The Social Settlement after Twenty-Five Years

Gaylord S. White

The Harvard Theological Review, Vol. 4, No. 1. (Jan., 1911), pp. 47-70.

Stable URL:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0017-8160%28191101%294%3A1%3C47%3ATSSATY%3E2.0.CO%3B2-X

The Harvard Theological Review is currently published by Cambridge University Press and Harvard Divinity School.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at http://www.jstor.org/journals/cup.html.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

The JSTOR Archive is a trusted digital repository providing for long-term preservation and access to leading academic journals and scholarly literature from around the world. The Archive is supported by libraries, scholarly societies, publishers, and foundations. It is an initiative of JSTOR, a not-for-profit organization with a mission to help the scholarly community take advantage of advances in technology. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

http://www.jstor.org
Mon Dec 31 13:41:50 2007

THE SOCIAL SETTLEMENT AFTER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

GAYLORD S. WHITE

UNION SETTLEMENT, NEW YORK

More than a quarter of a century has elapsed since a letter, written by a passenger on an English railway train as he sat on the bank beside the track waiting for a broken-down engine to be repaired, resulted in the founding of the first Social Settlement. The writer was the Reverend Canon Samuel A. Barnett, then Vicar of St. Jude's Church, Whitechapel, in East London, and the settlement was Toynbee Hall. Mrs. Barnett has recently published an interesting account of the steps that led to the realization of the settlement idea. She describes the lack of knowledge of the poor on the part of earnest, thinking men, when she and her husband took up their work at St. Jude's, and tells of the visits they made to Oxford from time to time to talk to little groups of cultivated, serious young college men to get them to care about the poor and their problems. Some of these men came to Whitechapel for a visit, to see for themselves the conditions of poverty, and occasionally some would take lodgings in East London, when they left the university to begin their life-work. In this way a connection was established between Whitechapel and the university, and discerning spirits were able to see that each side had contributions of value to make to the other.

It was not strange that when Mr. Barnett was asked to give advice to some men at St. John's College, Cambridge, who were desirous of doing something for the poor, and were not quite prepared to start a college mission, he should have suggested that "men might hire a house, where they could come for short or long periods, and, living in an industrial quarter, learn to 'sup sorrow with the poor.'" This suggestion was made in the letter to which I have referred, and "that letter," says Mrs. Barnett, "founded Toynbee Hall." The letter was expanded into a paper read in

November of the same year (1883) at a college meeting at St. John's College, Oxford. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm, and on Christmas Eve, 1884, the first settlers took up their residence in the new building which had been erected adjacent to St. Jude's Church. The story of the naming of the new enterprise, as Mrs. Barnett tells it, is interesting. Arnold Toynbee, a rare spirit, was one of the group of young men at Oxford who had been deeply interested in the welfare of the poor. An intimate friend of the Barnetts, he had been a frequent visitor at St. Jude's vicarage, and for a brief period had lived in lodgings in East London. But his health, never vigorous, soon gave way and he was removed by an untimely death. Mrs. Barnett writes:

> The 10th of March was a Sunday, and on the afternoon of that day Balliol chapel was filled with a splendid body of men who had come together from all parts of England in loving memory of Arnold Toynbee, on the anniversary of his death. Dr. Jowett had asked my husband to preach to them and they listened, separating almost silently at the chapel porch, filled, one could almost feel, by the aspiration to copy him in caring much, if not doing much, for those who had fallen by the way or were "ignorant of our glorious gains."
>
> We had often chatted, those of us who were busy planning the new Settlement, as to what to call it. We did not mean the name to be descriptive; it should, we thought, be free from every possible savor of a Mission, and yet it should, in itself, be suggestive of a noble aim. As I sat on that Sunday afternoon in the chapel, one of the few women among the crowd of strong-brained, clean-living men assembled in reverent affection for one man, the thought flashed to me, "Let us call the Settlement Toynbee Hall." To Mr. Bolton King, the honorary secretary of the committee, had come the same idea, and it, finding favor with the committee, was so decided, and our new Settlement received its name before a brick was laid or the plans concluded.

It was two years later that the Neighborhood Guild, which subsequently became the University Settlement, was founded in New York. From these beginnings the movement has spread until in this country alone are now counted some five hundred social settlements. If the name is often loosely used, implying a somewhat vague conception of the essential idea, it has ceased to be an unfamiliar term. Indeed "settlement work" is used by many persons as a generic expression to denote such activities as are usually associated with a settlement—the clubs, classes, and social gatherings that are so much in evidence in most settlements.

All this means that the social settlement has gained a certain vogue. It has become a popular method of modern philanthropy. It has reached a well-established place in social amelioration and reform. If the name is claimed by organizations which miss the essence of the thing, this in itself is an evidence of the settlement's popularity.

