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The Filson Historical Society

This is the
introduction
to the N. 14
Story written
by Mrs. Mary
Anderson Hill

To tell of the beginnings of Neighborhood House is to remember farther back than fifty years. Naturally, inevitably, there are many gaps between the memories which answer my summons, gaps which there are no existing records to bridge; but since I am the only survivor of those first days at Neighborhood House, I will tell their story as well as I can.

The leading spirit in the establishment of the social settlement in Louisville, the first such settlement in a Southern City, was a young man in training for the Presbyterian ministry, Archibald Alexander Hill. The name, Archibald Alexander, tells something of the young man's predisposition toward earnest service of his fellowmen. His father had been a student of a great teacher, Dr. Archibald Alexander, at the Princeton Theological Seminary. Himself a minister and teacher, Dr. Hill had surrounded his son with an atmosphere of dedication. Archibald Hill's mother, Martha J. Hill, a devout Christian, had a poetic temperament, but one which could transmute vision into reality. The son of such parents not unnaturally turned to the ministry for his life's work. For the special ministry of settlement work which he later undertook, his experiences in college, in different manual occupations, and in business, laid a broad foundation in knowledge of men and affairs. He was not merely a student of theology, moreover, at the time he became a leader in the settlement movement; he was also a student of sociology and economics, well-versed in history, a wide reader of literature. His catholicity of taste is suggested by his interest in three very different poets. Kipling he loved for his masculine vigor; Browning, for his insight into the soul of man; Wordsworth, for his knowledge of ~~that blessed mood~~
- - - *that blessed mood*
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened - - - -

I have in my possession still his volumes of these poets in which references and marked passages show their appeal to this young thinker.

My husband, at his death, left me also another volume, an unusual one, which had in these years of study no small influence on his thoughts, The Letters and Other Writings of the Late Edward Denison. Dennison, the preface of this book says, had for several years before his death in 1870 "devoted himself almost exclusively to the subject of the poorer classes." An Oxford graduate, a man of independent fortune, "he looked into the root of things: the essential laws of economy; the less tangible, but not less powerful incentive of religion in its largest and most catholic sense; and most of all, he sought the substitution of human sympathy for what a great writer has called the 'cash-nexus' - - -" In a pauperized, crowded East London parish, Stepney, Dennison took up his quarters in 1867. Here he built a working man's college where he himself lectured; here, day by day, he played the part of "a gentleman on the alert, - - - giving a push to struggling energy, guiding aspiring intelligence, breaking the fall of unavoidable misfortune." He believed that sounder education would lift the deadlevel of labor and poverty not only in Stepney but in other such sections of great cities, would make the laborers dwelling there "less the creatures of habit, less the slaves of place and circumstance." He believed that better conditions for labor should be brought about by law and by the enforcement of law; therefore he saw to it that local authorities whose duty it was to look after health, housing, sanitation, and relief should "keep up to their work." A few years of such strenuous living brought Denison's life to an early close. No one, however, for less a sensitive young man, could read his letters without realizing the opportunities for helpfulness on the part of "a gentlemen on the alert" living among the dwellers in a submerged district.

Mr. Hill knew well also the history of Toynbee Hall, the first settlement proper in London; he knew the history of the movement in both England and the United States. He realized the three trends combined in the movement as Jane Addams had described them: "first, the desire to interpret democracy in social terms; second, the impulse beating at the very source of our lives, urging us to aid in the race progress; and third, the Christian movement toward humanitarianism." I think he would have said quite simply for himself, however, that if God is our father, then all men are our brothers and that while these relationships of fatherhood and brotherhood may be taught by preaching them, they are best taught by living them. Thus he turned to settlement work, though he did not give up his study at the Theological Seminary and, in due time, was ordained.

In the middle of his theological course, Mr. Hill spent a summer at Bay View, Michigan, where one of the lecturers was Graham Taylor. Mr. Taylor, the head of Chicago Commons, one of the great settlements in America, was a lover of humanity, a far-seeing student of social conditions, a fine gentleman, and withal a forceful and persuasive speaker. The younger man fell quickly under the spell of the older. Mr. Taylor's lectures challenged one who sought to obey the "first and great commandment," to love the Lord, and also the second, "like unto it," to love one's neighbor as oneself.

The next step was a brief residence at Chicago Commons. Here Mr. Hill saw the modus operandi of the settlement's daily life. The Commons was, as its name implies a meeting ground for its neighbors and for those privileged to have been born and to have lived in happier surroundings. Here he saw Mr. Taylor's careful study of the neighborhood, his wise efforts to bring to it knowledge of the resources it could avail itself of in the city as a whole, his respect for the dignity of his fellowmen. The Commons, like other settlements, was not a source of relief; when for some neighbor relief was a necessity, the established relief societies were

asked to help. Rather the settlement was the home of cultured men and women who carried their own manner of life with them into a submerged district, just such a district as Edward Denison had described, where there existed a "dead level of labor and poverty." One means of breaking up such a dead level was the organization in a community center of clubs and classes needed and desired by the neighbors themselves and supported, at least in part, by them. Whatever equipment was essential beyond what the members' funds could buy was, if possible, furnished from funds contributed by friends of the Commons. Above all, the daily program of the settlement grew out of neighborhood conditions, needs, aspirations; it was not a ready-made schedule imposed by outsiders. Such work as he saw going on at the Commons interested Mr. Hill deeply. On his return to Louisville, though he was still a student at the Seminary, a way was found to establish similar work under his direction.

