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Between Client and Community

A STUDY IN RESPONSIBILITY IN SOCIAL CASE WORK

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CONTENTS

These studies were sown in questions—many of them —from students and social case workers in many states. They were reaped in discussion in sessions of the Milford Conference and in seminars in Cincinnati, Saint Louis, and Chicago, in Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York, and Boston during 1933 and 1934. The thinking is not the writer's in any sense of possession, for too many whose names are not even known have contributed to it. In another sense, it is so much the warp and woof of the experience of a score of years that it is not easy to tell what is thinking and what is lived experience. Like living, it is full of assumptions, of the kind we have to make to proceed at all. Is this a passing or a permanent trend? If permanent, is it significant? If it means so and so, what of it? The facts about what is seen to happen are for anyone to know. The interpretation of their meaning involves much of personal belief and will not be accepted by those whose interpretations are made of different mind stuff. But, after all, one can only give what he sees, as truly as he can, and let the other make what he can of it for himself. If events prove him wrong, he can only say so, and begin again. As the French proverb has it, Il faut reculer pour mieux sauter. *In the meantime, we can act with courage only as we believe with conviction.*

The Little Deck House
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I. CLIENT OR COMMUNITY?[1]

Social case work is, by definition, an individual approach to human beings in trouble. In the period of nearly twenty years since the outbreak of the Great War, social case work in this country has become increasingly concerned with the individual as a person—and this in spite of the fact that during the war, and again because of the economic depression, society has been organizing for large-scale collective action to meet emergent needs. These years have seen the extension of social case work to large numbers of people who never before had occasion to come into contact with it. If it would seem that pressure of numbers of clients would tend to stereotype methods of approach, there seems ground for believing also that the new clientele, with habits of self-direction and a tendency to question agency methods, has played a part in breaking up old patterns of procedure. The families of men in service during the war accepted as their right whatever easement of their situation the government or the Red Cross could offer them, and there has been a rising tide of sentiment in favor of the community's acknowledging its collective responsibility for the victims of an economic disaster the origins and effects of which are far beyond individual control. The very pressure of numbers, moreover, has made it necessary as never before to call out all the initiative and resourcefulness of the clients themselves, and this has made case workers very

[1] Part of this chapter was given as a paper at the annual Convention of Travelers' Aid Societies, Detroit, Michigan, June, 1933, under the title, *The Social Case Worker's Relationship to Clients When the Community Demands Action of a Definite Sort.*

conscious of their need to know their clients better as persons, lest they fail to reach their potential contribution to the solution of pressing problems.

Social case work has not only enlarged its clientele, but it has also developed into a skilled service what used to be done incidentally when a case worker advised parents about the rearing of their children. Psychiatric social work, following the war, found fields of usefulness, in turn, in the care of cases of "shell shock," in the social rehabilitation of arrested or recovered cases of mental illness, in the prevention or treatment of delinquency, and finally in a counseling service on the problems of normal children who were having difficulties in growing up with the "problem" parents they had. Parents who had never known a social agency began to seek the service of child guidance clinics for themselves and their children. Since they could get nowhere else a combined study of their problem from the medical, psychological, psychiatric and social angles, many came who had been accustomed to pay for professional service and who represented every class in society. Psychiatric social work has learned much from psychology and psychiatry about how to deal with people, and much from its clients about avoiding authoritative methods. The very nature of its subject matter, moreover, lends itself ill to dogmatic treatment. A tangle of family relationships or the reactions of a child to a complex home situation can only be solved by a cooperative consultation to find a solution which shall be the client's own. I suppose it is not strange that knowing clients as individuals and in relation to the more intimate aspects of their life should bring increasing respect for them as persons (even though they are seen as badly failing persons) and a wish to see them use to the utmost, and increase if possible, their powers of self-determination. This trend has not been peculiar to psychiatric social work but has permeated to some degree the practice of high-grade social case work everywhere.

Some of the concepts of psychiatry which have become everyday knowledge have undoubtedly helped these trends. For instance, there is the concept that behavior has its causes deep in the emotional life of the person, that it is the resultant of all the forces in his life at a given moment, that it can not be judged as "good" or "bad" but must be seen as a symptom of his life adjustment. Behavior must first be understood, then; and, if society or the happiness of the individual requires a change, it must be treated as intelligently as a

physical symptom would be treated. In the past three years still another vitalizing concept has changed our thinking about social case work. During the early period of acute professional self-consciousness the relationship between the case worker and the client, as persons, was looked upon as something inevitable but to be reduced to a minimum in favor of the professional ideal of being "objective." There was some revolt against the earlier use of personal influence for "uplift." Undoubtedly, some of the social workers of the past had used their clients for their own emotional gratification (as some do today), while others had wrought seeming miracles in helping their clients to changes of personal attitude without knowing how they did it. Nevertheless, social workers of the new age objected to the way their predecessors had talked about "doing good." They had to pretend a scientific indifference to what their clients thought of them personally while they worked as hard as anyone ever did for the very good they were ashamed to prate about. Psychoanalytic studies have now begun to show that the dynamic of change, in either attitude or behavior, lies in a relationship to a person. Since attitudes favor or stand in the way of the solution of many problems of social adjustment, the relationship between the case worker and client becomes a matter of extraordinary importance. We still know far too little about how it works, but it is now possible to demonstrate in social case work that contact with an understanding, mature personality does something to relieve anxiety and fear and to release latent powers in the client. We now dare to admit this relationship as a proper object of study and see a need to learn how to use it in a sound way for professional service.

All of these trends toward understanding and treating clients as individuals have led to an increased attention to the clients' goals rather than the social case worker's goals in the treatment relationship. Miss Robinson[2] has shown this clearly in the book which has given stimulus and direction to much of this thinking. In accepting a relationship which may change him personally, the client has a right to decide whether he wants treatment, and how much. He must be willing to accept responsibility for using what his professional counselor has to give, in such a way as to make it his own and to apply it himself to his problems of adjustment.

[2] Virginia P. Robinson, *A Changing Psychology in Social Case Work*, University of North Carolina Press, 1930.

This introduces something very like the psychology of private practice into a professional group which has, on the whole, been thinking heretofore largely in terms of community welfare, or at least in terms of the welfare of individuals as that might be seen by a professional representative of the community. The fact is that social case workers are today meeting many clients who represent the same social and economic groupings as themselves and who have the attitudes of people who are used to paying for medical advice and would do the same, if they could, in seeking help for problems of personal adjustment for themselves and their children. Unless we convince our clients at the outset that their relationship to the social case worker is something quite different, we are likely to find some of them reacting as they would to a doctor or lawyer whom they might employ. Perhaps the look of our offices, our professional manner, and the traditions of the community about social work have already set the stage for the attitude that to come at all is an admission of failure and a sacrifice of personal independence. I would raise the question whether this is an attitude toward social case work that we wish to have continue. If we prefer that communities should come to regard our profession as one whose service can be secured by any person on terms consistent with his self-respect as well as with his means, now would be the time (when changes are the more possible because everything is in a state of flux) to educate our communities to that conception.

What does a person expect of a professional service for which he pays? I suppose there is implied a body of knowledge which he does not have, and the trained mind of the professional person prepared to apply that knowledge to the problems he wants solved or to the doing of things which he can not do for himself, i.e., perform an operation or take charge of his case in court. The ethics of the professional relationship has received a great deal of attention from physicians and lawyers. The legal right of "priviliged communication" protects them from having to reveal on the witness stand information which has come to them in confidence in the discharge of their professional duties. A doctor must, however, report births, deaths, and infectious diseases to the proper authorities, and when this conflicts with the interest of his patient he still has no choice, if he is a man of honor, but to warn the patient that he must conform with the law. The same is true when the law lays down conditions under which certain drugs may be prescribed, or forbids certain operations. Paying for a professional service does not, then, imply that one has bought a slave. The professional person undertakes to work for the welfare of the patient or client, but within limits set by his personal and professional code. Within those limits, the public feels that it has a right to expect singleness of devotion to the interests of the individual. He, in return, in paying a fee agreed upon, considers that he has discharged his obligation and that his professional adviser is in honor bound not to make further profit for himself out of conduct of the case. In a recent legal case which has caused much discussion a national organization which had sent able lawyers to the defense of the accused withdrew them (or, rather, the lawyers themselves resigned) because they believed that another organization which was taking part in the defense was making political capital out of it. They said they could not undertake the case if any object other than the defense of their clients were being served.

How much does non-payment of a fee affect the relationship to the professional person? I can only report here what seems to be commonly believed, without any claim for validity in the individual case. The patients of free medical clinics seem to expect some inconvenience in time and place, some service from less experienced practitioners but under supervision of the older men, some use of their cases for teaching, if they are interesting enough. They do not expect to be treated incompetently or maltreated for purposes of experiment. There are some indications that it is harder for the free than for fee-paying patients to terminate treatment on their own initiative, but perhaps this is only because free clinics often have energetic social workers to follow cases. In medicine, then, where paid service is well known, the public apparently expects much the same ethical standards from physicians in free as in paid work.

While there can be no disagreement, I suppose, on the theoretical point that professional service must be genuinely devoted to the welfare of the client or patient, there is room for difference of opinion on the question of what is his welfare and who is to determine it. In proportion as the person's difficulty is recognized as beyond his knowledge, obscure and complex, he is willing, probably, to defer to the judgment of his professional adviser, expecting, however, to be consulted when a question of heavy expense or serious operation is involved, or when there is a choice of equally valid procedures which might matter to him personally more than any outsider could know. The field of social case work, involving questions about his home,

his work, and the rearing of his children, has always been one in which the average man felt competent to make his own decisions. Increasingly, social case work has entered into social relationships about which are tied strong emotions. It would seem that clients in social case work would be especially likely to expect to define welfare in their own way. What, however, is the case? We have seen how increased regard for the individual has come into the thinking of both clients and case workers at a comparatively recent date. The tradition, through most of the years of the development of social case work, has been that the case worker is a representative of the community and is under obligation to see that the community's interests are safeguarded. Both social workers and clients have had to accept the idea that application to a social agency involved, if not an actual stigma of failure, at least an admission that to be assisted meant also to be directed to some degree. Not to accept this has been to be "uncooperative" with treatment. The social case worker has traditionally, then, assumed a right to determine what the client's welfare was, even though the subject matter on which she was advising was less removed than that of law and medicine from the area in which most people feel competent to decide for themselves.

There is another reason for this assumption, of course: the fact that social case work today is supported financially not by the individual who is served but by the community. Whether this is done by taxation or by the contributions of individuals or groups who have accumulated a surplus from the resources of the total community matters little. The privileged members of organized society, or its elected representatives, are saying in some fashion that there are forms of need, for goods or service, which the community can not afford to allow to continue. If the individuals concerned do not agree with the community in these matters, then someone must see that their need is met in spite of themselves, or at least that they do what the community asks of them. Helpless old people are not allowed to die uncared for in their homes, though they might perhaps prefer that to being taken to an institution. Children must be vaccinated though their parents object. Delinquent behavior must cease or the non-conforming person must lose his liberty. These necessary forms of direction of the individual have been found to work vastly better when they were applied by the case-work method—that is, by somebody who knew how and could take the time to see why certain

people stood out as exceptions to a community program, what their needs were, and how they could be met, if possible by using resources in the people themselves. Individuals who resisted community demands might have to be coerced, but, even so, a personal contact was found to ameliorate a situation in which the social rebel might otherwise develop only a blind hatred of society. The community appreciates such service enough to pay for it—at least where the results are sufficiently tangible to be known.

