

Notice to the Public

KUHN, LOEB & Co.,
NEW YORK, Jan. 14, 1916.

Editor of JEWISH CHARITIES,

DEAR SIR: I am informed that the managers of the Jewish Consumptive Relief Association of Los Angeles, Cal., are taking advantage of a letter I wrote them last April, while I was in Southern California, with which I enclosed a contribution to make propaganda throughout the United States and especially in the Middle West and East, to secure funds for their Sanatorium, which they are clearly not justified in doing.

My contribution was made after a visit to the Sanatorium, which I found a rather primitive proposition, and because I was told that they were hard pressed for funds to pay debts, as the wealthier Jews of Los Angeles were rather backward in giving support, on the plea that they did not wish to draw sufferers from consumption into Southern California.

There is, in my opinion, absolutely no justification for these managers to go outside of the State of California in order to solicit funds for the support of their institution. Indeed, I very much question whether the substantial people of that State look with favor upon any of its institutions soliciting support in other parts of the country.

I am sure that they are fully alive to their communal responsibilities and are quite ready to meet them as are our other important local communities. Moreover, it has been clearly demonstrated by a number of our communities that those unhappily afflicted with tuberculosis can be restored to health in their home localities.

Under these circumstances I do not see why there should be any need for the establishment of new national sanatoria.

Even if there were such a need, the Jews of California, upon whom communal burdens have fallen so lightly, could properly be expected to place the climatic advantages with which they have been blessed at the disposal of the Jewish sick from other parts of the country. My impression is that they would take pride in so doing.

Very truly yours,

JACOB H. SCHIFF.

SOCIAL SERVICE

Note—This poem is dedicated to the Social Service work now being done by the Young Men's and Young Women's Social Service Auxiliary of the Brooklyn Federation of Jewish Charities.

The doctors slowly shook their heads,
"The boy will live," they said;
"He'll suffer though his whole life through
He cannot leave his bed."

Oh, will ye come and read to him,
Or talk of pleasant things;
Of happiness, of love, of peace,
Of how the bluebird sings?

"I'm sorry," spake the kindly judge,
"You sinned and now must go
For many months away from man,
It's hard for you, I know."

Oh, will ye send this poor one books
And comfort her alone?
Oh, will ye aid her when she's free
To really get a home?

Her husband dead, the widow now,
Alone to fight for life,
Is falling sometimes by the way
With suffering and strife.

Oh, will ye come and help her try
To keep her children good,
To make a home and bed for them
As any mother should?

If ye will come and heed the call,
May God His love bestow
To rich and poor, alike to all
Who labor here below.

Arthur L. Lippmann.

(A member of the Auxiliary)

EXCHANGE BUREAU

The Syracuse Jewish Home of the Aged needs a married couple to superintend. They must be experienced and highly capable. Send applications and requests for further information to Bertram Benedict, 222 Cedar Street, Syracuse, N. Y.

JEWISH CHARITIES

Chautauqua Address

THE FEDERATION AND THE SYNAGOGUE

Boris D. Bogen

Cincinnati

As soon as the burden of poverty became too great to be borne by individual effort co-operative endeavor was utilized and probably the Synagogue became the first agency in the field of Jewish philanthropy. The stranger, though still welcomed within the folds of the private homes, became so numerous that he was often referred, at least for shelter, to the House of Worship. The Synagogue was, however, unable to accommodate the sick, the feeble and the infirm—hence the rise of Hecdesch, the administration of which became a nickname for an ill-managed, dirty household. In the Middle Ages we find already special Jewish hospitals, and then, later, in the eighteenth century, homes for the aged and orphan asylums were called into existence.

History repeats itself and philanthropic effort in the United States indicates stages and settings similar to those of other countries. Here also the cemetery, then the Synagogue, were the first manifestations of Jewish social activity and when poverty became a problem the Synagogue assumed features of a relief agency. All our early charitable institutions found their origin within the Synagogue; there was instilled the inspiration, there the funds were gathered and from there were formulated the plans and details of administration. The Synagogue of yore was the unifying center of Judaism—it was the one place where all the Jews met as Jews on a common ground.

But times have changed. Though still adhering to the monotheistic conception of the Deity the Jews of today are not altogether unanimous as to their affiliation with the Synagogue. Social differences, as minor disagreements over the mode of worship, led to the disintegration of the Synagogue. The position of Parnass became a worldly achievement; competition and strife

in acquiring honor and leadership led to many manipulations and often resulted in secession and the formation of a new congregation. The cantor and rabbi lost the monopoly and by far too many were endowed with the ambition to get hold of the pulpit, to gain possession of the flock, and not being able to usurp the authority over the existing Synagogue they were tempted to form their own congregations, separating the Jews, as far as the Synagogue is concerned, into fifty-seven varieties, distinguishing themselves in a hundred and one different ways. There are the Reformed and the Ultra-Reformed, the Orthodox and the Ultra-Orthodox, the Portuguese and the German and the Russian—disintegrated into as many small groups as there are cities and towns—and the Polish and the Galician. Great is the variety of the Synagogue, great and extensive as the Jewish Goltz.