A noble and generous woman, Miss Lucy Belknap, had also been following the story of the settlements in England and America. She was especially interested in Jane Addams' work at Hull House. Her desire was to found a settlement in Louisville, where her home was. For this purpose she was willing to meet a large share of the expense. Unable to take up her own residence in a submerged neighborhood, she sought some one free to do so and also able to seek enough additional support from other "uptown" residents to maintain the experiment. Thus there came to one capable of leading in settlement work the opportunity to undertake such work.

Where in Louisville should the experiment be made? The answer to this question was also in preparation. Louisville, like other river-valley cities, had begun at the river's edge. From the Ohio it stretched back into the hills.

As it grew, the quarter nearest the river became the abandoned section; the well-to-do moved from it to the higher levels, where they built new and finer homes. The abandoned quarter became the quarter of business: markets, wholesale houses, warehouses, small retail shops, saloons. Spacious old residences in this neighborhood became tenement houses, subdivided by flimsy partitions into as many rooms as possible regardless of light, air, and any means of sanitation. Into these rooms and into any other available nooks and crannies crowded a working population largely foreign. As I recall, the people were chiefly Italian and Russian. There were some American-born, both white and negro, the latter living in the frequent alleys.

Now this neighborhood, soil which sorely needed cultivation and planting to the good seed of citizenship and community fellowship, had been for some time under the sympathetic scrutiny of seeing eyes. In one of the fine old mansions a city kindergarten was carried on, the teacher of which was Patty Smith Hill, Archibald Hill's sister. Her great interest in the children who came to her day-by-day had led her into first-hand knowledge of the homes from which the children came. She had seen those dark rooms; she knew the diseases they could breed; she saw the streets where the children tried to play at risk of life and limb; she was aware of the continuous struggle of the dwellers in such a district not merely for existence but for such decencies of life as cleanliness and recreation. To this quarter she now naturally turned her brother's eyes.

On the corner of Jefferson and Preston Streets a large room, previously rented for a saloon, was empty. A smaller room back of it was also empty. Into the front room the student of theology moved his desk and his books and from this vantage ground began to observe closely the men, women and children

to whom he wished to become in the fullest sense a good neighbor. He began with no advertising, no fanfare of announcement or promise, he was just one human being with love in his heart and a sincere purpose in his mind, trying to achieve actual acquaintance with the lives of some of "the other half." Little by little, sometimes by mere chance, he came to know first one, then another of the neighbors. As it was necessary that fires be made and the rooms kept clean if he was to invite those he came to know to meet with him there, a janitor was sought. By good fortune, Mr. Hill found a friendly young man of the district who was responsive to the ideas shared with him. This young man took up the duties of janitor, but he was much more than an employee; he proved to be an important link between the newcomer and the longer dwellers in the neighborhood. His name was Jo Zachariah.

At this point must be traced briefly another thread which came to be woven into my story. In the chapel at Vassar College I had heard inspiring talks from Janet Fine and Stanton Coit. Miss Fine, one of the first leaders at the Rivington Street Settlement in New York, told of the conditions among her neighbors and of the outlets to a more satisfying life the settlement had opened for many of them. Dr. Coit told of his boys' ^{club} ~~club~~ and its leading toward genuine Americanism, an effort which developed into the College Settlement for men on the Lower East Side of New York. Though I had no thought but to become a teacher, these two talks lay deep in my mind. I did become a teacher and in Louisville. Here two contacts with Archibald Hill led me into a share of his work and finally into marriage with him.

One of these contacts was at the cross-town kindergarten of still another of the Hill sisters, Mary Hill. She had asked me to read aloud to a Christmas gathering of the children's mothers. There, as I read a part of The Birds Christmas Carol, Archibald Hill had the idea of asking me to help him in the work he was

organizing on the opposite side of town. At a previous meeting, by chance, on the porch of a friend's quiet out-of-town cabin, he had told me at some length of Graham Taylor's work in Chicago and of his own hope to establish similar work in Louisville. So when soon after Christmas he asked me to undertake a girls' club in the old saloon rooms, he found me ready to accept the invitation.

Thus was born Louisville's social settlement which was later called "Neighborhood House." I remember two definite groups which met each week while the meeting place was still on the corner where the saloon had once been. The first of these was a group of young men, some of them probably brought by the friendly janitor, Jo Zachariah. Eventually these young men expressed a desire to study American history. Mr. Hill's brother, Wallace Hill, volunteered to sponsor this group and to talk to them about the history of our country.

