." The activities of Hull House divide themselves into four, possibly more lines. They are not formally or consciously thus divided, but broadly separate according to the receptivity of the neighbors. They might be designated as the social, educational, and humanitarian. I have added civic--if indeed a settlement of women can be said to perform civic duties. These activities spring from no preconceived notion of what a Social Settlement should be, but have increased gradually on demand. In describing these activities and their value to the neighborhood, I shall attempt to identify those people who respond to each form.

A Settlement which regards social intercourse as the terms of its expression logically brings to its aid all those adjuncts which have been found by experience to free social life. It casts aside nothing which the cultivated man regards as good and suggestive of participation in the best life

of the past. It ignores none of the surroundings which one associates with a life of simple refinement. The amount of luxury which an individual indulges in is a thing which has to be determined by each for himself. It must always be a relative thing. The one test which the settlement is bound to respect is that its particular amount of luxury shall tend to "free" the social expression of its neighbors, and not cumber that expression. The residents at Hull House find that the better in quality and taste their surroundings are, the more they contribute to the general enjoyment.

We have distinct advantages for Social Settlements in America.

There are fewer poor people here than in England. There are also [end page 229]

fewer people who expect to remain poor, and they are less strictly confined to their own districts. It is an advantage that our cities are diversified by foreign colonies. We go to Europe and consider our view incomplete if we do not see something of the peasant life of the little villages with their quaint costumes and suggestive habits. We can see the same thing here. There are Bohemians, Italians, Poles, Russians, Greeks, and Arabs in Chicago vainly trying to adjust their peasant life to the life of a large city and coming in contact with only the most ignorant Americans in that city. The more of scholarship, the more of linguistic attainment, the more of beautiful surroundings a Settlement among them can command, the more it can do for them.

It is much easier to deal with the first generation of crowded city life than with the second or third, because it is more natural and cast in a simpler mould. The Italian and Bohemian peasants who live in Chicago still put on their bright holiday clothes on Sunday and go to visit their cousins. They tramp along with at least a suggestion of having once walked over ploughed fields and breathed country air. The second generation of city poor have no holiday clothes and consider their cousins "a bad lot." I have heard a drunken man in a maudlin stage babble of his good country mother and imagine he was driving the cows home, and I knew that his little son, who laughed loud at him, would be drunk earlier in life, and would have no such pastoral interlude to his ravings. Hospitality still survives among foreigners, although it is buried under false pride among the poorest Americans. One thing seemed clear in regard to entertaining these foreigners: to preserve and keep for them whatever of value their past life contained and to bring them in contact with a better type of Americans. For two years, every Saturday evening, our Italian neighbors were our guests; entire families came. These evenings were very popular during our first winter at Hull House. Many educated Italians helped us, and the house became known

as a place where Italians were welcome and where national holidays were observed. They come to us with their petty lawsuits, sad relics of the *vendetta*, with their incorrigible boys, with their hospital cases, with their aspirations for American clothes, and with their needs for an interpreter.

Friday evening is devoted to Germans and is similar in purpose; but owing to the superior education of our Teutonic guests and the clever leading of a cultivated German woman, we can bring out the best of that cozy social intercourse which is found in its perfection in the "Fatherland." They sing a great deal in the tender minor of the [end page 230]

German folksong or in the rousing spirit of the Rhine. They are slowly but persistently pursuing a course in German history and literature. The relationship by no means ends with social civilities, and the acquaintance made there has brought about radical changes in the lives of many friendless families. I recall one peasant woman, straight from the fields of Germany. Her two years in America had been spent in patiently carrying water up and down two flights of stairs and in washing the heavy flannel suits of iron-foundry workers. For this her pay had averaged thirty-five cents a day. Three of her daughters had fallen victims to the vice of the city. The mother was bewildered and distressed, but understood nothing. We were able to induce the betrayer of one daughter to marry her; the second, after a tedious lawsuit, supported his child; with the third we were able to do nothing. This woman is now living with her family in a little house seventeen miles from the city. She has made two payments on her land and is a lesson to all beholders as she pastures her cow up and down the railroad tracks and makes money from her ten acres. She did not need charity. She had an immense capacity for hard work, but she sadly needed "heading." She is our most shining example, but I think of many forlorn cases of German and Bohemian peasants in need of neighborly help.