Time was, in the early days of the settlement, when its friends felt obliged to ask that for a while judgment be suspended. The idea was too new; perhaps by reason of its breadth it appeared too vague. Just because the settlement was designed to touch life at every point, to include within its view the whole range of human interests and needs, it was not easy to give a concrete and specific statement of its aims and purposes, such as would be entirely satisfactory to that somewhat over-rated individual, the practical man. Still, the practical man has his rights. The settlement can no longer ask exemption from criticism on the ground of its experimental character. In this age of "efficiency tests," applied not only in the field of industrial and commercial enterprise but also in that of education and charitable effort, the settlement cannot hope to escape. Nor do its friends desire that it should be exempt from the necessity of rendering an account. They believe that it has fulfilled a useful function in the community, and they are not prepared to agree with those of their critics who, while they admit the value of the work accomplished, maintain that the method has about reached the limit of its possibilities as a factor in social progress. It is a fair question to raise—this question as to the relatively permanent value of the social settlement. When a certain settlement was closed last winter in New York, the impression got abroad that the House was no longer of vital necessity to the neighborhood, owing to the extension of social opportunities by the municipality, a condition which was generally supposed to be attributable to the influence of the settlement. As a matter of fact this view of the case was erroneous, but such a situation is quite conceivably possible. There is an aspect of the settlement in which its very success in bringing about a variety of needed local reforms, such as the socialization of the public schools, the extension of playgrounds and the like, might be supposed to put it out of business; much as a physician might seem to terminate his usefulness by the success with which he pursued preventive medicine and social hygiene. Hence it is high time to inquire what the settlement has accomplished and what promise for the future the method possesses.

The question is sometimes asked, how far the settlement has fulfilled the hopes of those who took the lead in the early days. It would be interesting to ascertain what the founders of the work had in mind, and to determine how far their expectations have been realized. Thus, for example, Canon Barnett declared long ago that the aim of the residents of Toynbee Hall was "first to form friendships and then through friendship to raise the standard of living and of life." Professor Graham Taylor tells us that the purpose of the founders was "to democratize culture and to humanize city politics." Writing, while the settlement was still young, of "the subjective pressure towards social settlements," Miss Jane Addams distinguished a threefold motive, namely, "the desire to make the entire social organism democratic, to extend democracy beyond its political expression"; then "the impulse to share the race life in order to bring social energy and the accumulation of civilization to those portions of the race that have little; and, finally, a feeling that springs from a certain renaissance of Christianity," especially in its early humanitarian aspects. The object of Hull-House is described as being "to provide a centre of a higher civic and social life; to institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises, and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago." Somewhat differently phrased is this statement from Chicago Commons: "We, who are at Chicago Commons to share the common lot, choose to live, for our own and others' sake, where we seem to be most needed, rather than where the neighborhood is supposed to offer the most of social privilege and prestige. . . . We assume the full obligations and claim all the rights of citizenship in a community with whose interests we identify ourselves, whose conditions we share, and for whose home happiness, material welfare, political freedom, and social privilege and progress we try to do our part."

It will be noted that all of these statements of purpose are concerned not with definite and concrete details, but rather with certain broad principles of good citizenship and neighborly service. I think it may be said that the early leaders in the movement did not aim at accomplishing this and that definite object, so much as at the expression, in the midst of the life about them of which they had voluntarily made themselves a part, of the spirit of neighborliness. They were thorough-going democrats who sought to make the privileges of the few the opportunities of all. They set about their task in the scientific spirit, seeking to know the facts of the situation with which they were dealing; and they brought to it the desire "to serve by sharing." This has been, perhaps, one of the distinctive contributions which the settlement has made to the work of social reform—this combination of the scientific spirit with the humanitarian. It is probable that those who struck out on this untrodden way would not have ventured to predict whither it would lead them; but the prospects must have been alluring. Unforeseen opportunities and possibilities were constantly unfolding to the view, and now, as one looks back over the years, it is not difficult to see some marks of progress toward the goal of democracy. Just what value to assign to the settlement in the process, just how much to claim for it in reviewing the progress that has already been made, is more difficult, but that it has played an important part no one who is familiar with the movement can doubt.

Before we attempt to indicate what the settlement has accomplished and to estimate the value of the idea, it will be worth while to clear the air of certain misconceptions. It is somewhat surprising to find how general, at this late day, is the confusion of mind regarding the method and the aim of the social settlement. There are, for example, those who confound it with "mission work," as if it were some new form of religious propagandism; others think of it as some fresh departure in organized charity; and still others conceive of it as chiefly concerned with educational effort. Such misunderstanding is, after all, not so much to be wondered at. Just because the settlement sought to touch life on every side, it laid itself open to misunderstanding on the part of the casual observer. And most people, moreover, are slow to grasp a new idea. They can think of it only in terms of something they already understand and in association with some institution to which the new idea appears in some way related. And those who confounded the social settlement with enterprises of education or undertakings of religion or organized charity were not altogether at fault. For the settlement has been brought of necessity into intimate relations with these and other phases of work.

Settlement workers have always been vitally interested in questions of education, and nearly every settlement has some educational features among its activities, such as a kindergarten or library or classes in manual training and household economics. But in nearly all cases these features will be found to have been introduced either as supplementary to the educational facilities of the public schools, or as experiments whose value must be demonstrated, before Boards of Education can be asked to incorporate them in the public-school system. There may also be instances in which sewing or cooking or carpentry is taught, either as a means of bringing a personal influence to bear upon the characters of the children or of getting in touch with certain elements of the neighborhood.