The second group was of young women, several of whom were introduced to us by their brothers, members of the American history club. These girls were far less certain of what they wanted to do than the boys had been. They did want a club, however, a "literary" club. Out of several plans suggested they finally chose to read and discuss a little magazine, current in those days, called The Great Round World.

Both of these groups were of larger usefulness than their own organizations; they were additional means to the end of becoming acquainted with the neighbors, of making them aware of civic and municipal resources which they had a right to use to their own advantage, and of interpreting the district around the club

rooms to the more favored citizens whose homes were no safer, in truth, than these homes forming a far weaker link in the life of the whole community. Even more important than the acquaintance of club leaders with club members was the growing friendship of our chief leader, Mr. Hill, and our neighbors of all ages and both sexes. This friendship was furthered by the good offices of Jo, our janitor, Mr. Hill's first interpreter to later friends. Jo had soon opened his heart to Mr. Hill's ready sympathy, had told Mr. Hill much that must otherwise have been learned more slowly, had vouched for Mr. Hill to others, had paid him the homage of personal adoration even to the way Jo had his hair cut.

What kind of neighbors were these among whom we seemed less and less like strangers? They were chiefly Russian Jews, exiled from their native land by the cruelties still practised in the late 1800's by Russian rulers. They said in those early days as well as later that Mr. Hill and his associates were too good to be Christians. As intimacy increased the men showed the head-resident their backs scarred by stones hurled at them from the doors of Greek orthodox churches or by lashes dealt them by Greek orthodox superiors. They had brought with them to America their own Jewish faith and had set up its earthly tabernacle in a wooden building on Jefferson Street near our corner. There the Vantor sang in Hebrew; there the women sat in a tiny gallery behind a lattice screen; there the rites as directed in the Old Testament were carried on with reverent accuracy. The atmosphere was the atmosphere of a foreign land.

The children of these Russians went to the nearby public school, but each afternoon the boys assembled for instruction in the Talmud. I can still see them in memory as I saw them once in reality gathered in a bare room around a long table at one end of which sat the teacher, his Hebrew

text open before him and beside it on the table a whip with a lash long enough to summon back the wandering attention of the boy farthest from him. I can still hear in memory the sing-song repetition of the Hebrew text.

One or two among the customs of these would-be Americans are still vivid in my mind. Their Sabbath was our Saturday. From Friday evening, for twenty-four hours, the day was sacred; on it no burden could be carried, no work done. Jo Zachariah wore his handkerchief as a garment, not in his pocket but thrust through his belt; on the Sabbath he employed, for a small sum, a negro woman to do his janitor's work, to make the necessary fires, to sweep the floors and dust. One of the tragic results of the combined sacredness of our Saturday to the Jews and the secularity to them of our Sunday was that work in the American community could not easily be found for the young Jews. And a further sad result was that, as the boys and girls grew old enough to be employed, the Jewish Sabbath became less sacred to them. They departed from the ways of their parents and in departing turned - or were inclined to turn - their backs not only on the old ways but even on their parents. One of our difficult endeavors was, then, to interpret parents and children to each other, to prevent, if we could, a break between the Americanized children and the still foreign parents.

The chief occupation among these Russian men, as I remember, was tailoring, though there were many small shops where they sold the necessaries of life to each other. There was one large open market and also a fair number of saloons, but these were not patronized by our Russian Jewish neighbors. There were several large wholesale produce houses operated by Italians. There was an occasional gloomy warehouse. As for the tailors, they were often compelled to set up small businesses of their own because they were custom tailors chiefly and custom tailoring was giving way to factory work, at which they were not adepts.

As knowledge of the district grew and deepened vision of new opportunities for helpfulness came to Mr. Hill. The first requirement, however, was more room, larger quarters and quarters suitable for permanent, round-the-clock residence. Much searching discovered at 324 East Jefferson Street a possible home, of which, after some difficult negotiating, we obtained possession. We rented this property, in which three residents took up their abode. It consisted of a smallish brick house with a still smaller brick house behind it, separated from the warehouse on one side by the narrow alley-way, paved with brick and roofed over, so common in old Southern towns. On the other side was a kosher butcher-shop and grocery. The front house had on the first floor a "double-parlor," to use the Southern name for a room sometimes divisible into two rooms by folding doors. A narrow hall-way led from front door to back door; in the hall a staircase ran up to the second floor. On this floor were two fair-sized bed-rooms and two tiny ones. There were no closets; our clothes had to be hung behind a curtain back of the staircase on hooks inserted below a shelf on which was conveniently stored much personal property. I can see at the moment those red cotton curtains over which brilliant yellow lions ramped in unending pursuit of each other. There was no central heating, only open fires or stoves, cheerful, dirty, and laborious. The smaller house in the rear, probably used in the better days of the district for servants' quarters, had two rooms below our own dining room and kitchen - and, for public use, two rooms above, reached by an outside staircase. The yard between the houses and a little way back was paved with brick; in the yard was the one Hydrant from which we drew water for every purpose. There was a cellar for coal and other storage under the front house. This house was almost flush with the street. A short flight of stone steps led down from the front door and, by good fortune, the windows on the street were high enough

to cut off much eager peering from outside.