Perhaps of more value than to the newly arrived peasant is the service of the settlement to those foreigners who speak English fairly well, and who have been so successful in material affairs that they are totally absorbed by them. Their social life is too often reduced to a sense of comradeship. The lives of many Germans for instance are law-abiding, but inexpressibly dull. They have resigned poetry and romance with the other good things of the Fatherland. There is a strong family affection between them and their English-speaking children, but their pleasures are not in common and they seldom go out together. Perhaps the greatest value of the Settlement to

them is in simply placing large and pleasant rooms with musical facilities at their disposal, and in reviving their almost forgotten enthusiasm for Korner and Schiller. I have seen sons and daughters stand in complete surprise as their mother's knitting-needles softly beat time to the song she was singing, or her worn face turned rosy under the hand-clapping as she made an old-fashioned courtesy at the end of a German poem. It was easy to fancy a growing touch of respect in her children's manner to her and a rising enthusiasm for German literature and reminiscence on the part of all the family, an effort to bring together the old [end page 231]

life and the new, a respect for the older cultivation, and not quite so much assurance that the new was the best. I think that we have a right to expect that our foreigners will do this for us: that they will project a little of the historic and romantic into the prosaic quarters of our American cities.

But our social evenings are by no means confined to foreigners. Our most successful clubs are entirely composed of English-speaking and American-born young people. Those over sixteen meet in two clubs, one for young men and one for girls, every Monday evening. Each club dispatches various literary programmes before nine o'clock, when they meet together for an hour of social amusement before going home at ten. Dancing they always prefer, although they will devise other amusements. The members of the Tuesday evening clubs are from fourteen to sixteen years old; a few of them are still in school, but most of them are working. The boys who are known as the Young Citizen's Club are supposed to inform themselves on municipal affairs, as are the Hull House Columbian Guards who report alleys and streets for the Municipal Order League. We have various other clubs of young people that meet weekly; their numbers are limited only by the amount of room. We hold the dining-room, the reception-room, and the octagon each evening for the College Extension classes, and can reserve only the large drawing-room and gymnasium for the clubs and receptions. The gymnasium is a somewhat pretentious name for a building next door which was formerly a saloon, but which we rented last fall, repaired, and fitted up with simple apparatus. A "real gymnasium" is at present being built for Hull House. During the winter the old one sheltered some enthusiastic athletic classes. The evenings were equally divided between men and women. The children came in the afternoon. This may answer for a description of the formal social evenings, although there is much social life going on constantly which cannot be tabulated.

To turn to the educational effort, it will be perhaps better first to describe the people who respond to it. In every neighborhood where poorer people live, because rents are supposed to be cheaper there, is an element which, although uncertain in the individual, in the aggregate can be counted upon. It is composed of people of former education and opportunity who have cherished ambitions and prospects, but who are caricatures of what they meant to be--"hollow ghosts which blame the living men." There are times in many lives when there is a cessation of energy and loss of power. Men and women [end page 232] of education and refinement come to live in a cheaper neighborhood because they lack the power of making money, because of ill-health, because of an unfortunate marriage, or for various other reasons which do not imply criminality or stupidity. Among them are those who, in spite of untoward circumstances, keep up some sort of an intellectual life, those who are "great for books" as their neighbors say. To such the Settlement is a genuine refuge. In addition to these there are many young women who teach in the public schools, young men who work at various occupations, but who are bent upon self-improvement and are preparing for professions. It is of these that the College Extension classes are composed. The majority of the two hundred students live within the radius of six blocks from the house, although a few of them come from other parts of the city. The educational effort of Hull House always has been held by the residents, to be subordinate to its social life and, as it were, a part of it. What is now known as the College Extension course, a series of lectures and classes held in the evening on the general plan of University Extension, had its origin in an informal club which, during the first winter, read "Romola" with the original residents. During the last term thirty-five classes a week were in existence. The work is divided into terms of twelve weeks, and circulars

are issued at the beginning of each term. Many students have taken studies in each of the seven terms of work offered.

