

read and listen to as possible. We hold that this is an erroneous impression. Matters affecting the welfare of the Jewish poor, their life, their health, their ambitions and aspirations, are of vital interest to the enlightened and to the intelligent among us. In an age when social welfare and social service are the dominant issues in politics and in religion, it were incongruous for a social agency to hold that its problems and workings are of interest only to the few who are active members of its directorate.

"If, however, there are some who are not interested, who don't care, then what shall we do? Shall we descend to their level? Shall we, because of this condense our statements to the public in the form of concentrated pills, or shall we, instead, redouble our efforts to make them realize that they must know 'how the other half lives'; nay, more, they must know what is being done in their behalf, so as to help them out of their condition.

WORK WITH BLIND

Benjamin Bernstein
New York

For some years effort has been made to assist the Jewish blind, not only in the city of New York, but throughout the country. These efforts have, however, been sporadic and have been based, judging by results, on theories not particularly adapted to work for the blind. Attention was directed largely to such work for individuals as would come within the field of the ordinary charity society, and little or no systematic effort was made to deal with those problems which arose particularly from blindness. In addition, the Jewish blind of the city of New York received some aid from non-sectarian organizations. A number of our people received the city's annual donation to the dependent blind, amounting to an average of \$50 per person. Aside from this nothing was done for the Jewish blind, and their condition was, and still is, deplorable. Many of them had not breathed God's fresh air for years, one man had not left his room for fifteen years, because his family either could not, or would not, take him

"Matters of policy and administration, and the methods employed in the charity office must be of interest, not only to the professional social worker, but to every citizen.

"This, then, we believe, fully justifies the publication of this paper, made possible by the contribution from a friend of the poor, a business man, who believes in publicity applied to philanthropy as well as to business."

It is contended that in communities of a Jewish population of 30,000 or over such publications can be made very helpful. The opportunity is afforded therein of describing the work in a more vivid fashion than is possible in the annual report.

Some Jewish national organizations have long ago found the monthly publication a valuable means of securing the interest and support of the public. The journals published by the Jewish Consumptives' Relief Society of Denver and the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society of New York are notable examples.

out. The intelligent Jewish blind became dissatisfied with these conditions, and it was determined that something must be done by way of improvement.

About that time Mr. Jacob Salmonwitz became interested in the problem of producing Yiddish and Hebrew literature in embossed type for the blind. With the assistance of Hon. Joseph Barondess, and Mr. Joseph S. Marcus, president of the Bank of United States, a meeting was held at the Educational Alliance, September, 1913, and a small sum was raised for Mr. Salmonwitz's purpose.

Shortly thereafter Mr. Marcus, when laying the cornerstone of his bank building, determined to use the roof of the building as a recreation center for the Jewish blind. This was accordingly opened in July, 1914.

It was soon seen that the providing of Yiddish and Hebrew literature in embossed type was not as necessary as were other measures for the improvement of existing conditions of the Jewish blind. It was also

felt that for once the blind themselves should initiate and direct the movement, in order that their ideas could be put to practical use. With these ideas in mind, and for the purpose of generally improving the social and industrial welfare of the Jewish blind, the Hebrew Association for the Blind was organized on August 4, 1914.

As yet, measured by figures, this association has accomplished very little; it has, however, dragged the Jewish blind from their homes, and provided a center where they can meet socially and enjoy readings, games and such other amusements as may be provided. This is the first time that the idea of a center like that above described has been put into operation in New York City. It has resulted thus far in bringing the blind closer together and in creating a certain unity of spirit, which is necessary for the successful solution of their problems.

We have secured work of various kinds for a number of our applicants and in one instance secured an engagement for three of our number to supply public dance music. We have, of course, furnished relief in cases of need, have provided the less fortunate with proper supplies for the various Jewish holidays and have ministered to their needs so far as our limited means would permit.

We are at present engaged in trying to solve two important problems: namely, that of securing guides to lead about our blind people and procuring suitable employment for those able to work.

This association for the first time in the history of work for the blind in the United States is attempting systematically to deal with the guide problem. We recognize

that our roof garden is of no use unless we can assemble our people there and get them safely back to their homes. We also realize that it is very important that there be a system by which the blind can be taken to and from their homes in their search for employment, etc. In the matter of employment we recognize that it is not a mass problem with which we are dealing, but that each case must be handled according to its individual problem.

We have made no extensive plans, but we are proceeding slowly and steadily, doing every day what we can, and not attempting to lay out broad schemes which perhaps we shall never be able to carry out. Nevertheless, we have vision in regard to future work, some of which plans are briefly stated on our membership blanks as follows:

"The object of this association is to improve the conditions of the Jewish blind, and prevent blindness. To endeavor to publish and circulate 'Yiddish' and Hebrew literature among the Jewish blind. To provide guides for blind people when needed. To help the Jewish blind become self-supporting."

We derive our funds entirely from popular subscription. Mr. Joseph S. Marcus, in addition to the roof garden, has generously provided the association with a commodious office in his bank building. In this office the association's work is done and here during the winter months the blind have their center. As our means expand we hope to do much more and better work, but so long as the present depression continues, we shall probably have to be content with the slow progress we have been making.

THE EAST SIDE FORUM

Jacob N. Sokohl
New York

The East Side Forum has now completed a very busy year. That it was a success is fully attested by the large crowds that attended its meetings and even more by the deep interest in the neighborhood in its activities. Over 30,000 people attended the thirty-odd meetings of the Forum, averaging over 1000 to a meeting and packing to capacity the auditorium of Public School

No. 62, the home of the Forum. Thousands more were turned away because of the tremendous crowds and the S. R. O. sign worked overtime.

The Forum has already passed its experimental stage and is now a recognized institution in the intellectual life of the East Side. No other one neighborhood activity can boast of having elicited such