Summing up, then, the community has a stake in the social welfare of the individual, as it does in his health whenever that affects the health of other people, and provides social service as it does health service. I suppose local communities differ greatly in the degree to which they are conscious of health and social needs, in the degree to which they are disturbed by deviations from community standards, and in the degree to which they insist on doing something about them. All this makes social service, regardless of who pays for it, very much a community matter, welcomed or resented by individuals in proportion as they do or do not see its value to them. If they are driven by acute financial need to turn to the community for aid, they may well project upon the social service which accompanies the administration of relief the resentment which really belongs to the situation in which they find themselves. The most understanding treatment may seem to them an unwarranted invasion of their privacy although they would resent far more a contact quite without any personal interest in them. No one who has been deprived of the right to work and provide for himself and his family is likely to be entirely reasonable. Social case work shares in the good will or ill will which is felt toward the community as a whole.

In this setting, sponsored by the community for ends which it wants to have served by skilled work with individuals who might otherwise be a burden to it, social case work finds itself today beginning to be sought by individuals who have no financial need and are not social rebels, but who would like something like a private counseling service for problems of personal adjustment. Some colleges are developing student counseling, with as much emphasis on making it possible for students who want it to seek it without embarrassment as upon the prevention of tragedies of college failure which give concern to the administration.

The relationship between case worker and client when the latter comes voluntarily, knows that he wants counseling for personality

problems, and is able to cooperate intelligently in therapy is a very satisfying one to the case worker. We have seen that it can never, even in private practice of a profession like medicine, be free from some control by the community, but there is at least the illusion that the case worker is free to follow the client's need, whatever that may be. Social case workers who have had enough cases of this type to get something of the psychology of private practice have, it seems to me, tended to feel that *this* is the real thing in case work. All else, such as finding resources in the environment, was a concession to this time of transition. If only their vision of skilled service for personality problems could be realized, clients would leap to make the necessary changes in their life situation and case workers would not need to concern themselves with details of adjustment of the environment.

The unfortunate thing about this point of view is that it predisposes the case worker to take an interest in the emotional problems of the clients to the exclusion of other difficulties and other forms of service. The client's need is not made the first consideration in choice of methods of treatment. If his need is for a very minor service, we find it absurd today that his whole life should be subjected to minute scrutiny before that need can be met. We forget, however, that a few years ago when a "complete diagnosis before treatment" was the accepted fashion in case work, we thought it quite reasonable to insist on the detailed study which the case worker needed for professional security. Today we perhaps fail to see that we are again sacrificing the client to our own interest of the moment when we insist that he must have emotional problems or we will take no interest in him. If we have a good enough sense of humor we may even at times see our likeness to the old-time religious missions which wanted their major interest, a conversion at the mourners' bench, to precede their providing for a man a hot meal and a bed for the night.

Actually, it would seem that, since human beings need all sorts of things—ranging from food and shelter to recreation, education, friendship—and since attitudes play a part in their getting or not getting all of these, there can be no such a thing as a social case work that does not take account of attitudes. But I am equally sure that no case work can succeed in isolating a person's attitudes and treating them apart from the conditions of his life in which they find expression. I wonder if we, ourselves, do not get our best counseling

help when it comes in the course of contacts for other things. It is hard to admit so much of failure in directing our own lives as to ask for a formal appointment with a professional person for counsel. Do we not rather find ourselves talking to someone, just anywhere, who seems to have a gift for understanding? I am reminded of a woman who lays her state of spinsterhood to the fact that her mother would not allow her to have more than one date with any boy unless he would declare his intentions to be serious. But who wants to announce serious intentions the first time he meets a girl? And who would not prefer to avoid, if he can, making his problems seem of great moment when he is not at all sure that he will have the courage to do anything about them? How shall clients and skilled counselors be sure of meeting, if not at the crossroads of life where ordinary traffic passes by?

The foregoing question was part of a dilemma of which the writer became very conscious when the National Association of Travelers' Aid Societies asked for a paper on social case work at their annual convention in 1933. This Society has a more fortunate opportunity than most social agencies to meet people at the crossroads in more than a literal sense. But is it free to do case work of the individualized type which we have been describing when it is constantly subjected to the demand that it serve the interests of the community?

Travelers' Aid service is primarily for people who are unable to take care of themselves, whether by reason of age, mental or physical disability or merely because of being away from the resources of a familiar locality. They may or may not want direction. They may or may not dare to tell the truth about whence they came or whither they are going. The community in which they happen to land wants to know, for its interest goes no farther than that they receive temporary care which may lead to self-maintenance or to their getting back to the locality which is responsible for them. Travelers' Aid workers stand between the community, which expects them to act in its interest, and clients who want to be assisted to carry out plans of their own. The very ability of the case worker to inspire confidence and hence to win the client to tell his story may seem to be a betrayal, if that story leads to his being sent back to a place from which he had hoped to escape. A Travelers' Aid worker knows better than anyone else that regulations concerning legal settlement are often cumbersome, hard to apply, even unjust to the individual

at times and hampering to the larger social good if they prevent such mobility of population as will enable people to find localities in which they can definitely better their condition. Yet she has to bear her part in carrying out those regulations. How does this affect her relationship to the sobbing, frightened, or defiant client who sits at her desk?

This question about Travelers' Aid work became one of extraordinary interest when it was seen as an instance of a larger problem that social agencies of all types must face in some degree. Does sponsorship by the community involve a case worker in a conflict between loyalty to the community and to the client that must spoil the integrity of the case-work relationship? How is this question answered in various settings by agencies which take seriously the question of professional integrity?

In the spring of 1933 there was time for no more than a study of a series of case records of Travelers' Aid Societies and for the formulation of the problems to be faced in a similar study of other agencies. The following paragraphs summarize the conclusions that were then reached.[8]

Superficially, it might seem that the lure of case work in the manner of private practice is not for one who is working in the Travelers' Aid service. Fundamentally, however, may not the best of it—the attitude of mind as distinguished from certain procedures—be used there as well as anywhere else as soon as one has the necessary training and skill to apply the general concepts to the special conditions of Travelers' Aid work? True, the Travelers' Aid worker can not wait for clients to come and ask for counsel. She picks them up, or they are picked up by someone and brought to her. She can not give them an indefinite time to think over whether they want service, nor can she leave it to them to come back or not as they wish, as agencies may do with clients who are self-maintaining in their own homes. Procedures are clearly different when the community expects the social worker to be a professional parent until her clients are otherwise provided for. Nevertheless, a study of case records shows that there is in the practice of the best Travelers' Aid Societies the same consideration for the rights of the client as a human being which is shown in the best case work anywhere. There are limiting conditions for the practice of any profession, necessities which the practitioner must explain to the person as binding upon them both. The Travelers'

[8] From the paper referred to above (footnote 1).

Aid worker may have more of these than others, but the principle is the same. She says, "We shall have to do so and so. Is there any way that I can help you to adjust to this necessity?"

Secondly, there need not be the concealment of purpose, the tricking people into admissions, which we associate with detective methods, and which we can not associate with a sincere relationship of a professional person with a human being in need of help. A better understanding of how human minds and emotions work has made clear that information gained by force or guile is not only unreliable but useless for any practical purpose. One may get the name of a place of residence by some trick, but if the person is not prepared to accept a plan for his return there, he will not stay were he sent back twenty times. If he feels that the Travelers' Aid Society has got the best of him, he will next time seek help from some source far less safe for him or the community. An understanding of the principles of psychiatry now gives a very different conception of interviewing from that which made it a skilled (and, if possible, painless) method of extracting facts as if they were teeth. Like teeth, some came hard, and some broke in the pulling. Having gone after facts by this method we sometimes found that what we got were not even facts.

Interviewing is now seen as skilled listening, with questions where these will help the person to express, and get clear to himself perhaps, the story of how he has lived and felt which is hidden in everyone and which is seeking outlet wherever there is no fear of condemnation for any part of it. The psychiatric principle that behavior is a symptom of life adjustment makes it possible not to condemn but to understand. We now learn to listen, alert for the things about himself that the person is striving to say, no matter in how roundabout a fashion. These things about how he feels may vitally affect the success of a plan for such practical necessities as work or shelter, yet we miss them too often because we have not a mind trained to understand them. One may object that such interviews take too long. But what is more costly in time and money than plans made hastily, without adaptation to the needs of the person who must carry them out? And is there not some preparation for the acceptance of an unwelcome necessity if the person feels that he has at least had a fair chance to talk out what he wants with someone who understands?

After all, then, it seems to me that the relationship to the client in an agency like the Travelers' Aid may (in spite of a rather large

amount of community-ordered procedure as compared with some other forms of case work) be of the finest quality obtainable anywhere. It seems to depend on the bigness of the personalities concerned, just as does any relationship. Since the clients come big or little spiritually as they happen to, the case worker must make up with her skill and understanding and sincerity for the pettiness, cringing fear, or childish defiance which may be the client's problem. She must be skilled enough to get her clients out of themselves to a point where they can trust a human being for a little while—and she must not abuse that trust. She must be honest with them in telling them where necessity binds both her and them. She may sometimes have to protest on their behalf against community demands that work injustice. She will keep her professional integrity by being too big to accept a slavish following of either community or individual. And no one is in better position to know how much bigger than local conditions are human needs and aspirations.

This preliminary study raised more questions than it answered. In addition, the months that followed it in 1933 were full of changes in the relationships between government and social work, which emphasized old problems and created new ones. It became increasingly clear that the trend in private social case work toward giving up authority in favor of a freer counseling relationship between client and case worker was balanced by a counter trend toward a greater responsibility on the part of the community as a whole for the minimum subsistence needs of individuals when economic disaster made them unable to provide for themselves. Did this latter trend mean governmental interference with individual initiative and self-direction? Was the government taking on more authority at a time when case workers in private agencies found it advisable to do with less? If so, what about the social workers employed by local, state, or national units of government to administer their new functions of relief giving, caring for homeless and wandering people, and so forth? The same questions asked about the Travelers' Aid Societies appeared again. Could these social workers be public officials and at the same time give a fine type of case-work service?

A further change in the year that elapsed between the study of Travelers' Aid records and the writing of the chapters which are to follow came to have great significance for social work. It was the willingness on the part of the people of the United States to consider

the necessity of change. The National Conference of Social Work of 1933 had been outspoken in its criticism of intolerable conditions of destitution among millions of unemployed citizens, but there was still much talk of temporary and emergency planning. By 1934 the Conference had settled down to facing a necessity for changes in the structure of social and economic life. This might mean trying experiments, and it would certainly mean a long, hard pull of readjustment with no possibility of going back to things as they had been. The Conference faced an unknown future but accepted, even with exhilaration, the challenge of change.

This challenge was not only to seek new methods more adapted than the old procedures to altered conditions. It was a challenge to social case work itself to show cause why it should continue to exist. Is the present abundance of social case work a sign of a deteriorating society? Is social case work perpetuating starvation wages and degrading working and living conditions while it attempts to fill the gap until the forces of change can be made effective? Are those forces delayed for millions while social case work relieves a little the misery of a few hundreds? If the ability of a professional social case worker helps a client to attain emotional release and a measure of personal happiness does this result in his being a stronger person to grapple with evils and to overcome difficulties, or does it make him more dependent on others in any difficulty and more submissive under exploitation? Questions like these are being asked everywhere. They involve not only a social philosophy but the very quality of case work itself.

The chapters which follow deal in somewhat more detail with problems suggested by the preliminary study. There is an attempt to see social case work in relation to the changes going on about it and within it; to see it with some sense of what is transitory and what apparently has permanent significance; to see it as it stands between client and community, unable to ignore either or to serve either truly without maintaining its professional integrity. The bearing of the social philosophy of the case worker upon even the routine matters of daily practice is an Ariadne's thread discernible through all these explorations.