The relation of students and faculty to each other and to the residents is that of guest and hostess, and those students who have been longest in relation to the Settlement feel the responsibility of old friends of the house to new guests. A good deal of tutoring is constantly going on among the students themselves in the rooms of Hull House. At the close of each term the residents give a reception to students and faculty, which is one of the chief social events of the season. Upon this comfortable social basis very good work has been done in the College Extension courses.

Literature classes until recently have been the most popular. The last winter's Shakespeare class had a regular attendance of forty. The mathematical classes have always been large and flourishing. The faculty, consisting of college men and women, numbers thirty-five, Many of them have taught constantly at the house for two years, but their numbers are often re-enforced. During the last term a class in physics, preparatory for a class in electricity, was composed largely of workmen in the Western Electric Works, which are within a few blocks of Hull House. A fee [end page 233] of fifty cents is charged for each course of study. This defrays all incidental expenses and leaves on hand each term fifty or seventy dollars, with which to import distinguished lecturers.

It has always been the policy of Hull House to co-operate as much as possible with public institutions. The Chicago Public Library has an almost unique system of branch reading-rooms and library stations. Five rooms are rented by the library in various parts of the city which are fitted up for reading-rooms, and in addition to magazines and papers they

are supplied with several hundred books. There are also other stations where public-library cards can be left and to which books are delivered. Hull House was made one of these delivery stations during its second year, and when in June, 1891, the Butler Gallery was completed we offered the lower floor as a branch reading-room. The City Library supplies English magazines and papers and two librarians who are in charge. There are papers in Italian, German, Bohemian, and French. Hull House gives the room free of rent. The number of readers the first month was 1,213; during the fifth month, 2,454. The upper floor of the Butler Gallery is divided into an art exhibition room and a studio. Our first art exhibit was opened in June, 1891, by Mr. and Mrs. Barnett, of St. Jude's, Whitechapel. It is always pleasant to associate their hearty sympathy with that first exhibit. The pictures were some of the best that Chicago could afford, several by Corot, Watts, and Davis. European country scenes, sea, views, and Dutch interiors bring forth many pleasant reminiscences, and the person who is in charge of the pictures to explain them is many times more edified than edifying. We have had four exhibits during the year since the gallery was completed, two of oil-paintings, one of old engravings and etchings, and one of water-colors. The average attendance at these exhibits has been three thousand. An exhibit. is open from two in the afternoon until ten in the evening, and continues usually two weeks. The value of these exhibits to the neighborhood must, of course, be determined by the value one attaches to the sense of beauty and the pleasure which arises from its contemplation. Classes in free-hand drawing are held in the studio of the Butler Gallery. They have been very popular from the first and some excellent work has been done.

Every Thursday evening for three years, save during the three summer months, we have had a lecture of some sort at Hull House. This has come to be an expected event in the neighborhood. These lectures are largely attended by the College Extension students, and [end page 234]

the topics are supposed to connect with their studies, but many other people come to them and often join a class because of the interest a lecturer has awakened. This attraction is constantly in mind when these lectures are planned. For two years a summer school has been held at Rockford, Ill., in connection with the College Extension classes. From one-third to one-half the students have been able to attend it, paying their board for a month and enjoying out-door study quite as much as the classes. I would recommend for imitation the very generous action on the part of the Rockford College trustees in placing at our disposal their entire educational apparatus, from the dining-room to the laboratories. On the border land between social and educational activity are our Sunday afternoon concerts, and the Plato Club which follows them.