When Jewish philanthropy in the United States came face to face with the problem of mass immigration in the eighties it became apparent that the isolated, uncorrelated agencies for relief, the different groups connected with the Synagogue, were unable to cope with the situation. A more efficient organization became a necessity and the idea of co-operation arose.

It was evident that the Synagogue was unable to achieve the purpose and a separate movement—a movement among the Jews for concerted philanthropic effort—was started, with the result that almost every city in the United States established charity societies dealing with the poor and supported by the community at large, without any respect to the Synagogue affiliations.

The separation of practical philanthropy from the Synagogue found its highest expression in the movement known as the Federation. It is said that an organization

of this kind was formed in Boston as early as 1895, but the first real Federation was established in Cincinnati in 1896 and since then forty-five other cities have followed suit.

The idea of the Federation is an attempt at unifying the philanthropic activities of the community. In some cities it is simply a central collecting agency, in others the relief department is an integral part of the Federation, and again, in cities like Cincinnati, it is a centralized administrative organization of all constituent societies. In all instances the Federation is not connected with any Synagogue, and while rabbis may be members of the different boards their participation as a rule is only incidental.

For some time this arrangement was considered rather favorable, as it was thought that the analogy of separating the State from religion or the school from the Church holds good in this case. While now and then the Synagogue would comment upon the work of the Federation, the representatives of the latter tried to steer apart from anything that might be considered Synagogue affiliations. If the Synagogue failed to unify the Jews the cause of philanthropy might succeed. The philanthropic effort, based upon efficiency and practical application, avoided the complications that threaten by interjecting religious and traditional principles in the work of social endeavor, which was looked upon as a matter requiring a purely business attitude. Now other reasons beside a religious motive were assigned for specifically Jewish philanthropic activities. The Jews of the United States, true to the promise given to Peter Stuyvesant, must take care of their own. Immigration is the cause of Jewish dependency, and this country should not be held responsible for dependency that originated somewhere else. The Jews, as a matter of self-protection, must provide for their own indigents. It is not the rabbi now who became active in the cause of Jewish philanthropy, it is the business man, the successful organizer, the man of the world, who became active forces. Efficiency became the motto—organization the aim. The Conference of Jewish Charities was created, rules and regulations for controlling the transient dependents were adopted, congestion in New York was to be relieved through

a chain of agencies under the Industrial Removal Office auspices with the help of the fraternal organizations, national institutions for the care of consumptives were established, educational institutions were founded, the subject of wife desertion was handled through a special agency, certain standards of relief to the poor agreed upon, all without the help of the Synagogue, without its co-operation. Now and then some slight connection was intimated by the existence of the different sisterhoods, which were rather tolerated than welcomed, and some use was made of the cemetery and other facilities that the Synagogue possessed.

Social service is dynamic. The attitude is constantly changing. The pride of the Jews, that they will never become a burden upon the community, is an empty phrase today. With all the generous effort of private philanthropy, the larger bulk of the burden of dependency falls upon the State and the municipality. The country at large is rapidly awakening to the importance of the immigrant problem, it is a matter of but a short time before ample facilities will be provided by non-sectarian agencies to handle the situation in its various aspects and ramifications. The claim that the Federation will become a unifying agency for the Jews has not been realized. While controlling and promoting the philanthropic activities to a certain degree, the Federation did not succeed in stopping the rise and establishment of independent agencies. The Jews are not a homogeneous group and thus far the desire to bring unity has not been successful.

The Synagogue, which willingly gave up its hold upon charity affairs to the Federation, soon realized its mistake. A vital element was missing. Jewish religion without applied Judaism became a dead matter. The young generation especially was not attracted by "oral social service"—it required active applications.

Stephen Wise should be given credit for being the first in the field to try to regain the hold upon charity endeavor by the Synagogue. His attempt to co-operate with the United Hebrew Charities of New York is worthy of emulation.

The beginning was made at the Conference of Jewish Charities in Richmond.