But the settlement does not exist primarily to do a work of education. Such educational features as settlements may have included in their programmes are, in a sense, accidents of the work. And yet the subject of public education is very close to the heart of every settlement resident. All his experience goes to convince him that the field of education must be broadened and socialized and that whatever of educational opportunity society owes to the individual must be paid for by the people as a whole. Some of the most notable work of the settlements has been accomplished in connection with the public schools, but of this I shall speak later.

If it is a mistake to think of the social settlement as an educational institution, it is still farther from the truth to consider it simply as a fresh departure in charitable work. This is not to say that there are not many cases where the lines of settlement work and interest run parallel to those of organized charity. If, for example, organized charity is everywhere throwing the emphasis on the importance of preventive work in dealing with the social problem, the settlement is in full agreement, and hopes no less ardently than organized charity to see the day when poverty shall be abolished, and to have some part in bringing that happy day to pass. But the settlement is not dealing primarily or as an essential part of its work with the dependent class. It is simply a neighbor among neighbors. And just as one neighbor lends a helping hand to another neighbor in distress, so the settlement tries to bring the needed help to those of its neighbors whose lines have fallen in grievous places. This may mean giving temporary material relief. It will more likely mean putting the unfortunate individual or family in touch with the appropriate agency of organized charity. No settlement would wish to acquire the reputation of being a centre for the administration of material relief. It is true that the modern charity-organization society includes among its functions many things beside the administration of relief. The field of charity has expanded with the expansion of social vision and the deepening of the sense of social responsibility. And if thus both in interest and in method charity and the social settlement have drawn closer together, the enthusiastic advocate of settlement work might claim, with some show of reason, that the situation was in a considerable degree due to the reaction of the spirit of the settlement upon the work of charity. Doubtless a more temperate statement of the case would be that the settlement is itself one expression of the new social spirit which has profoundly influenced all philanthropic effort.

There is perhaps no more serious blunder concerning the social settlement than that which confounds it with the "mission." For there are those even today who conceive of settlement work as only another name for "mission work"—not, to be sure, the old-time sort of mission work, but none the less an effort through the preaching of a gospel to save individual souls. Now there is a sense in which the settlement idea grew out of the mission idea. I do not mean simply that there is a deep religious motive, whether it be consciously acknowledged or not, underlying the settlement. What I have in mind is the fact that when Canon Barnett first proposed the establishment of a social settlement he took occasion to point out the shortcomings of the then popular "college missions," centres of religious work in the crowded sections of London, supported by university men, and suggested that university settlements would better express the idea that these missions sought to realize. But those who think of the settlement as a centre of religious propagandism might defend their attitude by citing the fact that not a few settlements are carrying on some sort of definite religious activity. A recent study of "Religious Work in the Settlements of the Borough of Manhattan," New York City, covering twenty-seven houses, showed that eleven were maintaining some form of religious work. Nine of these were Protestant in their connections, one Roman Catholic, and one Hebrew. There are, of course, other organizations directly connected with churches and known as church settlements, but of these the study above referred to took no account. Now it might be maintained that the settlements which are conducting religious work are very far removed from the traditional "mission" both in method and spirit. In most cases this would be true. But in my judgment it is far better for the settlement to leave distinctively religious work to the church and confine itself to the kind of neighborhood work which it is especially fitted to do and which no other organization yet devised is so well adapted to accomplish. Those settlements which on the whole have exerted the widest influence have followed this plan, not because of any inherent hostility to organized religion, but because it seemed the wisest course. And I am convinced that their policy has proved itself thoroughly sound. Any other course must tend to confusion. To mix religious activities with the work of a settlement is to run a serious risk of imperilling some of the settlement's most important interests. And it is difficult to see what can be gained by such a course which could not be better accomplished by a church or mission with a thoroughly socialized ministry. I think I can make clear what I mean by calling attention to two aspects in which the functions of the church or mission and the settlement are differentiated. These points of difference concern, first, the approach to the neighborhood and, secondly, the contacts with the neighborhood.

The mission is established in a given locality for the purpose of declaring a message—a gospel that is well developed and clearly defined. It has a distinct work of propaganda; and it seeks to persuade men to accept its message and act upon it. It knows at the outset exactly what it proposes to do, for it deals primarily with well-ascertained human needs which it believes to be universal.

In this respect the mission differs radically from the settlement, which does not approach its neighborhood with preconceived notions as to what must be done for the neighborhood's regeneration. It has no definite propaganda, no clear-cut social theory to apply. It conceives its first duty to be to make the acquaintance of its neighbors, to study its field with a view to knowing the conditions under which the men and the women and the children are living and working. Policies, remedies, gospels, must come later and only as a result of this knowledge. And, furthermore, its method of work is not so much through the preaching of any gospel as through the organization of its neighborhood—of all the local forces for good, in some co-operative programme for the common welfare.