The industrial education of Hull House has always been somewhat limited. From the beginning we have had large and enthusiastic cooking classes, first in the Hull House kitchen and later in a tiny cottage across the alley which has been fitted up for the purpose. We have also always had sewing, mending, and embroidery classes. This leads me to speak of the children who meet weekly at Hull House, whose organization is between classes and clubs. There are three hundred of them who come on three days, not counting, of course, the children who come to the house merely as depositors in the Penny Provident Fund Savings Bank. A hundred Italian girls come on Monday. They sew and carry home a new garment, which becomes a pattern for the entire family. Tuesday afternoon has always been devoted to school-boys' clubs: they are practically storytelling clubs. The most popular stories are legends and tales of chivalry. The one hundred and fifty little girls on Friday afternoon are not very unlike the boys, although they want to sew while they are hearing their stories. The value of these clubs, I believe, lies almost entirely in their success in arousing the higher imagination. We have had a kindergarten at Hull House ever

since we have lived there. Every morning miniature Italians, Hebrews, French, Irish, and Germans assemble in our drawing-room, and nothing seems to excite admiration in the neighborhood so much as the fact that we "put up with them."

In addition to the neighbors who respond to the receptions and classes are found those who are too battered and oppressed to care for them. . To these, however, is left that susceptibility to the bare offices of humanity which raises such offices into a bond of fellowship. These [end page 235] claim humanitarian efforts. Perhaps the chief value of a Settlement to its neighborhood, certainly to the newly arrived foreigner, is its office as an information and interpretation bureau. It sometimes seems as if the business of .the settlement were that of a commission merchant. Without endowment and without capital itself, it constantly acts between the various institutions of the city and the people for whose benefit these institutions were erected. The hospitals, the county agencies, and State asylums, are often but vague rumors to the people who need them most. This commission work, as I take it, is of value not only to the recipient, but to the institutions themselves. Each institution is obliged to determine upon the line of its activity, to accept its endowment for that end and do the best it can. But each time this is accomplished it is apt to lace itself up in certain formulas, is in danger of forgetting the mystery and complexity of life, of repressing the promptings that spring from growing insight.

The residents of a Social Settlement have an opportunity of seeing institutions from the recipient's standpoint, of catching the spirit of the original impulse which founded them. This experience ought to have a certain value and ultimately find expression in the institutional management. One of the residents of Hull House received this winter an appointment from the

Cook County agent as a county visitor. She reported at the agency each morning, and all the cases within a radius of several blocks from . Hull House were given to her for investigation. This gave her a legitimate opportunity for knowing the poorest people in the neighborhood. In no cases were her recommendations refused or her judgments reversed by the men in charge of the office. From the very nature of our existence and purpose we are bound to keep on good terms with every beneficent institution in the city. Passing by our telephone last Sunday morning, I was struck with the list of numbers hung on the wall for easy reference. They were. those of the Visiting Nurses' Association; Cook County Hospital; Women's and Children's Hospital; Maxwell Street Police Station for city ambulance; Health Department; City Hall; Cook County Agent, etc. We have been on very good terms with the Hebrew Relief and Aid Society, the Children's Aid, the Humane Society, the Municipal Order League, and with the various church and national relief associations. Every summer we send out dozens of children to the country on the "Daily News" Fresh Air Fund and to the Holiday Home at Lake Geneva. Our most complete co-operation has been with the Visiting Nurses' Association. One of [end page 236] the nurses lives at Hull House, pays her board as a resident, and does her work from there. Friends of the house are constantly in need of her ministrations, and her cases become friends of the house. Owing to the lack of a charity organization society in Chicago we have been obliged to keep a sum of money as a relief fund. Five bath-rooms in the rear of Hull House are open to the neighborhood and are constantly in use. The number of baths taken in July was nine hundred and eighty.

The more definite humanitarian effect of Hull House has taken shape in a day nursery, which was started during the second year of our residence on Halsted Street. A frame cottage of six rooms across our yard has been fitted up as a *crèche*. At present we receive from thirty to forty

