HAND-BOOK FOR FRIENDLY VISITORS AMONG THE POOR

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Hand-book for Friendly Visitors Among the Poor by Charity Organization Society

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CHARITY ORGANIZATION SOCIETY

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Trieste

HAND-BOOK

FOR

FRIENDLY VISITORS

AMONG THE POOR.

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY THE

Charity Organization Society

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

CHARITY MUST DO FIVE THINGS:

1. Act only upon knowledge got by thorough investigation.
2. Relieve worthy need promptly, fittingly, and tenderly.
3. Prevent unwise alms to the unworthy.
4. Raise into independence every needy person, where this is possible.
5. Make sure that no children grow up to be paupers.

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PREFATORY.

THIS Hand-Book has been prepared for the guidance of all persons who are engaged in efforts to elevate the character of the poor, to stimulate their forethought and self-reliance, and to aid them in the unusual and unavoidable emergencies that befall them. It is drawn largely from the experience of those, both in Europe and America, who have for years been earnest seekers after the wisest methods of dealing with the poor.

Its suggestions and directions to Friendly Visitors are reproduced from the publications of the Associated Charities of Boston, the Charity Organization Societies of Philadelphia and Newport, and the writings of Miss Octavia Hill, Rev. J. W. Kramer, M.D., Rev. S. Humphreys Gurteen, Mr. Robert Treat Paine, Jr., Prof. Robert Ellis Thompson, Ph. D., and others of authority in this branch of social research.

The Domestic Suggestions (reproduced by permission), are the same which were prepared by Miss Juliet Corson for the Manual of the Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity and which she sees no reason to alter or enlarge. Should the proper time come, within the experience of this Society, when it will feel justified in supplying to the working classes a guide to cheap and wholesome cookery, it has the promise of the requisite matter from the same excellent source.

Our thanks are due to Dr. Chas. D. Scudder for the Sanitary Suggestions, kindly and carefully prepared by him ex-

pressly for this little volume; and also to Messrs. J. Van Vechten Olcott, Charles De H. Brower, Chas. W. Dayton, Walter D. Edmonds, Wheeler de F. Edwards, for their laborious service in the preparation of the compact digest of many of the laws of the State of New York which pertain to the protection and discipline of the dependent classes, and also largely affect the welfare and condition of all grades of society.

By order of the Committee,

CHAS. D. KELLOGG,
Organising Secretary.

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GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

TO

FRIENDLY VISITORS AMONG THE POOR.

1. The best means of doing good to the poor is found in friendly intercourse and personal influence. The want of money is not the worst evil with which the poor have to contend; it is in most cases itself but a symptom of other and more important wants. Gifts or alms are, therefore, not the things most needed,—but sympathy, encouragement, and hopefulness.

2. In a scheme of systematic visitation, experience has shown that the best results are obtained by limiting the number of families to be visited by one person; from three to five being enough to exhaust the time for attention and friendly care that any one visitor has to bestow. Experience is sure to curtail rather than enlarge this number.

3. Never state the object of a visit as being to see whether any *relief* is wanted, for the visits of one who is regarded only as a person from whom something is to be got are rather worse than useless. Let it be seen that your visit is intended to establish friendly relations, and is prompted by a neighborly interest.

4. Be on your guard against encouraging idleness, improvidence, or grosser misconduct, directly or indirectly. Injudicious procurement of alms for the family of a drunkard, or a dissolute, idle, or shiftless person, will invariably do more harm than good.

5. The best method of assisting deserving people when in need, is to help those who are able to work to find employment. In seeking employment for the poor, care should be