Into this home three of us carried ~~on~~ our own manner of living as far as it could be carried on there in view of the physical handicaps.

The three residents were Mr. Hill, his sister, Mary, and I. Since Mary Hill was teaching in a kindergarten on the opposite side of town, it was understood that she should do no teaching nor club work in the settlement but merely lend us her presence. It was a presence which meant much. For her it meant the sacrifice of going a long distance to her school and back each day and also the possible risk to health from living in a crowded quarter where sanitary conveniences were few or non-existent. We were always deeply grateful for Mary's serene presence. She was a wise adviser whenever we turned to her; a quiet, steady faith beamed from her which cheered and strengthened us in our many perplexed and difficult hours, though Mary was ever more radiant than talkative.

The inception of ideas and the making of definite plans into a program rested with Mr. Hill, the head-resident, as he was called. He had learned at Chicago Commons, as well as from his study of the settlement movement elsewhere, that no ready-made program would accomplish the purpose of a true neighborhood house; the program adopted must be a genuine growth and whatever program might finally grow into being it would be only a means to the end of wider resourcefulness, fuller sharing in the whole community life, on the part of the neighborhood itself. So as he studied conditions more and more closely and thoughtfully, he came to know his neighbors and to be accepted by them as friend and counsellor; to him they came more and more freely with their problems, problems of earning support for their families, problems of schooling or employment for their children, problems of health, problems between landlord and tenant, problems

of citizenship whether it was still to be won or, already won, was to be used in the exercise of American privileges still new to the foreign born. All this meant many hours of personal consultation, long conversations to come to an understanding of the difficulty, to explain the new customs of the new country, to curb unwisdom and impatience; then a patient search to put in operation whatever resources the city or the state could offer the foreigner who would like to become a citizen. Often, too, more long conversations were needed before those who controlled the means of help could be convinced that help was not only needed but was the right of these submerged members of the community. Of course, the first "up-town" friends to turn to were the members of the board of trustees which had been formed to sponsor Neighborhood House. These men and women, willing to serve because they believed in the spirit of our endeavor, gave generously not merely of their money but of their time, their interest, their sympathy.

The head-resident also shared in the carrying on of the program once established. His special club became the group of young men who had studied American history in the old saloon rooms under the leadership of Wallace Hill. At 324 East Jefferson this group of young men became a strong pillar of our structure. Their study and discussion was not only American history but American institutions and their own relation to these institutions. Many of these young men became members of other groups offered to their membership: some went to night school; some joined the Young Men's Hebrew Association.

Still another of the head-resident's responsibilities was to secure volunteers to lead the clubs which the residents themselves did not lead. There grew up clubs for all ages and both sexes. Only the Jewish women did not seek to organize a club. Our acquaintance with them remained personal only. Otherwise the house was truly a center for all in the neighborhood. Each school morning

the double-parlor became a kindergarten, supported by the city school system. Fortunately the kindergartner was a young woman who had taught for some years in the neighborhood. "Miss Jean" we all called her. She helped to interpret the neighborhood to us and us to it.

In the afternoons, the largest demand was for sewing-classes. These filled the double-parlor, their undertakings ranging from quilt squares to dresses, according, as our manual of instruction said, "to age and size of child." Carpentry classes for boys were contrived in the rear house in the upstairs back room. The front room upstairs in this house became a lending library, the books in which were contributed from the libraries of friends whose children had grown up or who were for other reasons willing to part with such, to us, treasures. Eventually even our kitchen was requisitioned for a small cooking class. In any room available tutoring went on if there were free a resident or a volunteer. In later days one of the larger bedrooms in the front house was given over twice a week to a brass band suggested and led by one of the older men in the neighborhood. Indeed, we could in no way save ourselves, in our small quarters, from being "institutionalized," which meant, in settlement parlance of those days, that each bit of the contracted space at our disposal had to be used over and over, in swift succession, for a series of definite meetings. All these enterprises were under the careful eye of the head-resident; yet for them he must never care more than for the deeper purpose of the whole. Often, if a volunteer teacher was absent, he must himself become the teacher. If he did not substitute himself as teacher, he must find another substitute. In any case he must be at hand to meet emergencies and answer questions. Yet, as I have indicated, even more than his specific and emergency duties, it was important that the head-resident prevent the spirit of the house from being lost in mere doing, mere busy-ness.

To the third resident, to me, fell the housekeeping. This I tried to make a good example of its hydra-headed arts. It was understood that we should live, as nearly as possible, as if in our own home. We had negro servants as we would have had in our own homes: Nannie to cook our meals; Aunt Francis to clean our own rooms; Frank to build and keep up our fires and - after Jo went on to a larger field - to clean the club rooms and to sweep the yard and pavements. These servants were another link to the neighborhood; they had friends among the negroes there. We knew some of these though we had no negro clubs in the settlement. In the South, at that time, any organized work with both white and black would have been impossible. But when Frank went with me several mornings a week to the open market to carry the big market basket, he and I chatted freely with the other customers about the vegetables and produce on the stalls, about prices, and such matters. There was no unfriendliness to him, no antagonism. He was part of the home and was known as a good "boy." The neighbors were interested in the way we kept the home; even the way we washed our dishes was subject to observation and we were often startled to see the eyes in small heads peering at us through the windows of our dining-room and kitchen.