children daily. A young lady who has had kindergarten training is in charge; she has the assistance of an older woman, and a kindergarten by a professional teacher, is held each morning in the play-room. This nursery is not merely a convenience in the neighborhood; it is, to a certain extent, a neighborhood affair. Similar in spirit is the Hull House Diet Kitchen, in a little cottage directly back of the nursery. Food is prepared for invalids and orders are taken from physicians and visiting nurses of the district. We have lately had an outfit of Mr. Atkinson's inventions, in which the women of the neighborhood have taken a most intelligent interest. We sometimes have visions of a kitchen similar in purpose to the New England Kitchen of Boston, but on a more co-operative plan, managed by the Hull House Woman's Club. This club meets one afternoon a week. It is composed of the most able women of the neighborhood, who enjoy the formal addresses and many informal discussions. The economics of food and fuel are often discussed. The Hull House household expenses are frankly compared with those of other households. I have always felt that "friendly visiting," while of great value, was one-sided. To be complete the "friendly visitor" should also be the friendly visited. It is quite possible that looking over her expense book with that of her "case" would be beneficial to her. The residents at Hull House find in themselves a constantly increasing tendency to consult their neighbors on the advisability of each new undertaking. We have lately opened a boarding club for working girls near Hull House on the co-operative plan. I say advisedly that we have "opened" it; the running of it is quite in the hands of the girls themselves. The furniture, pictures, etc., belong to Hull House, and whatever experience we have is at their disposal; [end page 237]

but it is in no sense a working-girls' "home," nor is it to be run from the outside. We hope a great deal from this little attempt at cooperative housekeeping. The club has been running three months and has twenty-five members.

In summing up the objective value of Hull House, I am sorry we have not more to present in the line of civic activities. It was through the energy of a resident this spring that the fact that the public-school census recorded 6,976 school-children in the nineteenth ward and that they were provided with only 2,957 public-school sittings was made prominent just before the appropriations were voted for school buildings and sites. It was largely through her energy and the energy of the people whom she interested in it that the Board of Education was induced to purchase a site for a school building in our ward and to save and equip for immediate use a school-house about to be turned into a warehouse.

During two months of this summer the reports sent in from Hull House to the Municipal Order League and through it to the Health Department were one thousand and thirty-seven. The Department showed great readiness to co-operate with this volunteer inspection, and a marked improvement has taken place in the scavenger service and in the regulation of the small stables of the ward.

Hull House has had, I hope, a certain value to the women's trades unions of Chicago. It seems to me of great importance that as trades unions of women are being formed they should be kept, if possible, from falling into the self-same pits the men's unions have fallen into. Women possessing no votes and therefore having little political value will be both of advantage and

disadvantage to their unions. Four women's unions meet regularly at Hull House: the book-binders', the shoemakers', the shirtmakers', and the cloakmakers'. The last two were organized at Hull House. It has seemed to us that the sewing trades are most in need of help. They are thoroughly disorganized, Russian and Polish tailors competing against English-speaking tailors, young girls and Italian women competing against both. An efficient union which should combine all these elements seems very difficult, unless it grow strong enough to offer a label and receive unexpected aid from the manufacturers. In that case there would be the hope of co-operation on the part of the consumers, as the fear of contagion from ready-made clothing has at last seized the imagination of the public.

That the trades unions themselves care for what we have done [end page 238] for them is shown by the fact that when the committee of investigation for the sweating system was appointed by the Trades and Labor Assembly, consisting of five delegates from the unions and five from other citizens, two of the latter were residents of Hull House. It is logical that a Settlement should have a certain value in labor complications, having from its very position sympathies entangled on both sides. Last May twenty girls from a knitting factory who struck because they were docked for loss of time when they were working by the piece, came directly from the factory to Hull House. They had heard that we "stood by working people." We were able to have the strike arbitrated, and although six girls lost their places, the unjust fines were remitted and we had the satisfaction of putting on record one more case of arbitration in the slowly growing list. We were helped in this case, as we have been in many others, by the Bureau of Justice. Its office is constantly crowded with working people who hope for redress from the law but have no money with which to pay for it. There should be an office of this bureau in every ward. Hull House, in

spite of itself, does a good deal of legal work. We have secured support for deserted women, insurance for bewildered widows, damages for injured operators, furniture from the clutches of the instalment store. One function of the Settlement to its neighborhood somewhat resembles that of the big brother whose mere presence on the play-ground protects the little one from bullies. A resident at Hull House is at present collecting labor statistics in the neighborhood for the Illinois State Bureau of Labor. It is a matter of satisfaction that this work can be done from the Settlement and the residents receive the benefit of the information collected.