II. FOR ITS OWN SAKE

Back of the community's demand that the social case worker serve its interests lies a philosophy of community responsibility for the welfare of individuals which has undergone and is still passing through changes of immense importance. We can only try to catch the meaning of these changes for the present moment, with no way of prophesying their further movement or destination. So far, it seems that there is an enlarging concept, not so much of what the community owes the individual as of what the community owes itself in protecting individuals from suffering and deterioration. It pays for services which it considers essential to its life, and when need brings millions of the citizens of any country to a level of existence below that which would be tolerated for domestic animals, every community must consider what to do for the preservation of the life of the community itself. The debt slavery of agricultural share-croppers, the "shanty-villes" of dispossessed American citizens living on dumps and searching in garbage cans for their food, the thousands of young people driven from their homes by poverty and wandering over the land in search of work until hope is gone and a meal and shelter for the night becomes their only aim—these cry out unceasingly that if such conditions are not remedied without delay there is no future for civilization, there is no civilization now.

Community realization of this proceeds haltingly and with many reversals in the United States of America in 1934. To save money, thousands of children are deprived of schooling altogether and millions more suffer great curtailment of opportunities while the cry goes up for increased expenditures for the control of crime. Vast sums are spent on public works to create employment, increasing the burden of taxation on those least able to pay, while "economy" programs increase unemployment and reduce still further the purchasing power of those employed. Crops are destroyed to save the farmers while urban unemployed are urged to settle upon subsistence farms. This vast robbing of Peter to pay Paul and of Paul to pay Peter seems to make little if any change in the basic maldistribution of the nation's resources. For the moment social case workers are busy helping to set up machinery for the distribution of the necessities of life. Where are they heading in all this? How long can the community continue to pay for social service? These are matters of deep concern.

When we say that the community pays for social service, why do we think it is paying and for what? Protection for itself from the deterioration of its citizens is the answer which we have seen emerging. Little as the implications of this concept have been realized, it is at least something which can now be discussed and which is influencing to some extent the organization of public relief and unemployment programs. What is not realized, as government expenditures increase and taxes mount, is that evading responsibility for human welfare saves nothing in money, to say nothing of the absolutely irreplaceable values in human lives. The community pays in any case—in government dollars for the control of crime and preventable disease and for vast projects, such as, for example, the care of wanderers who need never have left their homes and local communities had the latter accepted their responsibility for meeting the disaster that left family after family without food or shelter.

We have been living in a period in which economic disaster became so widespread that it finally forced recognition of the insurance principle of pooling resources to meet what individuals could never command the means to meet alone. The related principle that individuals might buy this protection of pooled resources by payments in advance over a long period of prosperity breaks down whenever, in the cycle of business depressions, "good times" do not remain long enough to allow for recovery from the last period of loss. Unless a way can be found to end depressions, insurance will have to mean the pooling of the resources of the whole community so that its citizens may maintain a decent standard of living, if only because their consuming power is needed for its economic life and their deterioration means its own ultimate death.

Is the trend, then, toward social service supported by public funds? For the moment it seems so. In making the distinction between public and private funds for social work, however, are we not failing to see that the whole community also pays, or has already paid, for its private philanthropy? When we trace the fortunes which have made possible large gifts for philanthropy, we find that in the past the whole community did not claim the rich deposits of oil and minerals within its borders, nor the forests, the fisheries, and the productive lands, but it gave them into the hands of individual and corporate entrepreneurs with the right to take for themselves what profits they could in return for the risks they ran in developing this natural wealth.

Now, with a large part of its heritage gone in denuded forests, soil erosion, losses by fire and flood, waste of irreplaceable mineral and oil deposits, the whole community of the nation still regards itself without the right to develop the natural wealth of its territory for the welfare of all but looks to the "generosity" of those who have profited so abundantly at its hands.

Nor is this the whole story. It has been the custom in this country to aid with free land, government subsidies of money, and special protection from the operation of free competition industries supposedly unable to develop without this assistance. There have been immense profits from the increment of urban land values in cities forced to sudden growth by immigration and by concentration of population from rural areas; there have been the gains of speculative buying and selling, the control of new inventions, seldom by those who made them. It is to sources such as these that we trace the wealth in private hands today. But, after all, the whole community has paid and is paying for the diversion to private hands of what is urgently needed for the health and safety of all. It is paying still when industries are allowed to poison the health, cripple the bodies, and deform the minds of their workers by wages and conditions of work set by the demands of profit on investments, since it must care for the victims in some way, if only to bury them. For every large fortune the community has paid. It is paying even when those who have less than they need for themselves and their children make contributions to philanthropic "drives." It is paying when the poor share with each other what is insufficient to maintain an adequate standard of health and efficiency.

If the distinction between public and private funds for social service loses its significance when we lose our illusions regarding the sources of private wealth, it is also true that we find ourselves thinking inaccurately when we forget that the world has left behind the era of scarcity of material goods. Production has improved its processes until, with very moderate expenditure of human energy, there is machine power enough to produce not only subsistence but considerable comfort for all. It is the supreme task of such intelligence as we have to devise ways of distributing goods and employing human energies that shall leave none deprived and none choked with more than he can use. A "planned economy" would no more tolerate the swollen fortunes, the overproduction and waste which we see now than would the engineers of a city water system expect that its

reservoirs must break every so often and kill by drowning the people for whom the water was intended.

When we say that the community pays for social service we are not making clear what we mean by the community nor by social service. A modern metropolis with a population of one or two millions is not a community in the sense of the city-state of Athens which had a governing body of citizens able to assemble for discussion and to express their will. A nation like the United States, with the conflicting interests of agriculture, mining and manufacturing, financial and commercial centres, is scarcely a community in any simple sense. The citizens of a large urban community or of a nation can never assemble in any body representative enough to express the thinking of all. Even if they could, they are not, in this interdependent modern world, able to form a unit within which there may be some concerted thought and action. They may be as profoundly affected by what happens on the other side of the world as by what goes on within their borders. They are dependent even for knowledge of facts upon news services which are organized as commercial ventures and not for the public service of maintaining communication. With facts unknown and often distorted, and opinions voiced by the more articulate, determined, or noisy citizens, if not by those who try to speak for the community in order to serve ends of their own, the term *community* has not at all the meaning we would like to think it has—that is, an organized body of people in some natural grouping, geographical or other, thinking and acting intelligently on matters that concern their welfare. Yet we have seen that when the community pays for social service there is an obligation to serve its interests implicit in the support which it gives. Social case workers, even though they may be dealing with individuals rather than with the organization of social programs, can not ignore public opinion nor community standards. They must learn what the community thinks are its interests, and to what standards individuals must conform or suffer the penalties of community disapproval. What means have they of knowing what the vast inchoate mass of the population really thinks? How do even those who undertake to lead it form any conception of what the community as a whole will do?

The answer is that the machinery of government, inadequate as it is to express the popular will, is the only way of making enforcible the standards which we call those of the community. In matters

on which there is general agreement the laws and ordinances, interpreted by the proper authorities, are considered a safe guide. But these standardized expressions of the will of the community may become obsolescent some time before they are abandoned, and changes in the life of the community often demand some clear indication of the community's will long before there is any provision for giving it expression in law. In the large area of debatable matters, then, the community for purposes of action, expresses its will in bestowing some discretionary powers upon its authorized representatives; and it leaves other citizens, including social workers, to act upon their estimate of what the community will support them in doing. That estimate may or may not turn out to be correct, since it is determined as much by personal factors, such as a tendency to fear possible opposition or to like to arouse it, as by real knowledge of community sentiment. In the conduct of individuals, the community supports their estimate of its will less by approval than by allowing it to go unchallenged. Social case workers, then, like any other citizens, have to feel out what the community expects of them and build their relationship to the whole community and to their clients with this in mind. They are not authorized to speak for the community as social case workers, unless they are also public officials with powers of administrative discretion. Their estimate of community forces will be sound in proportion to the breadth of their understanding and the depth of their sympathy, not alone with their clients but with the whole mass of struggling, thinking, feeling men and women about them. Social case work is not a profession for a recluse.

As we look upon the field of social service today, we discern a yeasty stirring of old concepts and a radical change of viewpoints about what social service is, in the general community if not among case workers themselves. Sometimes, in fact, it seems that case workers may be the last to see it, blinded too often by their "vested interest" in their jobs and in old ways of doing things. We have talked much already of the passing of "lady bountiful" charity, which now seems as un-American as once it was taken for granted. Perhaps the professional case workers see more readily that their board members must be educated beyond paternalistic attitudes than they discern the subtle implications of some of their own assumptions of a right to direct clients because they are in a position to dispense

charitable funds. Be that as it may, we cannot afford to sleep through a period ripe for change, even though it may, as it probably will, turn upside down the old ways of thinking in which we have felt secure.

Changes in the public conception of what social service is have already begun to come. The belief that a "rugged" American can always find a way to provide for himself and family with only temporary help in extraordinary emergencies is melting away like snowdrifts in the sun before the actualities of an interdependent world in which there are no more frontiers and in which the man unbacked by large producing and distributing interests has no chance to produce or market goods. The farmer, once envied for his independence, can not control insect pests, pay for seeds, fertilizer, labor, and machinery and get a price that covers the cost of production. A man who has only his power of hand or brain to sell finds that someone else owns what alone would give him a chance to work, and there is no other place to go. The theory that social service is a temporary stop-gap, then, or a service for exceptional cases of misfortune or ineptitude, falls down before the impact of need that reaches more than half the members of many communities. We are beginning to hear the phrase, "the social services," meaning public education, public health work, parks and playgrounds, and to talk of public relief as one of the services which an enlightened community takes responsibility for when it is needed. That it should be needed for more than the exceptional case is of course a symptom of the sickness of our economic life, but no more than in an epidemic of disease can the community evade its responsibility for care of the victims, as well as for finding a way to prevent such disasters. No longer can communities take refuge in blaming the victims and in depriving them of the status of honorable membership in the group. Noticeably more now than a year ago the communities of the United States have begun to shoulder their burden and to accept the right of those in need to subsistence as much as to any public service.

Suppose that we could look with the eyes of a newcomer upon the social services as our government conceives them today. In the field of health, we find it unquestioned that the community should own the equipment to furnish a supply of pure water, and cities of sufficient size usually own their sewerage systems as well. Removal of ashes and garbage may or may not be a community function. The larger

cities supply much free public health service, hospitals, and sanitoria.

In education the community provides a system of free instruction through high school and, in some states, through the university. It is one of the major tragedies of the depression that in many localities public education is being lost entirely or much reduced. Taking it for granted as we do, it is surprising to learn that up to about 1850 the same arguments were advanced against public education as are now used against public relief—that it would pauperize and undermine the independence of individuals and unfit them for useful labor.

In the realm of maintaining communication and travel, there is now no question that the community should provide roads and bridges and maintain waterways and should provide a postal system including parcel post. It is hard to remember that each of these was once bitterly fought as a check on private enterprise and a source of corruption to the population. One wonders how long the government will continue to subsidize, but not own nor control, its railroads and its air mail service, and whether it will always be dependent on companies organized for commercial profit for communication by telephone and telegraph and for news distribution. Heated as the controversy usually is when the subject of public versus private ownership of these common services arises, it might puzzle an observer from another planet to know why, in one instance, public ownership is unquestioned and in another is viewed with alarm as if the foundations of the state were crumbling.