The girls' club continued to be my special charge among the clubs and classes. In it, having laid aside The Great Round World, we turned our attention to smaller, more readily encompassed portions of the universe. We called ourselves a literary club, but almost any subject was of interest to us. The girls were quick to be lifted out of their drab daily routine of tending machines or doing some sort of piece work in lofts for long hours. They were appreciative of beauty and curious about new aspects of life. They liked to hear poetry read aloud. We did not follow a charted

course; I cannot remember much that we did. I once told them the story of Adam Bede; once read aloud parts of Snow Bound and of Enoch Arden. If a member had found during the week something in magazine or newspaper that caught her attention, she would read it to be discussed. In an ambitious moment we decided to give a play. The Ladies of Cranford offered us a number of women's parts. We read some of Mrs. Gaskell's novel, Cranford, improvised a stage of boards on trestles at the back of the double-parlor, scurried around to find foot-lights, borrowed antique costumes from old trunks in my friends' attics. Our foot-lights were tallow candles in colored glass lanterns; our entrances and exits were from and to the yard through the back windows, but we played to a full house and had much applause.

Doubtless all our efforts reached only a small fraction of "the other half," but we reached a few besides. Miss Addams says that many cultivated young people of the late 1800's suffered from a sense of uselessness in relation to social maladjustment, of which they heard much. "Our young people feel nervously the need of putting theory into action and respond quickly to the settlement form of activity," I quote from Twenty Years at Hull House. This desire to be useful inspired many young men and women to help us as volunteer workers at Neighborhood House. It inspired older workers as well. Among the latter were the women and one man at least who, after considerable acquaintance with Neighborhood House as residents or workers, carried the settlement idea into the Kentucky mountains and there founded first the settlement-school at Hindman and later the one at Pine Mountain.

One point about the settlement should be noted in order to prevent misunderstanding. The settlement was not a relief agency. If relief was needed, and this sometimes occurred if the breadwinner of a family suffered misfortune, we placed the needy family in touch with an established relief

agency. The settlement found its place in a neighborhood where labor was the rule, a neighborhood where, to be sure, none had much margin of money, of health, of leisure so that misfortune frequently carried some one over the edge. But the chief purpose was to show the neighbors opportunity for breaking through what Denison well called the "dead level" of their existence rather than to feed and clothe them. As far as the members could they contributed to the support of the clubs and classes to which they belonged. What they could not provide by way of equipment more privileged friends of the settlement contributed. These friends paid the salaries of the continuously employed workers and met certain other fixed costs. To these contributors through the Board of Trustees we made regular annual reports. The residents met their own living expenses, employing and paying their own servants.

Certain civic benefits not limited to our immediate neighborhood came about through our work. The Louisville Woman's Club became interested in affording our children some place to play, an open ground off the street. Such a spot was the yard of a neighborhood school, where volunteers from the settlement took charge. After this modest success, we invited a nationally known gentleman, a Mr. Tsanoff, from Toledo, Ohio, I think, to talk before the Woman's Club and its guests about the creation and operation of playgrounds for children in crowded sections of large cities. Mr. Tsanoff had written a book about such playground in America and had helped to institute many of them. He stayed with us at Neighborhood House. One trifling indication of his own love for play I recall. By way of entertainment I took him to see Modjeska in Macbeth and the next night to what

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we call now a "Western," "M'Liss. He much preferred the latter, he said; "it was more cheerful." Out of these simple beginnings, however, arose a genuine interest in Louisville in playgrounds for children and not only for the children of our neighborhood. Its generous sponsor was Mr. Robert Kincaid. He sought out available open spaces, in one of which he insisted on the construction of a swimming pool. A number of places for different sorts of play resulted, all of them places safe for play.

Another civic benefit was the establishment of public bath houses. In every orthodox Jewish neighborhood there must be baths for the use of the women in particular, at certain times. There was such a bath house in our neighborhood, privately owned and operated. In often dark quarters into which water had to be carried, and often carried upstairs, from a common faucet in a common yard, what wonder that cleanliness was at best a strenuous virtue, sometimes an inaccessible luxury. "Anybody can at least be clean" is heard only from the lips of those ignorant of tenement house life in cities or of its equivalent elsewhere. So Neighborhood House threw itself into the breach or rather, literally, into the bathtub. We rented twice a week the private bath house near us and we invited the children to use it. Each child brought a few pennies to ~~help~~ help with the cost of laundry, of towels and of soap, for it seemed wisest that we should control both soap and towel supply. Because only thoroughness brought appreciable results, we scrubbed many small bodies ourselves. I recall also the use of large doses of a powerful liquid, called "fishberry," on little heads as we combed them. More than a thousand hot baths were taken in the crowded and inconvenient quarters within a few summer weeks, but these were sufficient to convince us that a public bath house was needed as a measure of sanitation and health. The upshot of the summer's experience was a visit to Boston for an inquiry into its system of public

baths. Here Mr. Robert Woods was our guide and informant. Once at home again and armed with his wise ^{wise} counsel and with the literature he had sent us, we went before the city fathers. Mr. Percy Booth, one of our trustees, secured this hearing for us. Courageously and effectively he seconded our request that the Council provide baths for its underprivileged citizens. Thus the first public baths came to be established in Louisville.

