UNIVERSITY AND SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS

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University and social settlements by W. Reason

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W. REASON

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PREFACE

HATEVER may be said as to the non-originality of the idea to which all University and Social Settlements owe their origin, the form in which that idea is embodied is essentially modern. It has been determined by those social forces of the Industrial Revolution which have made the several grades of rich and poor to live in separate quarters of our large towns. The Settlement is, therefore, a new feature of our civilisation, and deserves a close and careful study, not only as a result in itself, but as an experiment which contains the possibilities of other far-reaching results in their turn. In one sense it is more than an experiment; it is an accomplished fact. No doubt it will continue to develop, and it would be rash to predict that this development will be bounded by the lines which have already been laid down. But that the Settlements will go on increasing, both in numbers and in strength, we are assured by the experience of the thirteen years and more which have elapsed since the foundation of Toynbee Hall.

The present volume is a contribution to the study of this movement. Settlement literature in this country is not large, and will easily bear additions. Besides the annual output of reports, etc., there is only, so far as I know, Mr Knapp's "Universities and the Social Problem."

Even in the few years that have elapsed since the publication of that book there have been large developments; and,
apart from this, the method of treatment left ample room
for another work on the subject.

There are still many people who ask with a puzzled air, What is a Settlement? To such it is not easy to give a brief answer that satisfies all the requirements of a logical definition, for Settlements are living things, and differ in proportion as they are alive. For this reason, no attempt has been made to bring the different papers "into line" in any way, save only in the distribution of subject-matter. that the book might be as complete as possible within the allotted limits. For the different Settlements have been founded by bodies of people of widely differing kinds, whose aims, as consciously set forth, seem at first to be also far apart. The only candid method was, therefore, to let each paper speak for itself. It will be seen that almost all the writers have not only been engaged in Settlement work, but have had the chief direction and the shaping of the policy of the institutions which they represent. might well have been expected, under these conditions, that the views expressed would have shown considerable divergence, and they are, in fact, by no means uniform. At the same time, there is easily discernible a strong underlying unanimity of purpose, and a remarkable agreement on fundamental points.

Hearty thanks are due to all who have contributed to

It was a disappointment to me that the late head of Oxford House, now the Bishop of Stepney, could not himself write the article on "Settlements and Recreations," for none could speak with such authority as he; but pressure of other business forbade this. He very kindly, however, allowed me to use whatever he had written on the subject, and it will be seen that I have made free use of this permission. The sections borrowed from his writings are clearly distinguished in the text of the article, and it must be distinctly understood that here, as in all other places, each writer is responsible only for his own words. I am also very greatly indebted to my colleague, Mr Alden, at whose instigation I undertook this book, for much help and many valuable suggestions.

One very important point remains to be noticed. There is no article dealing with the religious aspect of Settlements. This is not at all because there is no religion in Settlements, or that none of them do religious work. On the contrary, a glance at the Settlement Directory will show that a very large proportion set out with this as their central aim. It is rather because, as a second glance over the same section will show, it would have been impossible to do justice to the subject. For these Settlements have been founded not only by Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, Friends, and other religious bodies, but also by those who object to the association of any form of distinctively religious work with Settlement activity.

It is obvious that there are very few indeed who could handle the subject with authority and ability, and at the same time fairly represent all the differing elements. At any rate, no one was available.

Still, in an account of what Settlements actually are, it ought, merely as a matter of fact, to be clearly stated that in a good number of them, and these by no means the least influential, the religious aim is the central one, round which the others find their places; or perhaps I should better express the minds of those concerned if I said that it was that which inspires all the rest. As to the particular form which this religious activity takes in each Settlement, and the nature and quality of the results, no one may judge the other, "To his own Master he standeth or falleth." Nor is it possible to judge from the outside, by religious statistics or inspectional visits, as to the "spirituality" of Settlement work. One thing is happily certain; within the Settlements and between the Settlements there is no religious strife. If any such unhappily arise, it will come from the outside, from those who are more ready at criticism and judgment than at lending a hand. The aim of the Settlement itself is not strife, but helpfulness.

In compiling the "Directory of Settlements," I have been much assisted by the "Bibliography of Settlements" compiled for the American College Settlements Association by John P. Gavitt of Chicago Commons. This is a most useful little work to all who are interested in the study of this movement, though, naturally enough, it has required