In the matter of protection of its members, a community would think it absurd to pay some private company for each fire put out or each citizen rescued from being the victim of a criminal act. In fact, it would be dangerous to put such a premium upon the occurrence of calamities. The collection of taxes is now not at all questioned as a function of government, yet history reveals that once it was common to farm out the taxes, and tax gathering was considered an occupation at which a man of initiative could make a considerable fortune. If we regard with abhorrence the farming out of convict labor to private industry, it is not because we are so far from complicity with that evil. In all these matters, community sentiment changes, becoming at times more sensitive to human values, at others more calloused. The point of value to us is that, if we are appalled by the amount of change we have to assimilate in a short time, there is at least the record of history that changes as great have always been going on, and that the very things we consider

fixed and sacred, even to the Constitution of the United States, were in their day thought to be highly dangerous innovations.

Summing up, we cannot delude ourselves into a belief that the community is a unified thinking and acting organism. The most we can say for the use of the term is that for practical purposes we obey the laws and ordinances that are supposed to express its will (at least until we can get other expressions of it), that we conform to the discretionary powers of those employed by the community as its representatives, and that as social case workers, unless we are also employed as community agents, we have no more right than other citizens to assume that our opinions are those of the community. Social case workers do their work under the limitations of community standards; they try to help their clients into sounder relationships with their social milieu and to interpret to the whole group the individual needs and attitudes of the people with whom they work. Whatever the source of their salaries, taxes or private funds, the community as well as their clients has a stake in what they do, for the community in the end pays for what is done and what is left undone. When the community swings, as it seems to be doing now, toward taking greater responsibility for the subsistence needs of its citizens, it is not for the first time assuming new functions or making a right something that was once regarded as a gift calling for a surrender of personal independence. Each of the social services of the community, now accepted, once went through a period of questioning, if not of violent opposition. The real question about a newly assumed responsibility is this: is it necessary for the life and well-being of the community as a whole? Is it so necessary that the community *cannot afford* to leave this need unmet or trust it to the hazards of private and initiative resources?

III. AUTHORITY AND SOCIAL CASE WORK

The community's assumption of responsibilities which were formerly thought to be outside its function has created a demand for a greatly increased number of public servants. Inevitably, they must carry heavy responsibilities and must have large powers of discretion, for no amount of regulation can cover all the details of administration of a social welfare program. How should these new public officials be prepared for their duties? As soon as communities grasp the idea that dealing with people in distress calls for something more than common sense (and too often need of a job has taken precedence over even that) it is natural that they should look to a professional group trained in interviewing and in the techniques of securing cooperation with people. Social case workers who have been accustomed to a very humble status in the eyes of the general public, a place among those who are considered sentimental or slightly queer, find themselves called into consultation by those high in authority and their skill commandeered for use in a nation's emergency. Administrative work is not new to them, but it now assumes an immense importance when, for instance, food has to be distributed to great numbers of starving people with the least possible delay. They have little time to think about individual clients in the mass of those in need. They have been selected by some unit of government because it was believed that their skill with people would be useful. They *have been* social case workers, but are they now? Are they perhaps something else for which there is as yet no professional name?

This question cannot be asked or answered without arousing a great deal of feeling, for conflicting loyalties are involved. Those who have fought for professional standards of training for private social work may transfer that loyalty to the field of public social work and want exactly the same training there. They may insist that every public relief department must do "case work" because at least a part of the public understands that "case work" must be done by trained people and to abandon the title would be to lose what little standard of training has been accepted. Others, loyal to "case work" as they conceive it, insist that what it is possible to do in connection with the administration of a public service must not be called case work. Case work must be developed as a sacred art, practiced only by those especially prepared and in setting in which conditions are favorable.

One point of disagreement between these two extremes of attitude is the question whether social case work involves, or is compatible with, the exercise of authority. It is clear that public officials have to represent the authority of the community. They have to ask information as their right because they must have facts on which to proceed with plans which involve spending the community's money or assuming the care and custody of individuals unable to care for themselves. They have to make decisions which deeply affect the happiness of individuals and groups. They have to carry further the function of protecting the community which we studied in the work of the Travelers' Aid Society.[4] Those who define social case work so as to exclude any exercise of authority hope to keep the term for something more specific, more highly "professional" than anything that could be practiced in connection with the duties of a public official. They are using what we have called the "psychology of private practice," and are probably limiting the term "case work" to the area of emotional problems in which authority is clearly out of place.

We are confused, then, by a disagreement over the definition of the term case work, and still more by the fact that the issues are not faced squarely. We react emotionally to our preconceived notions of what public relief bodies must be and do, to our loyalties and our jealousies over professional status, and then confuse ourselves and others by speaking zealously, for instance, for public social case work when subconsciously we hope it will fail, or by praising the "private practice" conception of case work when inwardly we think it snobbery. One longs for a strong fresh wind to blow away all these fogs of misunderstanding and let us look about to see how things really are.

What if we should take a holiday from our own emotional stake in what happens to social case work and clear our minds by considering what happens to the client? Millions of people in this country have reached or are soon to reach the end of their resources for getting the necessities of life. They come in contact with the machinery of distribution, and woe for them if it does not work honestly and efficiently! But it is not automatic like a penny vend-

[4] Chapter I, pp. 13f. Since that was written the Federal government has taken over some of the public functions of the Travelers' Aid Societies in its service for homeless transients.

ing machine; and they have no penny. There is a person to be seen and talked with at one or several points in the process of getting subsistence needs met. What kind of person is it? Is it one whose eyes dull till they see only male or female, married or single, in the procession of applicants whose blanks must be added to the pile on a desk? Or is it one who sees a *person,* unique in some way, wanting something needful for himself beyond the bare necessities for keeping life in the body, and that not exactly the same thing desired by anyone else? Is the relief administrator able to get through barriers of fear or resentment, humiliation or dumb misery? Can he stimulate courage or will he kill it? The job is not a mechanical one, though it must be done in the midst of machinery. The personal contact does very varied and intensely personal things to the clients. Is it case work? At least if it is an "individual approach to human beings in trouble" it meets the definition with which we started. It seems arbitrary to limit the use of the term case work to a counseling service sought by the client apart from any need for material help when equally skilled personal service should be an integral part of the administration of relief.

This need for individualizing is found in other types of public service. The following case from a state hospital illustrates how a hospital social worker may combine the duties of a public servant with the art of social case work.

Mrs. W was brought to the hospital for observation to determine whether she was mentally responsible for her acts. She was charged by an unmarried physician with waylaying him in his garage when he drove in late one evening, and threatening him with a pistol if he did not make good a promise which he claimed was only a product of her own disordered imagination. He said that he had treated her family from time to time but had given her no reason to believe that he would help her get a divorce from her husband, marry her and provide for her four children as she said.

Mrs. W puzzled the hospital psychiatrists. She told a story of love making and many promises on the part of the physician, of sexual relations during her husband's absence of several months, of the opening of a door of hope in an otherwise barren existence, and then of the doctor's refusal to see her or give any reason for his sudden indifference—until she was desperate to know where she stood with him. She told of trying to frighten him with an unloaded pistol into making a statement of what he intended to do, one way or the other. She seemed quite unaffected emotionally by the story or by the seriousness of her situation. The hospital psychiatrists wondered if she had sufficient intelligence to realize it, or whether she might be suffering from a psychosis characterized by dulling of emotional reaction.

The social case worker employed by the hospital was asked to make an investigation. She interviewed Mrs. W, who was uncommunicative. She saw the husband, who gave a clear picture of Mrs. W's personality—a girl of good education and a background of culture, an orphan brought up by relatives who cared little for her, ambitious, very capable, devoted to her children and making the best for them out of their slender means, always restless and blaming her husband for his frequent unemployment. She was swept off her feet, he believed, by an unscrupulous man who took advantage of a time of great loneliness and discouragement, and who thought, when it seemed likely that she would become a nuisance to him, that the surest way out for himself was to discredit any story she might tell by a charge that she was insane. The husband had not seen the slightest indication of mental disorder. A number of most reliable people in the community who had been close friends of Mrs. W confirmed the story of her mental ability and of her unhappiness in marriage to a man she respected but had never loved, of a hopeless struggle against poverty in which her ambitions for her children seemed destined to defeat. All the information gathered gave a high probability not only that Mrs. W was in her right mind, but that her story was true.

Another interview with Mrs. W revealed a marked change of attitude toward the social worker. She said she had not realized before that the social worker belonged to the hospital organization and had a right to ask questions bearing on the disposition of her case. She had thought her an unauthorized person from outside who was prying into her affairs, and she had written to the children not to tell anything if a social worker should come to the house to "pump" them. She said it was a relief to her to talk to somebody who would understand her feelings. She had been disturbed, almost frantic, over her situation, but kept telling herself that she must not cry or reveal her feelings in any way lest she be committed as an insane person. (Little did she realize that her unnatural calm had nearly had that result.) She asked that the social worker help her in any way she could, for she realized that whether they kept her at the hospital, away from her children, or she went back to the small town where her impulsive action had caused a great deal of gossip, she would have an exceedingly hard course to run.

The hospital social worker took up this case at the behest of the hospital, not the patient, and consulted sources of information without her consent. It happened in this case (as would not always be true) that the patient accepted her service as soon as she knew that the social worker was in an official position in the state hospital. If she had not accepted her, it would still be true that the hospital, charged by the community with a decision involving the liberty of a person who may or may not be dangerous, must, in fairness to both community and individual, know the truth in as far as it can be known. As a public servant, therefore, the case worker had to get information pertinent to the decision to be made.

In what way did she perform that duty differently because she was also a social case worker? She had none of the authoritative

methods or resources of a public prosecutor who may summon witnesses and demand that they tell what they know. She could only persuade people to give information because the interest of an individual and that of the community alike created an obligation to know before a momentous decision was made. However, the training of a social case worker in winning confidence, in setting people free to say what they believe, in helping them to see situations more clearly was undoubtedly of value in this form of fact finding. More than that, the social case worker brought the machinery of the law and of the determination of legal insanity into focus upon the individual involved. The bare facts of threats and an ugly story might have left little choice between the alternatives of jail or a commitment to a mental hospital. There was confessed misconduct, but some knowledge of the life behind it set it in different perspective from that of many another story of marital infidelity and carelessness of responsibility for children. The *individualizing* of a public service is the great contribution of a case worker in an official position. The authorities of that small town wanted to know what the action meant in terms of the individual, and hence their referral of the defendant to the hospital for psychiatric study. They were willing to accept the diagnosis of "not insane" and to release Mrs. W, especially as further pressing of the charge of making threats with a dangerous weapon was clearly not the desire of the physician involved.

In many cases the individualizing service of a social worker in a state hospital would have terminated when Mrs. W was discharged at the end of the period of observation as "not insane." But in addition to her rôle as a state employee, which the case worker had filled in a specialized way because she was a social case worker, trained to find the individual in the mass of cases of similar difficulty, the hospital social worker had been asked by Mrs. W to serve her in another rôle—that of counselor. This, she did, therefore, as she might have done in private case work. To make it easier for Mrs. W to see her occasionally, she arranged for some sewing for Mrs. W. When they met, it was Mrs. W's right to talk or not as she wished. Sometimes she did, and for a long time indicated, whenever she met the social worker, her appreciation of the help it was to her in taking up the old struggle again to know that she could talk with a professional person if she wished.