In the early days when the settlement was still only a hope, both Graham Taylor and Jane Addams had been invited by Miss Belknap to speak in Louisville in the interest of the proposed undertaking. Their talks at the ~~First Presby-~~ ^{Warren Memorial} ~~terian~~ Church drew sympathetic listeners and resulted in the formation of our first board. It was made up of both Gentiles and Jews, good friends of our purpose and highly cooperative with us and with each other. I should like to enter here the names of all of them, but my memory does not serve me reliably and no records are at hand.

Besides Miss Addams and Mr. Taylor, another great social apostle of that day paid us a visit, Mrs. Florence Kelley. She had been the first factory inspector in Illinois and was at the time of her visit secretary of the Consumer's League. This league was a national association, the bitterest foe of all sweat-shop labor. Mrs. Kelley told in her lecture the story of the sweat-shop evil stretching its deadly tentacles from great cities like Chicago or New York into the remotest corners of the country. The road by which the evil traveled was the advertising of cheap garments. A garment made in a tenement house room where small pox or typhus existed might carry fatal germs to any family anywhere which bought the garment because of its low price. She told of underpaid sweat-shop workers, of women who received a mere pittance for buttonholes made by long hours of stitching late into the night, of little children pressed into mechanical toil possible for tiny fingers, of girls

injured by poisonous dyes necessary to the bright colors of artificial flowers -- all such labor done in the home, "sweated" as to pay and evil conditions of light and air. The Consumer's League was organized to make these conditions of labor known and to urge women to buy only those white undergarments on which the label of the League appeared. This label certified that the garment had been made not in the dark, unwholesome, even dangerous tenement home, but under good work-room conditions and for a living wage. It was one step toward the general use of labels to certify to decent conditions of labor and decent pay for labor. After Mrs. Kelley's talk a branch of the Consumers' League was established in Louisville, of which Mrs. Reuben Post Halleck was the efficient president. Mrs. Kelley I remember as a delightful guest, inquiring with gratifying eagerness into our plans and hopes. She was a forceful and trenchant speaker, but remorseful if she criticized too sharply the complacent satisfaction of the average comfortable citizen. After her talk in the crowded double-parlor, she came out to me in the hall with, "How much crockery did I knock down off the shelf that time?"

Although there were other stirrings of the social conscience for which Neighborhood House was at least in part responsible in these early days, these are the ones that I was closest to and that then seemed to me to go deepest.

As to definite religious teaching, that there should be none at Neighborhood House was clearly understood from the first. It was, as I have indicated, an understanding ^{due} ~~one~~, primarily, to the experiences our neighbors had had in Russia. We had to prove to them that Christians could be not persecutors but friends. Mr. Hill, finding the center of his life in God the Father, felt all men to be brothers, his brothers. Certainly his attitude expressed in his daily actions, won the respect and trust of these foreigners brought up in a culture so different from ours. That we did not come to East Jefferson Street to

proselyte, our friends from the up-town synagogue had assured our neighbors. We had no meetings at the house on Sunday; we had parties, but no Christmas parties. Since we could not teach the true meaning of Christmas, we preferred not to mark the season by superficial celebrations. We were careful not to violate our neighbors' beliefs, on the other hand. Only after we had been accepted as friends did we set up the cooking class I have mentioned. In it, since the kid, according to Mosaic law, must not be seethed in its mother's milk, soap was taboo as dishes frequently had held milk and soap is made from meat fat. Therefore a complete new set of simple utensils and dishes was kept in a box built to fit under the table in our little kitchen and sal soda was provided to wash them with.

Over the mantel piece in the front parlor our good friend, Miss Belknap, let us hang one of her pictures, an engraving of "The Prophets." This was the subject of much conversation with our neighbors. Some of the garments in the picture might have been duplicated in the synagogue on our street. At each neighbor's home, on the right hand door-post, was a mazuzah, a small metal case containing a Biblical passage. Next door to us was the kosher butcher shop, where each Friday evening came the showcut to kill in ritual fashion the fowl brought for the Sabbath meal. At ~~P~~assover season a vigorous house-cleaning swept from the home the last crumb of leavened bread. At that time also the brass and copper vessels which many families had brought with them from Russia received on the inside a fresh metallic wash. These vessels, at least, were in so far new for Passover use. We were told that all other old vessels and dishes were discarded and new ones obtained.

Two special occasions stand out in my mind: one, a funeral; the other, a wedding. Let me recall the wedding first.