The other aspect in which the mission and the settlement differ is found in the character of the neighborhood contacts of the two institutions. This is an important difference to bear in mind. Obvious as it seems, it is often overlooked. If a church or mission be located in a given neighborhood, and the people invited by the most cordial methods to come and adopt the view of truth contained in its doctrinal standards and denominational platform, it requires little experience to forecast the result. One may be sure that the appeal of the mission, however broad and genuine, will be effective only with a certain class of the people of the neighborhood. Those who like the particular sort of thing for which this particular ecclesiastical organization stands will gather to its support, while whole sections of the neighborhood will stand entirely aloof. It will be a case of natural selection. If the mission is supported by Protestant interests, it will be vain to expect to attract Jews and Catholics; if it is a Catholic organization, nothing can be hoped for from the Jews and Protestants; and if the Jews are the promoters, Protestants and Catholics will leave it severely alone. This situation is as deplorable as it is real. In the crowded sections of our cities and amongst our immigrant populations, serious problems growing out of the very general indifference to religion press for solution. Materialism in many forms presents itself, and the feeble efforts of religious bodies to cope with the tremendous need are pitiable. The situation possesses elements of tragedy. One may discern hopeful signs of a growing tolerance in the representatives of the three great religious bodies of the western world, but, as with neighboring nations between which exists an *entente cordiale,* let one overstep the boundaries of the other, or let any conflict of interests arise, and cordial relations are abruptly terminated. In spite of the broad-minded attitude of many religious leaders of different faiths, and in spite of the greater tolerance of the present day, we have not yet reached the point where all religious men, regardless of creed, can readily co-operate for the material and spiritual good of all. As long as this continues to be the case, no church of any faith can hope to make really broad contacts with a neighborhood whose religious and social interests are varied.

With the settlement, however, the case is quite different. The very first duty of the settlement is to get as far as possible into neighborly relations with every element of the surrounding life. Race, religion, social conditions, and class feeling need present no barriers to friendly intercourse between people who live on the same block or in the same district. And the settlement resident is not satisfied to let such barriers exist between himself and his neighbors. He meets the people among whom he lives not on a professional basis but on the basis of neighborliness—on the broad basis of a common humanity. And I think it may be said that, other things being equal, a settlement is successful just in so far as it comes into effective relations with Jews and Catholics and Protestants, the political leaders, the city officials, the organized workingmen, the socialist group, and all other groups that affect the social life of the neighborhood. This is the ideal the settlement holds before it, and it is an ideal that some settlements have realized to a considerable degree. And there is a distinct value in this, when so many influences in our modern life are making for division into social groups and tending only to accentuate class consciousness. The settlement stands primarily for those influences that unite and that tend to promote social consciousness.

From what has been said regarding the relation of the settlement to other social activities it will, I think, be obvious that the social settlement worker has come to know the life of industrial neighborhoods from a new point of view. Others have labored in the same field. The teacher, the charity worker, the mission worker, the student seeking data for some task of social research, —each may claim to be familiar with the neighborhood, but the knowledge of each will almost inevitably be limited and qualified by his special interest. The settlement worker has in a true sense no special interest. He is interested in everything that has any human bearing upon his neighbors. He has no special end to serve beyond the simple end of getting acquainted, knowing facts about the struggles, the difficulties, the aspirations, of his neighbors, and the conditions under which their work is done and their lives are lived. Just because the settlement worker does not "profess" anything, he escapes the narrowing influence of the professional point of view and is not met by that defensive attitude on the part of his neighbors which the visit of the professional worker calls out. When the minister calls unexpectedly, the chances are that the mother of the family will hastily throw her apron over the can of beer that stands on the table; when the settlement resident calls the chances are that he will be cordially invited to share the contents of the can. This may shock the nerves of the reader, but one comes to feel, on reflection, that there is an immense advantage in this frank and open relationship.

This knowledge of things as they are, of life as it is, among that class of the community upon which the burdens of poverty rest, this first-hand knowledge of conditions through living in close contact with the conditions, is the settlement's peculiar treasure. That such knowledge could be had by living in neighborly relations with people, and that it was worth having, was the settlement's discovery, a simple and obvious thing, as it now seems, and yet a discovery that has modified all social work and supplied a necessary corrective to much scientific social inquiry.

As we come now to discuss certain elements of value in the settlement method, the influence of this knowledge of conditions through acquaintance with one's neighbors will reveal itself. For example, it fits the settlement to interpret the life of industrial neighborhoods. In a democracy nothing but harm can result from a failure to understand and appreciate the conditions under which different sections of the community live and work, and the ideals and aspirations which govern them. Progress rests upon intelligent public opinion, and this is the result of mutual understanding. How little the people of some social groups know of the life of those of other groups!