Illustrations might be brought to show how social case work may be used by administrative bodies to reach the individual with a service planned for the mass. We are quite familiar with the work of the visiting teacher who reduces the number of school failures by attention to home and personality problems. She may stand for a hated school system to child or parents and yet manage in some way to make a bridge of understanding between the two. The public relief worker also has to be the interpreter of rulings—concerning eligibility and amount and kind of relief—which may be clumsy and even unjust. He may be conscious of this without trying to apologize or make himself responsible for it. He is there to say, "This is the way it is. We citizens may find a way to get better conditions, but at present this is all we can do. I have to ask for such and such information which is required." His authority is real but limited to the area of the determination and relief of financial need. It is accepted because he is a representative of the whole community.

Slowly but surely, if we read rightly the signs of the times, there is melting away, in the thinking of both clients and relief administrators, the belief that to have to receive relief puts a man in a position in which "beggars must not be choosers" and in which the surrender of self-determination is the price of assistance. Clients are organizing and speaking out as men and women for the right to live like human beings. The demand for cash relief is an insistent demand for the self-determination involved in spending even a very little according to one's own judgment. Clients who paid taxes as long as they had property feel that as citizens they have a right to count on the whole community in a time of inescapable disaster, just as truly as they have a right to look to it for health and police protection.

The reality of a change of attitude about relief may account for the fact that highly trained case workers who have acquired their experience in, for instance, psychiatric agencies where there has been much freedom for the client have gone into positions in the public field with misgivings, only to find it unexpectedly satisfying. A rather large number have said to the writer that they will never go back to the private field of case work. They cannot always explain what they find. Only occasionally is there one who, for personal reasons probably, seems to enjoy the opportunity to exercise power. Most often there is a sense of democracy, of being a part of something that is linked with the whole community, which is like breathing free air in comparison with the concentration upon the client's welfare (even

in spite of him) which has often characterized private case work in the past. In spite of heavy case loads and far less comfortable working conditions in the public service, which is facing a sudden and vast expansion, the case workers who are equipped by education and personal qualities for the job have, on the whole, found it satisfying.

Some social case workers of long experience have been puzzled to account for the change of attitude on the part of clients. They have been accustomed to expect to find resentment or a sense of humiliation associated with the need to receive relief. They have tried to "save" the families who seemed to them most worth while from having to be classed as relief recipients even though they had to have private assistance. Case workers are now sometimes surprised, as was one private family society, at having some of their clients go voluntarily to apply for public relief to which they were eligible, and then return to the private agency for a counseling service which they had come to value. Surely the conditions under which public relief has been administered in the last few years have been anything but ideal. Staffs have been insufficient and ill prepared for the sudden expansion of need for relief work; adequate planning has been impossible because communities were assuming that the emergency would soon be over; funds have been in imminent danger of exhaustion, and conflicting administrative orders have made life chaotic for both clients and administrators. Can it be that clients actually prefer this to a private administration of relief which at present can at least count on more stable standards and more trained personnel? Can it be that there is something about the practice of private relief agencies, most of them combining relief administration with case work, which clients are glad to get away from even when they cannot get away from relief itself?

A possible answer has already been suggested in Chapter I. The assumption of authority to determine what is the welfare of the client has been passing out of the practice of social case work, slowly for a generation and rapidly for a decade. The change of clientele and of the subject matter of social case consultation have been important reasons for its going. Yet a tradition has lingered deep in the thinking of many communities and of social case workers themselves that application for assistance must mean a giving up of personal self-determination, a placing of one's self in the hands of another. There has been an invasion of privacy in the detailed investigation required. This was not limited to a study of pertinent

financial data but, so it must often have seemed to clients, there was no limit to the things about which the case worker might assume a right to ask nor upon which she would give advice.

Twenty years ago there was little to disturb the belief that a social case worker, by virtue of being such, was responsible for finding the best solution of the problem which the client brought. If the client did not intend to place the problem in the hands of the social agency, why did he apply? If he preferred his own judgment to that of trained and experienced case workers he should not have come and he might leave, but it was the social case worker's responsibility to see that he understood that the agency felt he was making a mistake. If he came back, he would have to admit that he had been wrong and submit more completely to the judgment of the agency.

Much was made of the analogy to the processes of medicine. The social case worker must first of all reach an accurate diagnosis of the total situation, of which the client undoubtedly saw only a part, and that, often, not the most important part. The presenting problem must be seen in the perspective of the whole life and from the differing angles of various observers. The social case worker must have abundant and accurate information in order to meet the responsibility of forming treatment plans. When clients objected to giving so much of their whole life's history to obtain a minor service, they were given a careful explanation of the analogy of a medical diagnosis. It was rather disconcerting to those who were still doing this in 1931 that Dr. Richard Cabot,[5] eminent in medical diagnosis, stated in his presidential address at the National Conference of Social Work that not even in medicine is an exhaustive diagnosis always necessary, and more than implied that an unnecessary one is an insult to the patient.

The untroubled confidence of social case workers in their right to make the terms upon which those who wanted their help must receive it was crumbling long before 1931. Those who, like Mary E. Richmond, had a sure instinct for the cultivation of the human spirit managed to do their work without doing violence to it, even though the organization of social work and the ideas of the times were not in sympathy with any such giving up of authority. Perhaps at times they over-persuaded their clients to agree with them, verily believing that they were doing God service, but at least these pioneers to

[5] *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*, 1931.

whom we owe so much did not browbeat nor threaten to gain their ends. Some, however, who loved the power which the dispensing of charitable funds placed in their hands used it in ways that have made charity a by-word in the poorer quarters of many cities to this day. Yet the philosophy of responsibility for the client was taken for granted by those who trained social case workers twenty years ago, and much later than that. One often heard case workers discussing whether they ought to break up a family or not, meaning, I suppose, whether they ought to keep together, by the money they were contributing to its upkeep, a family which would drift apart without such aid, or whether the members of the family might better be cared for in institutions. The point worth pondering is that the possession of a sum of money for distribution placed in the hands of social case workers such power as this over the lives of others.

Gradually explanations were added to defend what seemed a bit too arbitrary. "When we say we make a plan for a family, we mean it is their plan." "Of course we do not proceed without the family's consent." The case worker still took charge of the problem and planned for its solution. She learned, however, to do it "in a nice way." Interestingly enough, the new term, "the psychiatric approach," meant for some years to many people *getting around people so skillfully that they would not realize it and become disturbed about it.* To receive a volley of abuse from a client meant either that you had been clumsy in this or else, possibly, that the client was psychopathic. It was important to know which, and that, further, called for a great deal of information which the case worker had a right to demand as the price of service.

I wonder if we realize that we have been passing through a profoundly significant revolution in the philosophy of social case work. The older philosophy was logically carried out in the procedures described above, provided one granted its premise that the social case worker was responsible for the solution of the client's problems as the trained diagnostician (not necessarily as the client himself) saw them. To bear this responsibility the social case worker had to insist upon being given the necessary information and had to secure the client's cooperation in carrying out plans for the success of which the case worker expected to be accountable to the community.

In what way has the philosophy of social case work changed? The newer philosophy proceeds from a different assumption about the function of the social case worker and the locus of responsibility for

the solution of the client's problem. It assumes that the person who is having trouble with his adjustment to life is, nevertheless, a human being with every human being's right to make his own mistakes. He may need only a little help or a great deal before his adjustment to his social milieu is again going to his satisfaction. It is his to decide where he will seek help, and if he can get it from his own friends so much the better. If he seeks, or comes by accident, into touch with a professional counselor in the art of living, the service should be more skillful than unprofessional help but should carry no more penalties in loss of self-esteem (as if, indeed, everyone were to be prevented from getting professional service if he could possibly avoid it!) The problem is the client's and remains so. It is his to say when it is solved to his satisfaction. One may stimulate him to new desires and new understanding, but unless the matter is one upon which the community has made a definite pronouncement the client's decision is final. The aim of the efforts of the social case worker, then, under this philosophy, is not to make changes in the client's life and point to these as professional achievement, but to give the client something for his own development which he was not able to extract from life for himself and one which will increase his capacity for living with satisfaction in the social group. How this is done may be reserved for another chapter. Suffice it here to say that it brings the case worker into a relationship to the client and the community very different from the one traditional in social case work.

A thoughtful person may object at this point to the use of the term, philosophy. Is it not true, rather, that these are two different approaches or methods of procedure but that they involve no real difference in the case worker's or client's philosophy? Is not this only an old play in modern dress? This many believe, and thereby miss the whole point of the modern movement. The real difference is not in procedures, which may not be so very different under the two philosophies if they are carried out with equal consideration for the client. The difference is in the case worker's willingness to let the client be the ultimate source of authority in his own affairs. The case worker does not even *give* him that right. It is his already.

Most of us have had the experience of finding our own relatives and friends in difficulties about family relationships or the training of their children. We may be convinced that the children are being ruined. But do we, as we have been accustomed to say in discussions of social cases, "take the social responsibility for doing something

about this situation"? If we are wise, I am sure that we follow what has been described as the newer philosophy of case work; that is, we assume that the persons concerned are responsible for their own affairs. We perhaps throw out bits of information which may suggest to them how they could use our special skill if they wished, but we do not take charge of their problems nor go farther in advice-giving than we are asked to go.

Are we to suspect, then, that there may be a sense of class superiority in our sense of greater responsibility for the mistakes which our clients may be making in their lives than for similar mistakes on the part of our friends? Surely we are not more willing that our friends should suffer for their mistakes, but perhaps we have learned by experience with them that unsought advice not only has a bad effect on friendship but is quite useless in saving anyone from suffering. Why have we not learned the same thing from our clients? Perhaps we have. Or perhaps the lesson has been covered over by our feeling that the community expected us to act for social betterment and that if clients were uncooperative and did not appreciate our efforts there were always more with whom we might busy ourselves. The fact that these were not paying patients but financial liabilities to the social agency may also have blinded our eyes to the significance of the large number of clients who, unnoticed, drift away from some social agencies.

Historically, one can trace in the missionary and reform movements which preceded social case work attitudes which we can see clearly as those of "noblesse oblige." There was the religious expression of this motif, and that which fulfilled itself in the reform of living conditions and in the transmission of culture from the more favored to less privileged groups. Always there were, in some form or other, (1) a sense of divine "call" or obligation to do good, (2) a sense of division or distance from those to be helped, (3) a bridging of that distance with the flow of power from the more to the less privileged. In other words, there was an assumption of superiority, more or less unconscious, but revealed even today in numerous ways in the literature and practice of social case work. This has been the focus of criticism of social work by radical and labor groups for many years. The "divine right" of social workers has not been accepted as universally as those who talked about "noblesse oblige" would have liked.

Are we then entering an era of democracy in the relationship between social case workers and clients? We have seen how certain

trends are in that direction. Perhaps professional workers are no less class conscious than formerly, but, seeing the lines drawn more and more clearly between the owning and the economically exploited classes, are finding themselves and their friends and neighbors in alignment with those of the great American public whose work, of hand or brain, avails them nothing for security in an economically disintegrating civilization. Perhaps it is that the clients fall less willingly into a classification which brands them as inferiors when they are only a few months removed from a prosperity in which they, too, assumed a right to feel superior to others less fortunate than they in the scramble for profits. Be that as it may, while many case workers have not yet discovered it, and many more do it lip service but have not made it a part of themselves, the case work philosophy of the divine right of the client to self-determination is here in amazing strength and vitality.

