

FEDERATION IN FACT

Much has been said in recent issues of JEWISH CHARITIES about the advantages of federation as contrasted with the older systems. It has been emphatically pointed out that not only have the aggregate sums raised for charitable purposes increased under federation, but also that the collection and disbursement of the funds have been accompanied by greater efficiency and relatively smaller cost of administration.

The prevailing type of federation obtaining in many cities is fiscal rather than social; to be more specific, the federation idea embraces the collection of funds by one recognized organization and their apportionment to the various constituent associations, the latter retaining autonomy in the expenditure of the funds allotted to them by the parent body and in the management of their affairs.

In the city of Louisville the federation is social as well as fiscal. The constituent societies composing it are interdependent, with their activities so co-ordinated as to form one organic unit, efficiently equipped to combat poverty in all its forms. One board of directors, composed of an equal number of representatives from each constituent organization, both local and national, together with the directors elected from the members at large, governs the federation in all its parts. A smaller executive body, consisting of members of the board keeps in active touch with the superintendent in the guidance and management of all the subsidiary institutions, and reports to the board at its monthly meetings. The superintendent under this system acts as a "Social Engineer," in directing all Jewish philanthropic movements through the channels of this or that component society, causing them all to work harmoniously in the solution of social problems. Each institution has its head worker and assistants working in co-operation with the superintendent of the federation and Executive Committee.

The Federation of Jewish Charities in Louisville consists of eleven local and four non-resident national institutions; but in the latter, the federation has nothing to say regarding their management. Among the local organizations there is the Relief So-

ciety, the Free Dispensary, the Jewish Hospital, the Jewish Children's Foster Home, the Free Loan Society, the Jewish Shelter Home, the Jewish Settlement and several other philanthropic societies directly affiliated with the federation. Of these, the Jewish Hospital, because of its peculiar technical nature and because the major part of its work is non-charitable, has its own board of trustees; but the admission of charity patients must be referred to the superintendent of the federation. Thus the federation in Louisville bears the same relation to its component parts as a highly organized living body toward its organs, functioning toward the same end in order that the organism may live and do its work. Though our federation is only five years old, it has gone beyond the experimental stage and has become a strong social force for constructive work in our community. The Jewish people of Louisville have liberally responded to its added demands from year to year, until it has grown to full maturity, active and accomplishing the ends for which it was created.

The idea of a centralized federation is not original with the Jewish citizens of Louisville; it was taken from the United Jewish Charities of Cincinnati, which, in most respects, is similar to the Kentucky organization. The writer believes that the more centrally organized federation can be made more efficient than those more loosely federated, because there is bound to be less friction and a closer co-operation between the subsidiary organizations of the former. It is also easier to bring the various constituent institutions to bear on the case at one and the same time, as the necessity frequently arises. Overlapping and duplication of work is more easily avoided under a centrally organized federation, and the petty jealousies that sometimes exist between institutions and their workers are impossible under this system.

Whatever objections may be raised to its further introduction in other cities, the Jewish contributing public of Louisville, as well as its beneficiaries are pleased with it.

HOUSING PENSIONERS

The following letters to Mr. Oscar Leonard of St. Louis by Dr. Lee K. Frankel and Mr. Louis H. Levin discuss a question of more than unusual importance, and may be of interest to the readers of JEWISH CHARITIES:

Dr. Frankel to Mr. Leonard

"The question raised by you in your letter and in the recent number of JEWISH CHARITIES is an interesting one and has frequently been considered by relief organizations in the United States. I know that the matter has been before the United Hebrew Charities of the City of New York for many years and has been discussed carefully *pro* and *con*. Suggestions have been made from time to time both by directors and others that the society should either build, buy or rent one or more apartment or tenement houses in the city of New York, in which to house those of its pensioners who in all likelihood would receive pensions for indefinite periods. As you are aware, the New York society has hundreds of pensioners of this kind on its books. These pensioners are largely widows with children and other families who must be cared for until the children have passed school age.

"Theoretically there is no reason why such a plan should not be feasible. In fact, it could readily be argued that under such a scheme the recipients of relief would probably be better cared for than they are at present. On its face, it would appear to be desirable to have pensioners who are practically dependent upon relief societies for subsistence housed together under conditions which are sanitary and that supervision could be given at less expenditure of energy than is required at present.

"You are probably aware that this experiment has been tried. The Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor of the City of New York has for some time rented a number of apartments in the Vanderbilt Tenements, where it has installed a number of families, in which one or more members is afflicted with tuberculosis. Unofficial reports, which have been made of this experiment, indicated that the results obtained have been equal to the expectation. In a conversation which I had

with one of the representatives of the society, he gave me to understand that the plan of housing a number of dependent families under one roof has no ill effects and that he has not been able to notice any deterioration in the moral fiber of the families.

"I believe that in the city of Detroit one of the women's relief organizations some years ago erected a tenement or apartment house, in which it houses its dependent families. Probably fuller information could be obtained by you by making inquiries of the United Jewish Charities of Detroit.

"Notwithstanding the apparently good results which may have been obtained from such a method of treatment, I am, nevertheless, of the belief that this method of caring for dependent widows and their families or for other dependent families is not desirable. I cannot get away from the vague fear that such a method of treatment exposes a dependent family to a publicity and eventually to a notoriety which in the long run will reflect upon their moral status. The herding together of a number of families under one roof would soon make such a tenement house known as a 'charity house.' As I see it, it is the introduction of the old almshouse plan of caring for dependents through private instead of public funds. I can see very little difference between an institution for the aged, such as our homes for the aged are, and a tenement house in which nothing but dependent families are cared for. One is an institution as much as the other. The print of charity is placed upon families in one equally as upon individuals in the other.

"This objection is made even stronger by the thought that not only would the adults be cared for, but that the children as well would be exposed to the ignominy of being known as the recipients of relief. At present, the dependent families of the United Hebrew Charities in New York are given the relief which they require in such a manner that the neighbors as a rule are not aware of the fact that the families are not independent and self-sustaining. I do not think it would be possible to continue this, if the families were to live in a special building. Residence in such an apartment