Here, for instance, is a vast number of immigrants herded together in a corner of a great city, alien in race, in language, in customs; yonder is a great group of workingmen strongly organized and striving for justice in industrial conditions; here, again, is an active body of earnest men laboring with whole-souled devotion to reorganize society and place it upon a socialistic basis; and besides all these are the multitudes of people of moderate means, and the smaller number of the rich, most of whom fancy, when they give the matter any thought, that so long as they are comfortable the rest of the world must be,—except, of course, the shiftless and criminal who deserve their lot. With our population sharply divided into such groups as these, each with little vital contact with the other, there is abundant opportunity of misunderstanding and prejudice, which unfortunately are all too common. Perhaps still more unfortunate is the dense ignorance of one group concerning the most important interests of the other. Much social injustice is due to lack of knowledge. With persons of intelligence and sympathy, to know is commonly to act. If, for example, women generally knew from frequent and neighborly observation the burden of sweated labor under which multitudes of their sisters suffer that the bargain counters may be heaped high, the work of the Consumers' League would be considerably simplified.

Indeed, hardly anything seems of more importance just now than that a better and more sympathetic understanding of each other's point of view should exist between the widely separated groups of society. If there had been such an understanding on the part of the ministers' association of Bethlehem, Pa., and the striking steel workers, the ministers would not have put this question to the strikers: "Is it reasonable to expect that by attacking your employer openly and in secret, by trying to destroy his property and his business, you can best persuade him to deal generously and magnanimously with you?" Nor would it have been necessary for the committee appointed by the Commission on the Church and Social Service to use such language concerning this question as the following: "There is evidence that the ministers were sincerely desirous to serve the best interest of the workmen, including the strikers, but the question addressed to them, and quoted above, is proof positive that they were too far aloof from the workingman to understand him and to win his confidence. Nothing could be more exasperating to the workingman than to assume that he desires to persuade his employer 'to deal generously and magnanimously' with him. What he desires and demands is not generosity and magnanimity at the hands of his employer, but simple justice. Not until ministers get close enough to the workingman to gain his point of view can they hope to influence him to any extent." It is safe to assume that none of these Bethlehem ministers had ever enjoyed the privilege of settlement residence. For the settlement resident, if he has eyes to see and ears to hear, gets the point of view of the labor man and would never have committed such a blunder. It is just here that the settlements have rendered an important service. They have not only acquired knowledge of the conditions under which their neighbors live and labor, but they have been a medium through which this knowledge has been spread abroad. The knowledge which the residents of settlements have gained has been based upon concrete instances of injustice and suffering and need on the part of their neighbors and friends. And the knowledge thus gained has been used to mould public opinion and to create a background for intelligent efforts for reform. This function of the settlement as an interpreter of the life of the crowded sections of our cities has received its finest expression in the genius of Jane Addams. It would be hard to overestimate the value of such work as she has done through her writings and addresses. Nothing could be finer than her book, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*, as an interpretation of the environment of the city youth, and as an appeal for a more intelligent handling of the question of public recreation. It needs, of course, something more than settlement residence to qualify one to render such service, but there are few seasoned settlement residents who have not in some degree done a similar service. They have made valuable contributions to the work of social interpretation through reports and published studies, as members of, or witnesses before, official commissions, and as advocates of social legislation before legislative bodies.

It is perhaps in relation to our immigrant populations that the settlements have been most effective in the exercise of this function of interpretation. Some of our most difficult social questions grow out of the presence of the multitudes of immigrants who crowd into the already congested sections of our cities, throng the ranks of unskilled labor, and bring with them habits and customs of primitive rural life which are ill-suited to city dwelling. Their presence complicates the problems of sanitation, of housing, and of industry. And yet there are contributions of value which every immigrant race and nationality is capable of making to the sum total of our composite American character. If, on the one hand, we are to profit by these contributions, some group of people must have the insight to recognize such elements of value and the skill to draw them forth and preserve them. And if, on the other hand, we are to give to the new-comers something more than material goods, something of the best of the spirit of our traditions and institutions, some group of people must make it its business to see that this is done with tact and sympathy and judgment.

To many of our foreign-born neighbors the night-stick of the policeman is the sceptre of authority in America; and the first contact with our civic institutions which makes a lasting impression on him is often effected by a liberal application of that same sceptre, followed by an arraignment in the police-court. The public schools are doing an important work in americanizing the children of the immigrants, but what of the adult? Shall we leave his education in civic and moral ideals to the tender mercies of the politician and the saloon-keeper? These men take a very practical interest in him and have a corresponding influence over him. Through the joint good offices of these worthy citizens the Italian laborer gets a job—when he is able to pay for the privilege; and the politician obligingly puts him in the way of getting naturalized; indeed, he is always ready to be his friend, if always with the expectation of some suitable *quid pro quo.* I recall the significant inquiry with which a young man was met who was endeavoring to organize a class of Italians for the study of English in a New York settlement. As he went from store to store, where the men congregated in the evening, giving his invitation, he was more than once asked, "Are you from Tammany?" When he disclaimed any connection with that organization, they shrugged their shoulders and turned away. Apparently they could not conceive of any other organization, or group of citizens, taking an interest in their welfare! It was an unintentional rebuke to the settlement, which was not lost upon it. The settlement worker who is thoroughly at home among his Italian neighbors has an unusual chance to serve both his neighborhood and the community at large. Through a dozen natural channels he comes into friendly contact with his neighbors, and with sympathetic understanding helps them to adjust themselves to the new and strange environment; and through his contacts with the larger world outside of the "Little Italy" or the Ghetto the settlement resident has a chance to correct mistaken impressions and to dispel unfounded prejudices concerning the people among whom he dwells.