Do clients *want* self-determination, however? Perhaps this is only another instance, like those of other remedies such as removal of tonsils or the provision of Americanization classes, in which social workers decide what clients should want and proceed to give it to them. Is it true that we are today applying a norm of maturity just as we did in previous periods of dawning awareness of certain problems, when we saw that good health in a growing child must include freedom from continual infection from diseased tonsil tissue, and that becoming a healthy part of the social group in a strange country must involve a knowledge of its language and customs? We made mistakes, no doubt, in the means we took to reach people with these admittedly good things, and in the resentments generated we may even have created worse evils than those which we were trying to cure. Nevertheless, knowing certain things to be desirable for health and general well-being does seem to be a necessary part of the equipment of a person whom anyone would take the trouble to consult.

The "norm," however, is in the mind of the professional person, and not necessarily in the mind of the client who wants health in a general way but may not want to take the steps to it which his professional adviser considers essential. Self-determination is thought by the social case worker to be an essential condition of growth toward maturity of personality but it may not be desired by the client either in itself or as a step toward a goal for which he has no conscious wish. For this reason, we find that as self-determination for the client becomes talked about as "the latest thing in case work

technique" some case workers (whose own philosophy is not one whit less a philosophy of dominance than before) will begin to try to force their clients to be self-determining and to punish them in some way if they do not at least "make a noise like" a self-determining being. Clearly this is only another example of trying to use the client to enhance one's own professional standing. It is anything but self-determination for the client. Until we can see that self-determination for a given client may mean manifestation of extreme childish dependence because that is the expression of his choices at the moment, we have not begun to grasp the meaning of the term but are merely determining, ourselves, how independent he should be and trying to force him to that norm by our will, not his.

The norms of growth toward maturity of personality have been made clearer in general outline by the recent advances of psychology and psychiatry. They can never be absolute any more than there can be an absolute norm of health. Health or maturity are terms relative to what is possible for the individual to attain, given his original make-up and the conditions to which he has been subjected since birth. Applying a norm in the matter of individual capacity for self-determination can mean, then, only a working knowledge of what the general stages are through which human beings pass in personality development and where, approximately, a given individual is in relation to them. We may then be able to gauge what the next steps for him will be, when and if he can take them, and may be able to make the conditions of his taking them a little more favorable. This may be as truly done by providing an atmosphere of understanding and hopefulness in the relationship between the client and the professional counselor as by changing the conditions of environment. Both may be important. The point of great importance for case work under the philosophy of client self-determination is that changes in the environment are made not for their value in giving the client an increased comfort which he would then owe to the social worker, and not to give the social worker the satisfaction of something to point to for "results," but as a means, consciously and responsibly used, for making conditions favorable for personality growth.

Do clients want self-determination? Our knowledge of emotional life admits a double answer: like everyone else they do and they do not. As long as life lasts, human beings are forced to find some balance between the desire for protection, security, freedom from struggle, and the desire to be individual, to have new experience, control conditions, make decisions, and take responsibility. Parents and

teachers may have done everything to foster the former impulses at the expense of the latter, but psychiatry assures us that both are there. Social case workers, according to their philosophy of case work, particularly as regards their beliefs about their responsibility for use of authority, tend to throw their influence to one side or the other of the struggle. Is it not conceivable that their function might be to help the client to work out a balance of his own, more satisfying to him than what he had come upon before and more adapted to his successfully becoming a part of a social group?

Summing up, we find authority in some form an integral part of the responsibilities of a person who represents the community in getting done the work necessary for community protection. He may be paid by tax funds or employed by a body of public-spirited people to fill a semi-public function (such as the care of stranded travelers or the protection of health) which public opinion will support as the concern of the whole community but which may not yet have been taken over as a definite function of government. He may or may not be called a social case worker or be trained for that profession. He must, if he is to represent the community in such a way as to minimize for the community's sake the maladjustment of individuals, acquire somehow some training in the understanding of human personality and learn how to enter into mutually helpful relationships with the people with whom he deals. This training is certainly akin to training for social case work as we know it, and it is to be expected that a considerable number of social case workers will be employed in such public or semi-public services.

The function of case workers there is to *individualize* a program planned for the average or the mass. In the process of getting necessary things done they will meet many people who are traveling a rough road in life. If these public servants, then, are the kind of professional persons whom people find helpful, it is to be expected that they will also be chosen as counselors in a certain number of instances and have an opportunity to serve their clients with the same dignity and mutual respect as in the private practice of a profession. In their rôle as public servant, they must be authoritative at times but may always be considerate of the individual—nay, must be so if they are to render a really helpful service. In their other rôle as counselor they cannot be authoritative because, to have value as counseling at all, the relationship must be a voluntary one.

IV. SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE CLIENT: WILL IT WORK?

There is a considerable number of social case workers who would say without hesitation that self-determination for the client is a beautiful theory but that it applies only to exceptional clients or especially favored agencies. They point to those who believe in it as idealists, who have never seen the realities of case work, who accept, so they say, only clients of considerable intelligence and then refuse to deal with any but relatively unimportant and intangible problems. Psychiatric agencies, in the minds of these critics, usually fall into that category. If their clients have "real problems," such as a need for relief, they are referred to agencies which work on a more practical basis.

Strangely enough, this attitude is almost exactly that taken by most psychiatric social workers until a year or two ago and by some today. They assumed that relief-giving involved a use of authority which they disliked, and they referred their clients to relief agencies, when it was necessary, with reluctance. Either they took for granted that the relief agency would use methods of which they did not approve and therefore tried to keep some hold upon the clients they referred (which did not make for mutual understanding between the agencies) or they felt that once referral was decided upon they must get rid of the clients as soon as possible and shut their eyes to what happened to them. Too often they did this without preparing the clients for the change and allowed a relationship of confidence which they had built up to be broken in such a way as to cause severe emotional damage. They assumed that a relief relationship was necessarily so destructive that they did not wish to be involved in it at all. This, however, did not apply, necessarily, to gifts of clothing nor to use of special funds which could be called scholarships. Perhaps they were a bit naïve in thinking that relief under any other name would smell more sweet.

Many psychiatric social workers also insisted upon working in "favored" agencies—at least as long as the high demand for workers in community mental hygiene clinics gave them the choice of a large number of positions. They avoided forms of social work in which they would have to deal with people of low intelligence or would have to perform services involving the use of authority. Mental hospitals and schools for the feeble-minded have even complained that although their work demands training in psychiatry many of the social workers so equipped prefer to work with "normal" people.

The economic depression, which stopped the expansion of mental hygiene clinics and closed many of them, scattered social case workers with psychiatric training among agencies dealing with all types of clients and all kinds of problems. Some of these social workers, not knowing of the development which had been going on in fields other than their own, felt that they were losing their chance to do work in which they could feel any satisfaction. Some who had come to value the philosophy of self-determination for clients feared that they would have to abandon their principles and treat clients as they would not like to be treated themselves. Undoubtedly some did abandon a philosophy of case work never well assimilated. Others found that it would work if applied with common sense, as, indeed, their new colleagues had perhaps learned already. Still others possibly lacked the common sense to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials, clung to familiar details of method, and struggled along, still believing in the philosophy but constantly thwarted in its use. Sometimes their associates made them feel impractical and ineffective. Sometimes they made their associates discontented with their old attitudes toward their clients without giving them any clear conception of how the newer philosophy could be applied to actual conditions. There has been a period of great confusion between philosophies and between methods. Social case workers with a basic philosophy of paternalism have made their methods more flexible without changing the underlying assumption of superiority. Workers genuinely anxious to develop the clients' own capacity have not known how to do so and have practised a "putting the problem back upon the client" which was virtually a refusal of service.

Never has a professional field been in greater need of painstaking research. Perhaps each philosophy of case work has certain types of clients or sets of conditions to which it is applicable. If that is so, there is need of determining what those conditions are and how to distinguish the clients. It is obviously naïve to assume that educational background or previous possession of property would automatically assign clients to their proper classification. Devotees of the intelligence quotient might assume that a range of I.Q. for capability for self-determination might be determined. But then, it is hard to secure a reliable I.Q. for an adult, and by the time mental tests could be arranged so much social work would usually have been done that the case worker would be already committed either to taking charge of the client and his affairs or to an assumption that the

client was going to manage them himself. Even supposing that a client's intelligence could be accurately known in advance of working with him, ability to deal with life conditions depends, as every practical case worker knows, on many factors in the environment and on much in the person's capacity for emotional response. Clients are capable in certain settings and quite lost in others. Some circumstances favor growth and others retard it. Much depends upon latent powers in the client. Research on these problems finds itself concerned with very complex matters.

Another hypothesis might be that the choice of a working philosophy is dependent not on the client nor on conditions but on the personality of the case worker. Some must take charge of their clients and their problems; others revolt against this and get results only as they help their clients to achieve them. If agencies believe that their work demands a paternalistic approach why not select that type of case worker? Why should not those who can work best with the aim of self-determination for their clients do so without insisting that others should accept their philosophy?

The trouble is that a social worker's basic philosophy does carry an emotional quality of "rightness," which comes to be defended with zeal. Perhaps it is true that these differences in philosophy will always exist side by side, just as conservatives and liberals have always been at loggerheads in politics. Unfortunate as it is for the smooth running of community programs of social welfare and for the interpretation to the public of the value of social case work, perhaps there will always be a conflict of aims among the practitioners of social case work. To add to the inevitable confusion, it is a fact that methods of work are not at all a reliable indication of the philosophy by which the case worker steers her course. Some who are essentially paternalistic in approach grant a high degree of freedom to their clients (the point is that they grant it on the assumption that it is theirs to give) and others who find clients extraordinarily unable to help themselves may seem to be doing everything for them when they are consciously fanning the feeble spark of client participation to the utmost.

The tragedy of it all is that too often the case workers themselves do not know what is their own philosophy of case work. They are swayed by catch phrases, descriptions of "the newest techniques" and by the example of people they admire. Without making anything their very own, they try to use both philosophies at once with results

that are a picture of extreme futility and confusion. The fact is that if anything is to be achieved no such mixture of opposites is possible, either in the activities of one case worker or with the same clients, be there one worker or several. Education for self-direction does not proceed when half the time the reins are tightened and the social worker assumes control. It takes courage to carry through consistently either the control of the life situation of another person or a plan for his education for self-determination, no matter how much help one has from a flexibility of method that smooths out the worst difficulties of each. The real difference in the two philosophies is so great that each tends to negate work done under the banner of the other. To take charge effectively, one must believe without flinching in his own right to do so. To trust a more or less bewildered client to take charge, one must not falter in the belief in his ability either to do so with such help as can be given him or to bear the consequences if he does not. If the individual case worker must be clear about philosophy or be ineffective, so must an agency, for its philosophy determines its aims. Its choice of workers is of greatest importance. To take only one strategic point, the worker at the intake desk (some of us believe) sets the stage for paternalism or self-determination by the way the first interview is handled. If that is true, there is only confusion to be gained by a change of basic approach thereafter.

Impossible as it is, with our present knowledge, to allocate with certainty the clients who should be treated under one or the other philosophy, the methods which should be employed, or even the capacity of social case workers to make a philosophy their own and practice it, there is still a method of research which may yield pragmatic results. Why not apply one philosophy as consistently as possible in every sort of agency and with every type of client and see whether it works or not? Naturally the philosophy of self-determination for the client, relatively little tried as yet, and obviously difficult in application, presents a challenging opportunity.

In the fall of 1933, the writer found an unusual laboratory for this purpose. The Jewish Board of Guardians of New York City was itself experimenting with the application of the philosophy of self-determination to its work with adolescents, particularly those with a history of delinquency. Dr. John Slawson, the executive director, and Miss Elizabeth Dexter, the director of case work, were keenly

interested in having the writer study some phase of this problem which could be handled in the time available—two days a week over a period of several months. They provided office space and clerical assistance, and the staff contributed generously of its time and enthusiastic support.