The daughter of a family across the street was to be married. The hall over the market house was swept and garnished. Long boards on trestles were set up for tables. Much food was laid in and wine also.

"Would I come over and pin on the bride's veil?" a little-sister messenger asked.

Of course I would and gladly. The plump and smiling bride was ready for me. She was clad in a heavy, dark red silk dress. The veil of white tartan was to be fastened on by a wreath of artificial flowers. Surrounded by a ring of critical witnesses, I did my nervous best to secure the desired effect. Good fortune was with my efforts. As later in the hall the bridal procession formed two by two, including the relatives of both bride and groom, the bride smiled at me sweetly from beneath the canopy carried over her by four little girls. At the end of the ceremony, I remember, the wine glasses from which the happy pair drank to each other were dashed to the floor and crushed to bits. So, at least, bad luck through the use of these glasses by others was prevented.

The funeral was that of a young boy we knew especially well and loved. Harris had been from the first a member of the boys' club. He had become our close friend. He was an intelligent boy, one, we believed to become a leader of his people. He slowly, slowly succumbed to tuberculosis and died. His mother and sister were also our friends and we were summoned to the home. It was, indeed, a house of mourning. In the darkened room where Harris' body lay sat a group of older women with the mother and the sister. They were rending their garments and continuously, in a monotone, they wailed "Ai! Ai!" We were not asked to go to the synagogue for whatever service

was conducted there, but we were asked to be present at the burial in the cemetery. There we saw Harris' body lying in the coffin which was the common coffin of all whom death brought to the grave. Over it was the common pall, of dark cloth, with the six-pointed star of David in gold in the center. Harris' body, swathed round and round in a long strip of white linen cloth, was reverently lifted from this coffin and placed^d in the grave on the ground. The face was covered. Then the earth was filled in quietly and gently. Meanwhile another member of the boys' club moved to and fro opposite us outside the hedge which surrounded the cemetery. This boy's name was Levi. He was therefore of the tribe of Levites or priests. According to the Levitical law (Leviticus XXI: 11) the priest must not contaminate himself by too close proximity to the body of the dead. As we left the cemetery, the Jewish friends of Harris picked up stones lying there in abundance and hurled them back over their shoulders towards the grave. We were told that this act was reminiscent of olden times when the grave had to be protected from wild animals by stones heaped on it.

These occasions and others less significant seem almost dream-like to me now. But among my possessions are brass and copper vessels given me by my neighbors or sometimes brought from them. One of these is a two-handled copper cup such as was used ritually by the showcut when he killed the chickens next door. Lifting^d by each handle in turn, he poured clean water from it over first one hand, then the other. This cup is a symbol to me of the reality of such scenes as I have recalled.

There were other times when we were called on to help in crisis of life or death. Once our good friend, a physician often called into the district,

Dr. Florence Brandeis, asked me to help her with a birth she thought might be difficult. The baby was born "blue." It was my task to keep it alive while the doctor strove to keep the mother alive. Alternately I was to hold that mite of flesh placed in my hands in the warm open oven and dip it in a pan of cool water placed on the floor by the stove. Such were the means at our disposal in that home in that emergency and there was no time to denuer. Of course I was frightened, but when a faint wail came the doctor called out "Good." The mother lived too. Years after I met on a visit to Louisville, a chubby lad who said, "My mother tells me you helped to save my life."

One of the saddest death beds I had to attend was that of a stranger to us, an old lady whom no one seemed to claim. She was too ill, when I found her, to talk to me. After her death, I closed the eyes of this aged waif and urged by a neighbor, placed pennies on the lids. Then I called on the city authorities to do whatever else must be done. After that experience of barren loneliness, contact with families where there were children was doubly warm and friendly.

Often the results were slow or apparently lacking; our lights would burn low; discouragement was overwhelmingly close. In such times our leader pulled us out of the sense of threatening futility. Something funny he had seen or heard, perhaps from the window of his tiny bedroom-study overlooking the street, would set us all laughing and gloom would lift. Once it was the picture he drew of three children running down the street, one with an all-day sucker, pursued by a second little fellow, while the third, able only to toddle along in the rear, kept shouting, "'Ick it, Iddy! 'Ick it, Iddy!" I doubt, however, whether the best of good licks would have saved the treasure

to the possessor if the pursuers had caught up with him.

Another time a small boy was going out the side alley-way, sobbing loudly.

"What's the matter, Jakie?"

"I want my cake; I want my cake."

"Where is it? Did some one take it? Let's go find it."

"I ate it. I want my cake. I ate it."

Astonishing confession. Few of us realize that the cake we want has been eaten by ourselves.

Our leader also planned continuous study to help us keep our purpose before us and to enlarge our power to achieve it. We read alone and together. After the evening meal, before the clubs began to gather, we had a quiet half-hour. Then Mr. Hill often read aloud until some point of discussion arose and we would talk not listen. I remember among what we read there were some chapters from Isaiah, some essays by the Italian patriot Mazzini, and most to our purpose, a good deal of Ruskin, the road-builder, lover of beauty, humane, economist, to whom all settlements turned for inspiration.