That was just the time when the principles upon which Jewish Charities were based began to be shattered. It was rather questionable whether there was any reason for specifically Jewish activities—if the Jews cannot solve the entire problem why should they have any of the activities separate and distinct—why should not the Jew contribute to the general cause of philanthropic endeavor and relieve himself of his specific problem? This was the first time when rabbis were called upon to settle the perplexing problem. The address of Dr. Wise was received in rather an unfriendly way by the professional workers; many things that he said then he probably would not endorse now, but one thing was certain: he did emphasize the new possibility of real co-operation between the Synagogue and Federation and not only co-operation in words but in action—a co-operation which means life to the Synagogue and soul to the charity organization.

Enthusied with the intricacies of organization, impressed with the complicated details in handling the phenomenon of dependency, the charity worker could not help over-estimating the significance of the system and objected to anything that would interfere with the well-planned-out activity. The problem of raising funds was reduced almost to an automatic arrangement; the machinery of handling cases was put under a stereotyped proceeding; it was annoying now to lose time and energy upon unnecessary sentimental features in relief giving. The rich were removed from the direct contact with the poor, the routine work was delegated to the paid worker, the directors and members of the boards were now elated over the process of watching the mechanism and the entire proposition was reduced to a well-regulated, almost mechanical, device—how to cope with poverty. For a time this arrangement seemed to be ideal.

The needs, however, have grown, the demands increased, the machinery operated for a time as by inertia, but with the loss of public participation the drying up of the very resources became evident. The public sentiment, after getting over the novelty, began to weaken; interest in philanthropic effort lessened, the sceptic began to feel solid ground. The Federation continued its

existence, but found difficulty to spread or extend its activities. New organizations, independent, began to be formed; the strict rule of efficiency could not be maintained, the public began to lose patience and the entire organized effort began to feel that it could not continue to neglect the public.

Here is where the Synagogue found a possibility to regenerate its function as a social agency. The sisterhoods began to be quite active, different social groups were organized, the Synagogue began to interest itself in matters which were heretofore (at least some time) the exclusive scope of the organization. The Orthodox Synagogues became instrumental in the support of institutions and relief agencies with a strictly religious tendency; the Reformed Synagogue tried to connect its parishioners with actual charity activity. The Sunday-school, besides a religious factory, became a point of contact with the needy, and at least, at times, the Synagogue boldly made collections for purely charitable purposes. In some cities the Synagogue took the initiative of organizing the volunteer workers for the Federation. The Synagogue now cries for actual social service application. The Federation is in dire need of new inspiration, Jewish—sentimental—if you please. The rabbi comes closer to be a social worker and the latter begins to realize that the rabbi's co-operation is the only thing that will save his cause.

There is no doubt any longer that the Synagogue is again becoming a center of social service. The question is in what way can the Synagogue co-operate with the Federation, satisfy the longing for practical service and at the same time feel that it is not duplicating nor interfering with organized effort.

The Federation has demonstrated its efficiency in the way of constructive economic management of philanthropy; it brought to light the many phases of the intricate problem of dependency, delinquency and deficiency; it supplied definite meaning and provided a definite criterion for active social service, but it realized that it is not making progress unless it is gaining new grounds. It must get the active co-operation of the community—it must enlist the services, nay, the sacrifices of the volunteer forces. Here is where the Syna-

gogue can be of actual service; it depends upon the Synagogue to instill the spirit and enthusiasm for modern public service and not only to provide the desire for active public work but also define, supervise and actually perform the task of a philanthropic agency, utilizing the method, the principle and the facilities of the existing Federation. It is up to the Synagogue to see that its members adequately provide support to the Federation. The Committee of the Synagogue, nay, the entire congregation, should be interested in the extent of the contribution of each and every member of the Synagogue not only to the Federation but to all charity endeavor.

If certain Jewish clubs have taken upon themselves to reject membership to persons not adequately supporting the local charities, does not it behoove the Synagogue to acquire the same attitude? It is the business of the rabbi to see that his congregation as a whole should be well represented in the amount contributed to the different charities by its members. Does your rabbi know it? Is there some one in your congregation who makes it his or her business to know it? Does the community at large know to what extent your congregation is a factor in the support of local charities? If each and every synagogue would do its duty in this respect it would serve to a certain degree as a controlling impetus for the charity-giving. The Federation would soon be relieved from the complaint that it is mostly supported by few instead of by many. The Synagogue, ascertaining the total amount contributed by its entire membership, would certainly have the interest and the right to ascertain definitely the actual functions of the different charities.

Does your Synagogue, as a whole, or in its special committee, ever examine the budgets of the different philanthropic agencies—did your Synagogue ever make an actual test of the comparative standing of the different charitable institutions and was it able to direct properly the donations of your parishioners? The Synagogue should know the exact status of the Jewish charities and special committees should be vested with the right and duty to get the necessary knowledge in regard to local

charities. The different Synagogues should be actively represented on the different boards of the different philanthropies; the Synagogue should be given the benefit of the experience of its delegates and should receive definite reports of the doings. An arrangement like this could not fail to serve as a great educational factor in the community and will popularize the work of the Federation more than the moving picture and more effectively than the different stunts of commercial advertising recently in vogue and distasteful to the professional social worker.

