

but through international experience." We shall develop, in a word, international statesmen who will be of inestimable service in many directions.

I want briefly to touch upon one other minor chamber of the international province of my problem: I hold that important repercussions will prevail as soon as it is demonstrated that more progress can be made when, in the words of Felix Warburg "we are motivated by the problems before us rather than by the parties and personalities behind us." Important consequences will flow in all of our communal life from the recognition of the nugget of wisdom contained in this felicitous phrasing of a program of social action.

There remains one additional prophecy which I may venture to utter and that is that I am of the firm belief that with the creation of the Jewish Agency we shall see, after a number of years, that it is possible to import, to a greater or lesser degree, a personnel which has been reared in a Palestinean atmosphere and has that unique background. This already is the case in the field of Jewish education. I believe that this will not be the sole field in which such recruitment will become possible. With such a development an additional train of important consequences will begin.

I have of course omitted any

reference to the importance for Palestine of the Jewish Agency in international political affairs; I have likewise omitted all reference to the effects of the Jewish Agency within Palestine. I have not touched upon the possible effects of the sharper and more drastic differentiation which the Jewish Agency will occasion between those who are or will become conscious of their group ties and those who may desire to escape them. While this is of transcendent interest and importance, it is entirely too nebulous a field in which to turn more than a furrow by mere allusion, for our available tools of analysis are still too crude. I have tried to hew closely to the line set for me by the chairman of the Program Committee and have accordingly confined my remarks to the American field of action which is so close to our own professional interests. Forecasting in the field of economics now has some foundation in science. Prophecy on the part of sociologists still demands, however, flights of fancy. I am conscious of having indulged in such a pastime but, perhaps out of all of the rifle shots I have fired, I trust to have made one or two hits, more or less near the target. I think that it is possible that out of the Jewish Agency we may see the time hastened or approximated of which the prophet spoke when he said: "For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

HANDLING TRANSIENTS IN BALTIMORE

BY MAURICE STOLLERMAN

EACH day brings to the Hebrew Friendly Inn clients usually known as "transients." They claim to be homeless and destitute, and request food, shelter, clothing, medical treatment, transportation, employment and other forms of emergency relief. The social evidence they present is indicative of considerable contact and experience with Jewish sheltering homes and social agencies. They seem well versed in the art of vagrancy and mendicancy, speak the parlance of "the road" and are immersed in the philosophy of "hobohemia." They have already developed and are employing a definite technique in their approach. They present numerous social problems, the proper disposition of which is a challenge to the social agency and social worker, as well as the whole community.

WHO TAKES TO THE ROAD?

All types are seen in the office. We find a young boy of sixteen or seventeen who, prompted by the glamor and adventure of the road, or because of his inability to get along at home, has detached himself from family, relatives, and community. He has taken to the road where he soon meets chronic hoboes—anti-social characters—who advise him of the bounty dispensed

at institutions known as "Hachnosas Orchim." The embryonic hobo, flattered by the attention of the experienced floater, listens admiringly to the rules of approach laid down by his elders, soon learns the code of the highway, and thus his original promptings for wholesome adventure are transformed into a careless, reckless, aimless drifting, resulting in pauperization and vagrancy. The young man finds himself in the shackles of the road, from which the social worker must make a titanic effort to extricate him.

Another group which pays its respects to the social agency is the seasoned hobo. In this group, we invariably find able-bodied but lazy, shiftless, irresponsible malingers whose pockets are laden with all sorts of credentials from sympathetic individuals, as well as medical certificates from dispensaries useful as tools for begging. These men by an ingenuity peculiar to their kind have acquired familiar Hebrew phrases which they employ for the purpose of impressing the interviewer. Of course, the fact that the Hebrew quotations are completely irrelevant and have no connection with the aid they seek, does not seem to occur to them. They generally make their appearance on the eve of the Sabbath, give

fictitious data, stress their orthodoxy, and beg food and shelter. This type is also frequently seen at the synagogue, during the services, where it capitalizes the religious fervor of worshippers for the solicitation of funds. They also make annual pilgrimages to all agencies in the country, assuming all sorts of aliases. They indicate a wealth of knowledge concerning administrative policies of social service bureaus and are familiar with the names of prominent social workers. Many of them go so far as to simulate mental disorders and are quite proficient in the art of exaggerating a cough and resorting to ingenious defensive mechanisms.