Just a word about the appearance of the rooms where the clubs met. We tried hard to keep them clean. Next to cleanliness came beauty. Great was our joy when one of my former students said she would have fresh paper put on the walls of the double-parlour. This was one way to satisfy that desire for service on the part of the young, of which Miss Addams speaks so sympathetically. The wall-paper chosen was a soft red. When the neighbors were admitted to the transformed rooms, many were the admiring "Oh's" and "Ah's." Against this background our pictures looked better and it was especially becoming to our one piece of good furniture, an old sofa of excellent design lent us permanently by another generous friend.

The final picture in my mind is of the double-parlor resplendent with huge bouquets of golden-rod and iron-weed, as we in Kentucky call the tall

purple aster. It is August 15, 1901. Mr. Hill and ⁹ are married there. Our families, a few friends, and our two clubs, our boys and girls, are with us. Though good-byes are said, it ^{is} ~~forms~~ a radiant place, a radiant hour.

Good-byes had to be said because for some time Mr. Hill had been the head of a settlement in New York City. He had been asked to build the home for this settlement and an adjoining chapel by the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church.

After he went to New York I became the head of Neighborhood House with Minnie Baldauf as my assistant. Mary Hill found it necessary to move back to her own home and Sarah Dudley came to live with us as the third resident. So we went on until the wedding I have spoken of. Then Miss Charlotte Kimball became the head-resident. Here my story of the Louisville settlement, so far as first-hand knowledge goes, must come to an end. But it cannot come to an end without a word of pleasure and congratulation to others because the work of Neighborhood House has continued and its influence has increased year by year. Surely this long life is in itself proof of the soundness of the ~~f~~fundamental idea. It is by actual knowledge of each other that helpful cooperation comes about, cooperation the aim of which is service of a larger whole than those who cooperate, service of the community.

In the years since I lived at Neighborhood House many instances of its significance to individuals have come to my attention. It meant to young men and women, most of all perhaps, incentive to seek as great opportunity as they could. ^{Came to my notice} An instance of this ~~occurred~~ when my son was teaching at the University of Michigan. One of his students, after class one day, asked him whether his father was not Archibald Hill of Louisville. This student, then studying for his degree, had been in the first boys' club at Neighborhood House. He said that it was in the club that his desire for education had been awakened.

Like stories could be told of many more who helped in the early building of Neighborhood House and after.

Much of the social and class work done in the settlements originally has been taken over by the public schools. In many places the public school has become a community center; it is open to the neighbors in the evening not only for adult classes but for entertainments and social gatherings, but because of certain formalities connected with the public school system everywhere the school has not come to seem so close to neighborhood difficulties, needs and desires as the settlement. It is less flexible than the settlement. Everywhere, as a community center, the settlement has led the way, Starting as a humanitarian movement under the guidance of men and women of the nineteenth century who were eager to give of themselves and their possessions to the underprivileged, the settlement has become a center of genuine social research. The knowledge the settlements have acquired, based on hard facts of daily life, has enriched social theory and will continue to enrich it. Laws for human welfare, beginning with the welfare of little children, are on our statute books and are enforced because settlement workers have gathered incontrovertible facts which showed that the democracy we strive to bring to reality requires such laws. Whatever modifications of our social structure this century, the twentieth, may bring to pass, the settlements can make no small contribution to the security of its foundations.

Toynbee Hall was opened in 1884 by a group of young men from Oxford and Cambridge. It was in the congested White Chapel District of East London, the first actual social settlement. Fifty years later, Paul Kellogg, editor of the Survey, wrote that there existed "roughly, six hundred settlements on four

continents which had their prototype in the original household of Toynbee Hall." In these fifty years and after, settlement dwellers learned, not by exploring "slums," but by daily contact with their fellow men, the need for better housing, for conditions to make health possible for masses of men, for sounder education for adults as well as for the young, for decent conditions of labor and for wages to make decent homes a reality - in short, for all that democracy must include it is to become what we like to call it, "a way of life."

Born in a period of laissez-faire economy and of a democracy chiefly political, the settlements have now a part to play in a period when economic democracy has become the crying need of the world which desires to be a peaceful world. Of the possible service of the settlements in this new period of world democracy, Paul Kellogg writes thus:

The propensity of neighborhood workers to be forerunners, encouraging the public to take over what they have proved workable, has given currency to the notion that the settlements have been putting themselves out of business. Yet their usefulness can scarcely be ended by having the things they have discovered adopted by the community; for their primary function is to discover, and that would still be theirs. They are grounded in their neighborhoods and change with them, draw in their neighbors and promote self-organization along natural lines, and this may be the secret of their persistence in the midst of change. In the clashes ahead for economic control, the settlements will have a part to play, as in the nineties, as centers of contact, understanding and impulse.

Centers of control and understanding - out of these may come not merely impulse but the sense of our common responsibility to maintain a democracy, political economic, moral. Such a responsibility fully realized may become a moral purpose strong enough to shape a peaceful world. May the settlements, help us to find and to express this moral purpose and thereby shape a democratic America.