How far had the writer's thinking gone at the time this study was undertaken? The philosophy of self-determination for the client had come to be accepted as a workable one during a previous experiment in the Boarding Home Department of the New York Children's Aid Society in 1931-32.[6] At the beginning of that study, the writer had said to another case worker, "I have no doubt, from my experience in a counseling relationship with students of social work, that it is possible always to stimulate and assist without taking the problem out of the student's hands. In six years I have learned that students will tolerate no other handling of their problems, and that this approach works even in the most difficult situations. I suspect that it will work with clients also, but I may find that their differences from students of social work create exceptions." "I think you will find," said the other, who had been using this philosophy in case work, "that there is less difference than you anticipate." This was clearly borne out by the Children's Aid experiment.

The next step was to see whether the philosophy of self-determination for the client could be applied in agencies having almost a public service function in their very definite obligation to the community. In other words, if there are agencies which cannot hope to do case work under this philosophy, it is essential for them to know it. The Travelers' Aid Society seemed to be one which might be so handicapped, and a brief study of case records was made in the spring of 1933 with the conclusions which are set forth in Chapter I. This was only a beginning. Undoubtedly there would be especial difficulties in the field of work with delinquents, with the mentally sick and defective, and the badly handicapped in other ways. The indication was to try this philosophy in the places where it would seem least applicable, and to experiment with a variety of methods under the same approach before abandoning the philosophy as unworkable.

In beginning the study with the Jewish Board of Guardians in the fall of 1933, the writer was interested in the question, who initiates contact with a social agency? It seemed to her at the time that if clients had an adequate opportunity to know about the service of the agency and were left free to use it or not as they wished, their presentation of their own problem would reveal their real concern more truly than if an agency approached them with offers of service which expressed the agency's idea of the problems they ought to be having. Miss Dexter said something like this in describing the concern of the Jewish Board of Guardians about reaching with its preventive service the homes of the boys and girls sent by the courts to the two schools maintained by the organization—the Hawthorne School for boys and the Cedar Knolls School for girls.

[6] Bertha Capen Reynolds, "An Experiment in Short Contact Interviewing" *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, Volume III (September, 1932).

The agency's difficulty is that unless the families have been known, perhaps through its Child Guidance Department, the notice of the commitment of the child by the court is the family's first contact with its case-work service. The explanation of that service by the ageny's representative in court is a difficult matter. The family is in a highly emotional state of mind, and there is scant leisure or privacy to make clear what the agency could do for them. One may surmise that the delinquency of the child may be only a symptom of serious and long-standing social and personal problems in these families, but there is no time for the growth of a relationship of confidence in which they could be expressed. With the going of the child to the institution the crisis passes. He may stay for several months or a year or two. The case worker resident at the Schools attends to matters arising between the homes and the School administration, such as permissions for visits home, misunderstandings about the child's life there, explanations of need for minor operations and so forth. The case worker in the Child Guidance Department at the central office, who will take the responsibility for supervision when the child is parolled, has the name on his list but often in the press of emergent duties does not see the child at the School for some time. Nor is it easily possible to see the parents unless some contingency makes a natural opening for doing so. Undoubtedly a valuable opportunity for preventive work may be lost if contact is not made until just before the child is to be parolled. On the other hand, if the case worker initiates the contact, how can he avoid taking away from the parents their right to say whether they want service and to indicate what problems are important to them? Do not case workers sometimes suggest to clients the very problems they are offering to help them solve, and then wonder that there is so little enthusiasm for

working them out? These questions the staff of the Jewish Board of Guardians was already asking.

After preliminary conferences, in which it was arranged that the writer should experiment with some interviews with parents of Hawthorne and Cedar Knolls children, the following statement of a plan of procedure was set down.

One of our major interests is to see the implications for details of our practice which reside in a philosophy of case work which recognizes the problem as the client's. This philosophy would logically place the initiative for seeking service upon the client. He is frequently handicapped, however, by ignorance of what case work service would be, by hostile attitudes, because of the auspices under which the service is offered to him (connected with demands from an authority, such as the court, which he may resent), or perhaps by the difficulty experienced by all of us of coming to the point of admitting that a problem exists before it has reached some severe crisis.

One of our problems, then, in making contact with clients, is to convey to them our willingness to be consulted without giving the impression that *we* wish or demand that they consult us. Instead of making contacts on the basis of problems which we see but which the client may not wish to do anything about or does not even recognize, we merely indicate that we are available for consultation. A second possibility is that, even though the client does not take the initiative, we may see that it would be to his advantage to have the added understanding of his situation which we might give, and we may, without forcing him in any way, give a sort of preparatory educational service which may lead him to know whether he wants to enter into a consulting case-work relationship or not. A third possibility is that, in our position of giving case-work service auxiliary to the workings of a court system and the administration of an institution, our relationship to these agencies might make it necessary for us to take the initiative in consulting parents, with some responsibility to the system to be discharged through the interview. Our understanding of our rôle would here place us in the position of acting as court or institution representative, doing the business required in a business-like way, and also, if possible, in the course of that contact, opening a way, either by preparatory educational work or by expressed willingness to be consulted, for the client to take the initiative in seeking from us a case-work counseling service if he wants it.

With all this in mind, it seems best, in this research study, to avoid a first contact by home visit (by which the social worker would have taken the initiative away from the client) but rather to make contact by a letter sent out routinely to all parents in the selected group. The wording of the letter is designed to leave the client free to come or not as he wishes, or to send for the social worker if he prefers. It aims to make contact easy but to leave the initiative with the client. It will be interesting to see how many parents respond to the letter and what problems they bring as of significance to them. The letter is addressed to both parents in order that whichever one is interested may feel free to take advantage of the invitation.

There will be a mixed group who do not respond. To these the social worker may go with preparatory educational service entailing no obligation on their part to make further contact for case work. For the purposes of our study, the social worker will try to find out, first, how many have no conscious problem; second, how many have problems but thought them not suitable to bring up with this society; third, how many are antagonistic to the society? Out of these interviews it will be interesting to see how many parents finally choose to have some case-work service and for what; how many understand what it is and definitely have no wish for it; and how many are apparently not able to reach an understanding of what it is. This preparatory educational process will be considered just as educational for the society as for the client; that is, the attitude will be not that of one giving a "selling talk" but of one asking the client, "How can we be of service?" We will try to study a variety of ways of interpreting the society's work for varied mentalities and needs, and will also study ways of being alert to what the client is trying to express about his own needs, even though he does so indirectly.

This plan of procedure being agreed upon, a letter and enclosed postal card were sent to the parents of children committed or remanded[7] to either of the schools since June 1, 1933, excluding those with whom any other visitor of the agency was in contact. To that list was added the parents of all children committed to the institutions during the following months, again omitting those cases already in contact with some other J.B.G. worker.

The letter read as follows:

My dear Mr. and Mrs.———,

The Jewish Board of Guardians, a society interested in helping Jewish boys and girls, not only through its institutions at Hawthorne but in other ways, would like the parents of children in these Schools to feel free to come into the office and meet one of the visitors at any time if there is anything they would like to ask about or talk over. To make this as convenient as possible, Miss Reynolds will be in the office at 228 East 19th Street, for the next three weeks[8] on Tuesday and Thursday mornings (except Thanksgiving Day) from nine until one o'clock. She may also be reached for appointments at other times by telephoning the office—Grammercy 5-5400. If you are planning to come in on one of these mornings, it would save your having to wait if you telephone in advance for an appointment.

[7] A remand is an order for custody of the child for a certain limited period.

[8] The aim was to give a period long enough to avoid accidental hindrances but short enough so that if the parents had some idea of coming in they would not put the letter aside with the thought that it could be done any time. Later it seemed best to make the time unlimited. After the first, office hours were kept in the Brooklyn office of the society on Thursdays.

If it is hard for you to get to the office and you would like Miss Reynolds to see you at your home, just fill in and mail the enclosed card.

Sincerely yours,

....., *Director*

The postal card was self-addressed and contained the following message:

Address.....

Telephone.....

I would like Miss Reynolds to come to my house on *Tues.* or *Thurs.* afternoon when I will be at home.

(If you are not able to be at home at these times, please write below when you could be and Miss Reynolds will let you know when she can come.)

The best way to get to my house from East 19th Street is:

Sign here.....

The interviews were recorded as soon as possible after the parents were seen. The "comments" upon the interviews were made when the record was typed, and later as they occurred to the writer. This material will be found in the following chapter.

The reactions of the writer to the recording process are shown in her comments on one of the cases:

In general, worker has been dissatisfied with her recording of interviews. When she thinks over a case for comment, the things she wants to comment on seem usually to be absent from the account, and the account itself lacks the richness of significant detail that can be reproduced in memory. Is it that the process of selections (largely automatic in an experienced worker) concerns itself most with determining what the problem is and leaves out detail irrelevant to that? The educational or research interest would take in a wider range, but worker still thinks of the record of the interview as related to the functioning of an active agency, and only "lets go" on comments—perhaps rightly so. Seeing this happen makes her conscious how much ordinarily drops out during the recording process.

The study, as is clear from the above description, did not attempt to cover more than a small area of the problem. It did aim to gather and record some impressions of the extent to which parents of delinquent children in this group are articulate about problems for which they would like counseling, whether they would take the initiative, and what their matters of concern would be. The previous court experience was recognized as handicapping, but it was hoped that the experiment would show whether good contacts could be made within that limitation. The agency hoped for leads toward earlier and possibly more fruitful contacts with parents for preventive work.

It was recognized that added to the always unknown influence of the personality of the interviewer was the factor that she was not Jewish. Since nothing could be done about that, the plan was to proceed on a basis of common humanity, not emphasizing the difference but recording any indications that the clients gave of being disturbed by it. As far as the writer could judge, there was very little either of such consciousness or of language difficulty. The statistics of the experiment were as follows:

	Total	*Sex of Child*	
		Male	*Female*
Letters sent to parents	27	21	6
Parents responded	13	9	4
Came to office	5		
Sent post card	7		
Telephoned (appointment not kept)	1		
Parents did not respond	14	12	2
Research visit	5		
Eliminated (antagonistic to agency in previous contacts)	3		
Failed to reach	6		

As the study progressed, it became evident that the first thinking had oversimplified the problem. It was found that the client's taking of initiative could not be determined by the number of calls at the office nor the number of postcards asking for a visit in the home. Perhaps because of the authority of the court in the background, the parents did not seem to feel the freedom to come or not which the form letter had intended to convey. For instance, the record of one of the interviews begins as follows:

Mother came to the office in a heavy rain, evidently with the idea that the form letter had been a summons of some kind. She explained toward the close of the interview that she would have come last week except that she had to go to the hospital with a child who had a running ear. When worker told her it was not necessary for her to come in unless she wanted to, mother shrugged her shoulders and said, "But you know, the second letter." (A note had been sent correcting the statement that worker would be in the office for three weeks to say that she would be there till further notice.) When she first entered the room, mother sat down on the edge of the chair as if waiting for worker to ask her something. Worker expressed appreciation for her willingness to come in on such a day and mother said, "But I couldn't ask you to come so far." Worker asked her if there was anything she wanted to talk over, and she then began to talk about her boy—how much she missed him and how sorry she was that he was sent away. She spoke with a slight accent but with good vocabulary and gave evidence of being a very devoted mother and a responsible person.