Still another kind of "globe trotter" is the one referred to as "mental." To this group belong men who have not that quality of mind essential to economic and social adjustment. Here we find those who by reason of their mental status are unable to furnish the social agency with an intelligent statement of facts concerning their background and legal residence. They give conflicting irrelevant statements and it is impossible to pin them down to specific data which might lead to their reinstatement in the community where they really belong. In these cases, the problems loom large for the social worker, for these men are very often old, physically handicapped and definitely unemployable. They are very proper subjects for institutionalization. They cannot be dismissed from the agency and made to shift for themselves, nor can they be returned to their homes since the agency is unable to establish their legal residence. They will render themselves social nuis-

ances and fall into the clutches of the unsocialized vagrancy laws, resulting in their incarceration in a house of correction. To place these men in the city almshouse is sometimes made difficult because of their desire for Jewish environment. To effect a permanent adjustment for them in a home for the aged is almost an impossibility, since the community, focusing as it does its responsibility primarily on residents, is not always willing to admit nonresidents to a home.

We also see from time to time a family deserter, who by reason of his inadequacy and instability, is unable to cope with the economic and domestic tensions in his home. He cannot steer through the traffic of his family troubles, and as a channel of escape and security from a nagging wife, whining children, a persistent landlord and a hard-boiled sheriff holding a writ of eviction, he takes to the road. The disposition of this case calls for considerable thought in case work treatment. Here the plan of treatment must be made in the light of the best interests of both the deserter and the deserted.

Then there is the unskilled workman, who seeks assistance in finding employment. Here we have the residuum of industry, the industrially maladjusted, the first to be fired when industry is at its lowest ebb, and the last to be hired when industry is at high tide. Again the social worker is faced with a challenging problem. Should the job be given to a non-resident floater, who will probably keep it a few days, or shall this job be given to the resident client?

BALTIMORE'S CARE OF TRANSIENTS
THE Jewish transient work in Baltimore is vested in a special department known as the "Department for Homeless Men." This department is located in the district office of the Hebrew Benevolent Society, in a neighborhood thickly populated by Jews. A social worker is in charge of this department. A transient seeking assistance is interviewed in the district office during office hours. Should he apply after office hours, he goes directly to the Sheltering Home, which is known as the "Hachnosas Orchim" or Hebrew Friendly Inn. The Hebrew Friendly Inn is situated seven blocks from the district office. It is a three-story building consisting of twelve single bedrooms, one dining room and a large social room. The social room was formerly a dormitory, but the organization realizing that transients are often afflicted with social diseases, did away with the dormitory and turned it into a social room. Each transient is given an individual room, unless the influx is such that it is necessary to put more than one man in a room. The Hebrew Friendly Inn is in charge of a caretaker, whose home is immediately adjacent to it. He prepares meals for the transients, serves them and does the janitorial work. When a transient applies after office hours, the caretaker is authorized to grant evening meal and breakfast on the following morning. For further stay the transient must see the worker of the Department for Homeless Men. The transient is given a bath ticket for the public baths, the use of which is a condition precedent to his right to stay at the Sheltering Home.

The office registers all cases with the Social Service Exchange. A record is made of the case and a letter written to the agency of the transient's alleged legal residence with a view of establishing his residence. Cases of suspected desertion are cleared with the National Desertion Bureau.

In view of the fact that the number of transients applying directly to the Sheltering Home after office hours seemed to exceed the number applying to the office of the agency, the plan of devoting a definite period of time for interviewing transients at the Hebrew Friendly Inn after office hours was instituted. The purpose of this plan was to determine whether the number of transients applying after office hours warranted the presence of the transient worker at the Sheltering Home. Accordingly, a period of twelve nights from seven to nine P. M. was devoted to this plan. The experiment was started on May 20 and continued up to and including May 31, 1929.