It is difficult to classify the Working People's Social Science Club, which meets weekly at Hull House. It is social, educational, and civic in character, the latter chiefly because it strongly connects the house with the labor problems in their political and social aspects. This club was organized at Hull House in the spring of 1890 by an English workingman. It has met weekly since, save during the months of summer. At eight o'clock every Wednesday evening the secretary calls to order from forty to one hundred people. A chairman for the evening is elected and a speaker is introduced who is allowed to talk until nine o'clock; his subject is then thrown open to discussion and a lively debate ensues until ten o'clock, at which hour the meeting is declared adjourned. The enthusiasm of this club seldom lags. Its zest for discussion is unceasing, and any attempt to [end page 239] tur

n it into a study or reading club always meets with the strong disapprobation of the members. Chicago is full of social theorists. It offers a cosmopolitan opportunity for discussion. The only possible danger from this commingling of many theories is incurred when there is an attempt at suppression; bottled up, there is danger of explosion; constantly uncorked, open to the deodorizing and freeing process of the air, all danger is averted. Nothing so disconcerts a social agitator as to find among his auditors men who have been through all that and who are quite as radical as lie in another direction.

The economic conferences which were held between business men and workingmen during the winter of 1888-89 and the two succeeding winters doubtless did much toward relieving this state of effervescence. Many thoughtful men in Chicago are convinced that if these conferences had been established earlier the Haymarket riot and all its sensational results might have been avoided. The Sunset Club is at present performing much the same function. There is still need, however, for many of these clubs where men who differ widely in their social theories can meet for discussion, where representatives of the various economic schools can modify each other, and at least learn tolerance and the futility of endeavoring to convince all the world of the truth of one position. To meet in a social-science club is more educational than to meet in a single-tax club, or a socialistic chapter, or a personal-rights league, although the millennium may seem farther off after such a meeting. In addition to this modification of view there is doubtless a distinct modification of attitude. This spring the Hull House Social Science Club heard a series of talks on municipal and county affairs by the heads of the various departments. During the discussion following the address on "The Chicago Police," a workingman had the pleasure of telling the chief of police that he had been arrested, obliged to pay two dollars and a half, and

had lost three days' work, because he had come out of the wrong gate when he was working on the World's Fair grounds. The Chief sighed, expressed his regret, and made no defence. The speaker sat down bewildered; evidently for the first time in his life he realized that blunders cut the heart of more than the victim.

Is it possible for men, however far apart in outward circumstances, for the capitalist and the workingman, to use the common phrase, to meet as individuals beneath a friendly roof, open their minds each to each, and not have their "class theories" insensibly modified by the kindly attrition of a personal acquaintance? In the light of our experience I should say not. [end page 240]

In describing Hull House and in referring so often to the "residents," I feel that I may have given a wrong impression. By far the larger amount of the teaching and formal club work is done by people living outside of the House. Between ninety and one hundred of these people meet on appointment regularly each week. Our strength lies largely in this element. The average number of people who come to the House during the week is one thousand.

I am always sorry to have Hull House regarded as philanthropy, although it doubtless has strong philanthropic tendencies and has several distinct charitable departments which are conscientiously carried on. It is unfair, however, to apply the word philanthropic to the activities of the House as a whole. Charles Booth in his brilliant chapter on "The Unemployed" expresses regret that the problems of the working class are so often confounded with the problems of the inefficient, the idle, and distressed. To confound thus two problems is to render the solution of both impossible. Hull House, while endeavoring to fulfill its obligations to neighbors of varying needs, will do great harm if it confounds distinct problems. Working people live in the same streets with those in need of charity, but they themselves require and want none of it. As one of their number has said, they require only that their aspirations be recognized and stimulated and the means of attaining them put at their disposal. Hull House makes a constant effort to secure these means, but to call that effort philanthropy is to use the word unfairly and to underestimate the duties of good citizenship.

JANE ADDAMS. [end page 241]