Another useful purpose that the social settlements have served has been as initiators of movements for social advance and as experiment stations where new proposals for community welfare could be tried out. I know of no other organization which is quite so well fitted, by its very nature, to perform the service of interpretation. And naturally growing out of this is the effort to meet the needs that are discovered.

In this latter particular the field is less peculiarly the settlement's. Other organizations have had a large part in the work of social progress, but the settlement has done its share. Within recent years large foundations have been established for the purpose of initiating and furthering movements for community welfare. Before these great gifts were made, leaders in charitable and correctional activities were demonstrating the possibilities of preventive work and setting on foot new enterprises of philanthropy. And it is not too much to claim that the social settlement was a potent influence back of much of these more modern efforts. Not that the settlement undertook at the outset to accomplish any definite reform. It set itself to get acquainted with people. And this simple undertaking produced results which could not possibly have been foreseen. That something must happen as a consequence of knowing one's neighbors the early leaders felt assured, but just what that something would prove to be, the most sanguine of them would scarcely have ventured to predict, even though they cherished their dreams of what it might be. One thing that followed was the influence on all enterprises of philanthropy and religion coming from the settlement method of learning to know people's needs by sharing their experiences of life and using this knowledge as the basis of reform and preventive work. Another thing was the necessity which at times the settlements themselves felt of initiating reform and preventive work and of using their facilities for testing the worth of new propositions. A concrete case of individual need comes to the attention of a settlement resident, and in the attempt to meet the need it is seen to be only a symptom of a larger social need. Then follows an effort to meet the larger need, and the settlement is the natural place for the effort to be tried out. It is in this way that settlements have become experiment-stations in social work. Examples may be cited in the field of public health, education, and recreation.

The settlement's intimate relation to the homes of the neighborhood has naturally given it a deep, though by no means exclusive, interest in the problems of child-welfare. Many of the efforts of residents are directed toward securing for the children of the tenements such opportunities for development, physical, mental, and moral, as intelligent parents of ampler means consider essential for their children. Questions of health naturally come in for a large share of attention where so many influences are at work to retard sound development. What, for example, was more natural than for Miss Wald, of the Henry Street (Nurses') Settlement in New York, with her professional training and intimate knowledge of the homes of her neighborhood, to see how much could be accomplished by having a trained nurse co-operate with the doctor who was assigned to inspect the children in the public schools? The next step was to try out the plan, with the consent of the public authorities, in the neighborhood of the settlement, using the settlement nurses for the experiment. The nurse could give general supervision to the cleanliness of the children, call the attention of the doctor to cases of special need, and follow up in the home or the dispensary any prescribed treatment. After a little experimental work the value of the plan is determined, and we have our staff of school-nurses working under the Board of Health, later merged, as a further development of the idea, into the Division of Child Hygiene of the Department of Health.

Kindergartens and free libraries commonly found a home in the settlements before the community was ready to support them out of public funds. When the public was convinced of their value by practical tests, they were largely transferred to public administration and support.

Much of the process of socialization which the public schools have undergone with such beneficent results has been initiated by the settlements. Experiments in "home and school visiting" were being made in the settlements, in the ordinary course of the day's work, long before any one realized that there was enough value in the scheme to organize it and put a tag on it and develop it into a distinct department of social activity. The first boys' club in a public school in New York was organized by a worker in the University Settlement who had successfully developed the club work of the settlement boys. This may be regarded as the entering wedge in the use of school-buildings as recreation centres.

The whole question of public recreation is one which has always come to the front in settlement experience. The "organization of leisure" is a familiar phrase in descriptions of settlement purpose. Not only do many persons need help in utilizing their spare time in a way to minister health to the body and refreshment to the spirit, but also the opportunity for safe and wholesome recreation must often be created. At present the needs of the community in the matter of recreation are left largely to the exploitation of those who see in them simply an opportunity of commercial gain. Towards many of these enterprises of private business the attitude of the municipal authorities has almost always been repressive, and rightly so. But the community has offered little to meet in a wholesome way the legitimate public need which the cheap theatre, the uncensored motion-picture show, the dance hall, and the like, are meeting for pecuniary profit and at a frightful cost in human character.

It has remained for the social worker to recognize the immense importance of sane, wholesome recreation as a powerful character-builder and to move for larger municipal provision for this need of the city-dweller. The playground has always been a cherished object with the settlement resident, and scarcely a settlement can be found in a crowded district which will not have converted its little two-by-four back yard into a pathetic apology for a playground. In the early days of the movement for playgrounds the settlement people were among the most ardent advocates and the most active workers. And it is with no small satisfaction that social workers in New York reflect that the present Commissioner of Parks for the Boroughs of Manhattan and Richmond was an old settlement resident and for years has been the foremost promoter of playgrounds in the city. But I have said enough to indicate how the settlements have acted as initiators of movements and served as centres for social experimentation.