The Federation needs competent, trained volunteers; the Synagogue should know and to a certain extent have a supervising function of the volunteer service among its members, who are or should be connected with the active work of the Federation. Does your synagogue or temple know who of its members serve as friendly visitors for the Federation or Relief Society, are they organized under the auspices of the Synagogue, is anything done for their training, can you ascertain their comparative efficiency? An arrangement like this will relieve the Federation from the unnecessary energy of trying to keep the volunteer service together, will do away with the individual handling of the friendly visitors, producing so much annoyance and unpleasantness among the active workers.

Then, again, does your Synagogue know the needs of the community that the Federation is unable to meet; does it possess the knowledge of the plans of the Federation that remain unfilled for lack of funds? If so, does your Synagogue as a unit take upon itself the initiative or co-operate with other Synagogues in helping the community?

In all these undertakings the Synagogue ventures upon philanthropic fields in co-operation with the Federation, nay, utilizing the Federation, supplying it with new resources, new forces, new interest and a motive so much wanted by the organized Jewish charities of today.

The Synagogue should utilize its contact with the younger generation, instilling in the latter not only a desire for generous giving to the Jewish philanthropies but also an enthusiasm for actual participation in the

practical endeavors of Jewish social service. The Synagogue should provide facilities for training the young generation along these particular lines; it should give instruction in the principles of Modern Jewish Philanthropy and should, in co-operation with the Federation, provide practical experience in the active work of the Federation. The Federation cannot do this work on its own responsibility; the funds the Federation collects do not permit the expenditure for the education of the working forces; its paid employees cannot devote their time in instructing the volunteers, or acquainting the young people especially, with the intricacies of social service. This should be the function of the Synagogue; it should see that its members are receiving the impetus not only to listen to beautiful passages and moral doctrines but should be anxious and fully capable to apply their Judaism in actual practical life and in answer to actual experiences of the Jewish community.

The Synagogue has an extensive field of philanthropic endeavor; it cannot do it without the co-operation of the organized effort. Its departure in this direction should and would be of mutual benefit to the Synagogue and the Federation. There is, however, one difficulty that should not be overlooked. The Synagogue must realize that modern conditions have developed a complicated machinery in every line of human endeavor; this is also true in regard to Jewish philanthropic effort. The untrained rabbi or the amateur leader in the Synagogue philanthropic circle is a pathetic figure and is liable to produce considerable confusion and actual harm. It is necessary that the Synagogue should receive the guidance of the professional (man or woman) who is in position to direct its social activities in accordance with the other social agencies existing in the city and put it on a high plane of efficiency.

In this longing for social activity many a Synagogue is at a loss as to what to undertake; this is especially tantalizing where the Federation is strong or where other Synagogues are already in the field. The establishment of study circles, sewing circles, willing and unwilling workers, visit-

ing boards and different committees raising funds on the sly is really pathetic and the lack of enthusiasm is appalling. This piece-meal work is not worth the effort; it carries more negative value, both to the Synagogue and to organizations; it is detrimental to both.

If the Synagogue decides to become an actual factor in social service it should first of all take an inventory of the forces that it already possesses and get an account of the actual participation with the existing agency. The Synagogue should survey the participation of its membership in the support of the Federation; this will be an index of existing interest. If the Synagogue is sufficiently involved in this enterprise—the study of its workings, the budget of the constituent bodies, the proportion of income spent on administration ought to be a legitimate field of investigation. Then it is up to the Synagogue to start a definite campaign among its members for a more adequate and more balanced distribution of the charity donations of the individual members. The study of the individual institutions would come next—the Synagogue has the right to approve or disapprove of the different agencies and regulate their contributions of its members.

Besides the monetary participation in the philanthropic effort of the community, the Synagogue should take account of the personal participation of its members, trying to regulate, direct and unify their efforts. This is especially important in making connections between the efforts of the Federation of the rehabilitation of families and the co-operation of the active business men of the community. In all these endeavors, however, a definite conception of the detailed workings of modern charity endeavor is paramount. While the natural leader in this enterprise should be the rabbi, in cases where the latter is not thoroughly prepared to meet the situation the leadership should be vested in persons who, besides noble motives, have the necessary knowledge to cope with the situation. In all instances the work should be based upon definite data obtained through painstaking investigation and research, which is the only true method of social service today.