THE HOBOS TECHNIQUE

It was observed that men applying after office hours were those who had been on the road for a long time and were chronic transients, well grounded in the ways of the hobo. It was quite apparent that they had had a great deal of experience with social agencies. By reason of this experience, they knew that food and shelter could be obtained without an office interview, if they applied directly to the sheltering home. In fact, some of the men had been in the city all day and deliberately waited until the office closed. They do everything in their power to avoid the office

interview. The transient worker learned from these men that it was a matter of common knowledge among transients and hoboes that food and shelter could be obtained, without an interview, if they applied directly to the sheltering home after 5 o'clock.

Transients appear to have a greater sense of security at the Hebrew Friendly Inn than they have when interviewed at the office. There they seem to be more at ease in their demeanor and speech. They appear to have a greater degree of confidence in the sheltering home and are rather suspicious of the thoroughness and efficiency of an office interview. The opinion prevailing among them is that the chief purpose of an office interview is to deny them food and shelter. With this sense of security which they seem to possess when at the Sheltering Home, they are considerably more willing to tell their story. They appear more cheerful and contact is more easily established. They do not seem to simulate mental disorders, a very common practice during an office interview. The transient at the sheltering home looks more like a normal person. He does not have that troubled melancholy appearance he exhibits at the office. In short, he is "at home" at the "Hachnosas Orchim" but he is apparently inadequate for what he terms as the "red tape" of an office.

Men at the Hebrew Friendly Inn sit around the table talking and exchanging stories. One may have with him a Jewish Year Book in which are listed all the Jewish agencies and the names of the various sheltering homes. He advises his fellow transients, upon

arrival, to see a specific agency or individual and gives them his ideas of the makeup of the social workers in charge of these agencies. The other transients take note of his suggestions. In this way, they inform one another of the characteristics of social workers in various cities. It is quite interesting to learn how thoroughly familiar they are with the procedure of agencies and, in fact, even with local board members. You can see from this that there exists a fraternal spirit among them and that they are eager to assist one another.

There is no fixed time limit with regard to a transient's residence at the Sheltering Home. Each case stands on its individual facts. Pending determination of the transient's residence and receipt of information concerning him, he is referred to Sinai Hospital for a physical examination and, if physically able, is referred to possible sources of temporary employment.

If, therefore, from information received and the evidence presented by the transient, it appears that his adjustment is more certain away from home, he is given every opportunity to adjust in Baltimore, although in most cases he leaves the city of his own accord.

As a general policy, however, the transient is returned to his legal residence. In granting transportation it must be borne in mind that it is the practice of many of these men to get off the train before they reach their homes.

It has also been found that transients frequently come to Baltimore from Washington and to Washington from Baltimore. The importance of exchanging information with Washington became clear.

Accordingly, on August 1, 1929, the Baltimore-Washington Jewish Transient Exchange was inaugurated. The purpose of this exchange is to forward information to Washington before the transient leaves Baltimore. The city of Washington follows the same method.

X is interviewed in Baltimore and immediately following his interview, a transient blank is mailed to the agency in Washington. This blank contains the transient's name, alleged residence, physical and mental description, transient's story, worker's impression and recommendation.

Under this plan it is possible for each city to have advance information which is considerably helpful in determining the disposition of the case. The Baltimore-Washington Jewish Transient Exchange has been in operation for only a few months and it is yet too early to specifically evaluate its results.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE ABOUT IT?

THE Jewish Transient problem is not peculiar to Baltimore or to Jews. It is national in scope. Every community is challenged with it. It becomes the duty of the social worker and agencies to wrest from the road young men who commend themselves to constructive thought

and plans for rehabilitation inasmuch as these young men can still be salvaged, returned to their families and helped toward a healthy, social adjustment.

The chronic hobo, the anti-social character, must be dealt with firmly. To check their vagrancy calls for more effective co-operation on the part of the entire community. An extensive and intensive educational program must be instituted by every social agency with a view of educating every resident to recognize the anti-social propensities of these men. The communities should be taught to centralize and refer transients directly to the social agency. It is not an unusual occurrence for the social agency to refuse assistance to these men only to find its effort thwarted by benevolent but misguided individuals. Communities must be taught that refusing aid to a chronic transient is also a form of social service, though negative in its application.

Continued efforts in co-operation between communities and their social agencies dealing with vagrants will be necessary to solve, even partially, this perennial problem.

Thus far—at least—the answer in most instances may be found in the closing line of the case records: "X disappeared without advising organization of his plans."