Such things as I have mentioned, and others similar to them, have been accomplished, sometimes under the lead of the settlements and more frequently in co-operation with other groups of social workers, because there were persons of intelligence, sympathy, and some leisure living among the people, sharing their experiences, studying the neighborhood needs, and finding out what ought to be done.

Other uses of the settlement might be mentioned. One is tempted to speak of its "get-together" character, to point out the service it has done in bringing together on neutral ground representatives of different social groups, and giving them a chance to meet face to face and to exchange ideas and view difficult problems from each other's point of view. They have helped in this way to promote a true democracy of feeling. The part the settlement has played in quickening social consciousness may be difficult to estimate, but it has undeniably been large. Today, for instance, we hear much less than a few years ago of the "institutional church." The social mission of the church is, fortunately, coming to be taken as a matter of course. We expect every live church to be conducting, or taking part in, some form of social work. And I believe that the settlement through its influence in stimulating a sense of social responsibility has reacted directly on the churches to produce these results. There is a sense in which the settlement in its earlier days acted as a challenge to the churches. The churches naturally looked somewhat askance at the settlement, which undertook work, with a careful avoidance of all religious features, in quarters regarded by the church as its own preserves. This in itself was enough to arouse suspicion against the movement on the part of the church, but there were further grounds of complaint. It was soon apparent that the settlements were absorbing many of the more thoughtful young people, who had been brought up within the churches. Not a few college men and women, coming to take up the active work of life and finding little sympathy in the church for their intellectual and social convictions, turned with a sense of relief and satisfaction to the opportunity which the settlement offered of practical work in simple, genuine, human ways. This fact did not pass unobserved by the churches, and in addition they could not but recognize that the settlements were achieving results in the very districts in which they were compelled to admit utter failure. The situation stirred the church to action. Methods of so-called "settlement work"—clubs and classes and a variety of social activities—were adopted, and the institutional church was developed. I do not wish to appear to claim that the settlement was the sole influence in quickening a sense of social responsibility in the church. If the settlement had never been, the church could not have failed to feel the touch of the spirit of the age. Its social conversion was inevitable. Still it remains true that the church and the settlement had too many common interests to escape the effect of mutual reaction. Friction was sure to result unless extraordinary care and forbearance were exercised on both sides.

It was hardly to be expected that on either side there should be a conscious effort to allay distrust and promote a good understanding. The definition of the institutional church given by one of the leaders in that movement is significant. He defined the institutional church as "the social settlement plus religion." I think one may detect here a hint of the influence of the settlement upon the social movement within the church, and also a suggestion of the church's estimate of the social settlement. Evidently, from the point of view of the church the settlement lacked the one thing needful. Happily much of this feeling has passed away. A more sympathetic attitude has taken its place. And yet the feeling still lingers to such an extent in the minds of many persons identified with the church that it may be worth while to add a word concerning the matter. If those who today complain that the settlement lacks "religion" mean thereby that in their judgment it ought to conduct organized religious activities, I have already expressed the reasons why I think their point not well taken. To do that would be to introduce the very element that prevents the broad neighborhood relations so essential to the settlement's success. It places the settlement in the category of a mission. It would be far better to decide at the outset whether to establish a mission or a settlement, and then determine the question of religious work accordingly. And if this complaint means, as it sometimes does, that there is anything in the nature of the settlement that makes it intrinsically hostile, or even unfriendly, to religion, I should have again to take issue with the complainant. Any doubt about the religious character and value of the settlement is based either upon a misapprehension of the settlement or an extremely narrow view of the significance of religion. I believe the present social movement is essentially a religious movement. It springs from human sympathy and expresses its sympathy in intelligent practical form for the welfare of mankind. If the chief object which the truly religious man holds before his mind is the advancement of the kingdom of God through a life of loving service, the social-settlement worker can clasp hands with him. Some settlement people may prefer to use a slightly different terminology in stating their aim,—to call things by different names,—but the things are not altered by the difference in the labels. And if it is further urged that religion is concerned with the salvation of the individual as well as with bringing men into right relations with their fellow-men, the settlement can help even in this phase of religious work. It does not presume to attempt to convert men in the conventional sense, but if individual salvation is understood to include saving man's body and mind, as well as his spirit, it can make an important contribution to this larger process of redemption. We are at last coming to realize the need of a sound physical basis for a normal moral and spiritual life, and the settlement is a force in the readjustment of the physical and moral life of the individual, as well as of the environment in which he lives. Service is not all of religion, but it is an important element, and the social settlement is a synonym for service.

If there is, as I believe, a better understanding of the settlement on the part of those who represent the church, it is likewise true that settlement workers generally are realizing the need of a closer co-ordination of all the moral and spiritual and social forces of the community. The settlement worker and the socialized church-worker are finding much common standing-ground. Religion is no longer tabooed in settlement circles, if it ever was. And I believe the churches on their part will come to see that in some neighborhoods, at least for the present, a settlement without organized religious work can do a useful work which neither a mission nor even an institutional church can do. Must we not rid ourselves of the idea that "Christian work" is one thing and "humanitarian work" quite another? Does any one doubt that Jesus was fully as religious, and quite as much engaged in "Christian work," when he was ministering to the sick and feeding the hungry, as when he was preaching to the multitude or gently revealing the Samaritan woman to herself? Both functions are of importance. The one must supplement the other. Not all organizations doing useful philanthropic and educational work and liberally supported by church people are required or expected to open their meetings with prayer or conduct revival services; and it is hard to see why the settlement, which is first of all a home, should be viewed with misgiving, because it concludes that its wisest course is to leave to the church all forms of active religious work.

But I believe the settlement will come to see more clearly the value of those spiritual processes and the power of that inspiration which it is the function of the church to generate and set in motion. And thus the church, the synagogue, and the social settlement will more effectually supplement each other's work and bring about a correlation of spiritual and moral forces that will hasten the coming of that day when justice and good will shall rule in all relations between man and man.

It remains now to consider the question of the future of the settlement. There are not wanting those who believe that the settlement will soon have served its generation and ought then to follow the example of the ancient leader of Israel who, as we are told, under similar circumstances fell on sleep. Is this the case? Is there sound reason to believe that the settlement method has accomplished about all that can be expected of it and that its days are numbered? We are reminded that more and more the activities of the settlement are being turned over to the appropriate departments of the city government, and that the settlements themselves desire this and are constantly endeavoring to promote it; we are told that when the process is complete and all activities now carried on by the settlements are municipalized, the settlements may take in their signs, put up their shutters, and close their doors. For the sake of argument we may grant that in time all the familiar activities of the settlement will be carried on by the community, and we may assume that no new ideas will be evolved to require "trying out," although that is a somewhat improbable assumption. But, even so, I think the settlement would still have a place of usefulness. For one thing, it would doubtless be necessary to have a voluntary organization or group of people experienced in social work, to co-operate with the city officials who were charged with its social enterprises. If politics is to be kept out of the administration and the evils of mechanical methods reduced to their lowest terms by means of intelligent, sympathetic, human supervision and leadership, some group of private citizens who care about these things must be in close touch with the situation. Today we have State Charities Aid Associations, Public Education Associations, and the like, exercising a similar function. What group would more naturally take up this matter as its business than the settlement group? At a recent conference it was stated that the social work of the public schools in one of the larger Western cities had been successful only in those sections in which there were settlements.

Furthermore, is it not worth while to have a group of educated people, with social and civic ideals, living as citizens and neighbors in the industrial quarters of great cities? It does not require an active imagination to conceive of many services such a group could render. In all large cities startling changes are taking place, due to the movements of nationalities and races, changes so rapid that often within a few years a neighborhood will undergo a complete transformation,—the Jews, for example, crowding out the Irish, to be themselves displaced later by the Italians. To be a constant factor in the midst of such kaleidoscopic changes, the one established neighbor, rooted, and grounded in the neighborhood, persistently gathering facts, supplying leadership, and forming a rallying-point for all good citizens, this is a service no other organization could render so effectively as the social settlement.

As to the character of the settlement of the future one hesitates to venture a prediction. I think, however, that one may detect a tendency to revert to the simplicity of the early days of the movement. Much passes today for "settlement work" and the "settlement idea" that is only loosely related to that for which the settlement really stands. It began, as I have pointed out, with a group of people of education and culture making their home in a neglected neighborhood with the idea of being good neighbors and of sharing the common life. From this simple beginning it has developed in most cases to include a large plant, a staff of paid workers, and a great variety of activities. The effect has been to obscure the simplicity of the early idea. The institutional settlement has always been regarded by the friends of the movement as in a measure a necessary evil,—a development which was required by the situation, but permitted with regret. The tendency now seems to be to a more decided reaction against the institutional type, and this tendency gives promise of permanency for the method. The older settlements will doubtless continue to endeavor to meet the needs that arise in their neighborhoods, as long as the municipality lags behind in its enterprises of social service, even if this necessitates a further development in the way of institutions. But where new settlements are organized, their promoters will do well to consider whether their opportunity does not lie in the direction of the simpler, residential type. Such a settlement could direct its energies chiefly to increasing still further the social usefulness of schools, public libraries, gymnasiums, playgrounds, recreation-houses, and the like, and would take a lively interest in seeing that all such work was efficiently maintained. Its residents would not lack neighborhood work, and, freed from the exacting duties of much club and class work, they would have more time to devote to such important services as those which I have mentioned,—the interpretation of life and the initiation of, and co-operation with, new movements for social welfare,—services which the settlement is peculiarly equipped to perform. This seems to me to answer, as well as it can be answered, the question of permanency; for it is difficult to believe that the time will arrive within the next few generations when social justice will be so firmly and widely established that such efforts will be altogether out of date. When that happy day comes, the settlement, along with many other forms of philanthropic and charitable effort (about which, by the way, one wonders why the question of permanency is never raised), may be cheerfully relegated to the scrap-heap of social endeavor. In the mean time we may safely conclude that the settlement has a contribution of peculiar value to make to the work of setting up that new order of society which those who follow the lead of the Christ believe shall be eventually realized in the kingdom of God.