Comment.—This case raises the question how we can tell how much of the nature of a summons a letter from an agency like the J.B.G. will have for clients, no matter how carefully it is worded. The sending of the second letter was an error of method. In correcting the statement in the first letter that worker would be in the office for three weeks, an unintended urgency was imparted to the situation. Writer recalls, however, that others who came to the office sat as if expecting to be told why they were sent for. Several who sent the post card asking for a visit apologized for having done so, giving illness and, in one case, lack of carfare, as a reason why they could not come in. It is impossible to tell how much they felt obliged to respond in some way. Mrs. S, who was visited on a research basis, said that her husband had intended to come to the office (she herself was sick and her husband was the boy's stepfather) but wanted to come when his nephew, who was a lawyer, could accompany him, since the latter had told them not to talk without his assistance. Mrs. L, also visited on a research basis, did not come to the door of her room, but called to visitor to wait in the front hall and she would speak to her. She came as if she had dressed hastily, and obviously not desiring an interview but afraid not to see what it was about. Most of those seen, either at the office or at their homes, had small requests to make which may have been of sufficient importance to them to initiate the contact, but were possibly put forth as excuse for having made it, after the clients found that worker had nothing to ask of them. All this makes us doubt whether we ever really know whether the client took the initiative or not. It may be that those took more initiative who did not respond at all.

From these and many other instances, it was evident that the response to our letter was no measure either of the amount of initiative the parents would take or of the reality of their problems to them. The set-up of the situation was apparently too artificial for the clients to give the agency even a lead for further procedure.

The parents who did not reply to the letter were approached on a "research" basis, somewhat in this fashion. "I come from the Jewish Board of Guardians. (Stop to find out if they know of that agency.) Perhaps you know that we are interested in children and are studying our work to see how we may help children and their parents more. Our idea is not to think up new things to do in our office, but to ask the parents who really know. Will you help us by telling us just what you think? If you had known about this society when your boy or girl was at home, perhaps two or three years ago when things began to go wrong, what would you have wished that we would do? Could we have done anything to prevent the trouble you have had?"

The families approached in this manner showed no consciousness that they had a problem about which they could do anything, and counseling service apparently meant nothing to them. Few visits of

this type were made, partly because of exceedingly bad weather conditions which would have made absurd to the families a "casual" call with no other urgency than that the agency wanted to study its own work. Even with care in planning the time of the visits so that they would seem reasonable, the writer found that the parents expected her to have come from some concealed purpose. They usually offered the gift which experience may have taught them was generally acceptable to social workers—details of history about the child's delinquency. The question, spoken or unspoken, was, "What do you want?" Apparently they could not think in terms of what *they* might want, except for their child's release from the School or some special privilege during his stay there. It is only fair to say that this group gave a marked impression of lower intelligence than those who responded to the letter. Only one, and he decidedly the most intelligent among them, is included with those whose interviews are given in the next chapter.

Sometimes the writer asked, "Is it hard to bring up a boy or girl in this neighborhood?" This was done in the hope of drawing out consciousness of lack of recreation facilities, but nothing of that sort was brought forth. On the whole, all the families interviewed seemed to have expected no more than they received from their community.

Summing up, the study ended with a conviction that we had tended to overestimate the extent to which the parents of children committed to Hawthorne and Cedar Knolls Schools would either understand what social case work could offer them or would take the initiative in using it. It seemed that the agency would have to devise some way of meeting the parents which would be more natural to them if it hoped to find them spontaneously seeking its service. The court setting, poor as it seemed to be (in its lack of leisure and privacy) for the place of first acquaintance, did at least present a common meeting ground at a time when the parents felt the urgency of a crisis in their relationship to their child. It may be inferred that a social case worker available at the time of the court hearing might have found in the parents more desire to discuss problems of family life, or that, if they did not at that time bring up more than matters immediately connected with the commitment, they might later continue with the same person a relationship of confidence which had been begun. In at least two instances in this study parents had gone back to someone whom they met at court for advice—once (Interview 10, Chapter V) apparently to find out whether it was

advisable to respond to the form letter. The disadvantages of making the contact for case work service at the time parole is being considered have already been discussed. There is a natural opening for meeting, but a desire to have a favorable decision about the child's return (improved in behavior as the parents seemed always to believe) would tend to make them suppress discussion of family problems at that time. On the whole, then, the indications seemed to be to find an occasion for meeting in which some crisis would make vivid to the parents their need for counsel, and to use that to create a relationship with the case worker in the atmosphere of which the parents would feel free to discuss whatever they wished.

Apart from these negative results, this series of interviews with parents furnished the stimulus for thinking about many of the difficult problems of case work. Ten of the interviews are given in the following chapter.

V. TEN INTERVIEWS AND THE THINKING THAT GREW UP AROUND THEM

The interviews to be described in this chapter are presented in the form in which they were written for the case record, and the comments and discussion upon them also retain the informality and incompleteness of the original notations. The whole chapter, therefore, should be considered as illustrating the kind of "raw data" out of which the thinking of the other chapters emerged.

The arrangement of the interviews corresponds roughly to the focus of interest of the comments. For convenience they are divided into four groups.

In the first group of cases the comments are occupied with the problem of how much initiative and responsibility clients are likely to take for their own problems when they either have a great deal of emotion about them or evade thinking of them as theirs. The second group furnishes illustrations for a discussion of "paternalism" versus an "educational approach"[9] in social case work, especially that involving the giving of material relief. The third stands as introduction to a discussion, running also through the cases in Group IV, of the relation between social case work and social conditions in the community. The last group contains, in addition to the community focus of Group III, a consideration of the case worker's function. What has the agency to give in the situation? How may it be given so as to stimulate and lead? How may it foster the client's own initiative and responsibility?

Group I

Interview 1 (Celia L; age 15)

Admitted.—Cedar Knolls School, July 21, 1933, on commitment for an indefinite term.

Complaint.—Delinquent child: a material witness in case of adults charged with larceny. She had taken $1700 from the firm which employs her father and had spent several hundred dollars on a wild spree with friends.

History.—Girl was referred to J.B.G. by mother, October 6, 1932, because she left school and refused to return. Had been successful in school but had begun to associate with a young married woman thought to be a bad influence.

[9] These terms, found throughout the cases, were used before it occurred to the writer that they might carry emotional connotations that would handicap their acceptance as descriptive of two points of view in case work. They are retained, however, as representing the writer's thinking at the time the discussion was written.

Was out late at night, crazy for money and clothes, outspoken about despising Jews and about antagonism to mother. Father blamed mother's having had two nervous breakdowns for the spoiling and neglect of the two girls. Rose, 17, is now dependable, while Celia, who has been ill with chorea, has learned to get what she wants by creating scenes. Treatment by the J.B.G. attempted to establish a confidential relationship with the girl and to help her with vocational plans. Mother told worker she had not wanted to marry and did not want children. Father is devoted to Celia. Rose and Celia very antagonistic. Parents have alternated beatings and indulgence.

Interview (11-28-'33).—Mr. L telephoned (in response to a letter sent to parents of girls in Cedar Knolls) asking how much later than one o'clock worker would be at the office. He said he was very busy but felt he must see worker before Thanksgiving. When asked when he would like to come in, father said he could arrive at 12:45.

Father arrived promptly. He found worker in interviewing room. Length of interview was one-half hour. Worker placed a chair for father so that he need not face the sun, and father remarked that he had little time to be out in sun and air as his work is very confining. Throughout the interview the father seemed tense, moved restlessly in his chair and talked in a rather breathless way. He asked at once if worker knew the story of his daughter. She said she did in general. He stated at once his errand, saying his daughter was having interviews twice a week with a woman who is giving her psychiatric treatment, and he wanted to know who this was and how he might get in touch with her. Worker gave the name of the psychiatrist explaining that she is an M.D., that she sometimes comes to this office, and that a letter to Cedar Knolls would reach her. Father said he was anxious to talk with her and "get a line" on his daughter's case.

Father said, "I want you to know we are very satisfied with the treatment Celia is getting. She has gained 20 pounds. Her mother has visited several times and I saw her in the city at the hearing in court." Father said she was much upset at that time but seems happy at school since then. Father has visited the School once and liked the place. She is doing so well at present that he does not want to think of having her come home for some time, although, of course, he misses her.

Father gave an impression of a sudden change of subject when he said that the trouble with his daughter had taught him how much his employers thought of him. They not only let him keep his position but they treated him with utmost kindness. "I would rather they had given me a slap than that." He scraped together the money to make good the funds spent by Celia and her companions—about $1700. Worker commented that this must have been hard for him to do. He said yes—but the money side of it was not the hardest. "Money doesn't matter—it's the girl who matters." He said they had done everything they could for her. His wife is very nervous and so is he, and they cannot expect 100 per cent perfect offspring. When worker asked him about his wife's health, he said she is well. He was afraid of a complete break in all this trouble, and she was equally afraid for him, but both of them came through it. Worker asked if his wife was anxious to have Celia home. Father said, "No—she wants her, of course, but she is 'level-headed' and knows Celia is better off there." His wife

warned him not to make too strong in writing to the girl his desire to have her home. Father said that he has not written her except to say that he still loves her and to indicate that he would either have to say a great deal or nothing at all. Mother does the visiting and most of the correspondence. Father says they send packages almost every week. Father says Celia's letters contain little save lists of what she wants. They do not give her 100 per cent of what she asks but try to keep her satisfied.

Sister Rose visited with mother and criticized the way Celia put her arms around the cottage mother and patted her on the back. Rose thought Celia should be under more strict discipline. Father is glad that girl is not treated as a criminal and thinks she is given just the right degree of freedom by the cottage mother.

Worker asked, "Do you understand what this psychiatric treatment is like?" Father said he thought he did. Asked if it wasn't "auto-suggestion." He said he supposed the interviews were an opportunity for Celia to talk out her feelings. Said he knew that it helped. He says he himself has given up doctors when he is ill but just a word at the right time does him more good than medicine. He is glad Celia is having this treatment.

At this point, worker explained the plan under which a letter was sent to parents to make it easy for them in case they had anything to talk over with the psychiatrist. Said she supposed parents might be thinking ahead and wishing to prepare the home for the child's return even though that might be a year away. Father said they were thinking of that also but they do not want to move yet. They do think it will be necessary since the whole neighborhood knew about Celia's escapade. They hate to move because they have lived there many years and enjoyed the location. Said they have had a happy home there. At several points in the interview he praised his wife's devotion to her children and good management, blaming her illness for the fact that this child has disappointed them. Said she was younger at the time her mother was taken ill and hence was more affected by it than the older one.

Worker remarked that trouble like this may come to anyone. Father said his employer, who is a millionaire, has children who are worthless and spend more in a week than father earns in a year. Father took Celia into his office this summer. Apparently wanting to show that he trusted her, he gave her access to the cash drawer and introduced her at the bank so she could cash checks. He said some people blame him for this but he thought he was acting for the best. Worker remarked that it is a difficult thing to understand children well enough to know how much they are able to stand—one may make a mistake in trusting too little or too much. Father did not reply in response to this with evidence of any consciousness of need for greater understanding of her personality, although he did say that he thought a great deal of her trouble was due to her being brighter than her sister and that she used her brain destructively; that her sister had been much less capable but thoroughly reliable. Worker explained that by the time Celia was ready to come home, she will have a regular visitor but that this winter, while there is not much to be done, father can always communicate with worker if there is anything he wishes to talk over.

In answer to father's remark that Celia had certainly been a sick girl, worker

said it takes a long time to help a sick personality and also that the process is much like that of education and helping Celia grow up also takes a long time. Father is pleased that Celia goes to school there and is getting good marks. Father said he would feel free to get in touch with worker at any time that he has any question to ask.

Comments.—It was not clear why father came today when he claimed to be so excessively busy. By telephone he said he had been intending to call up when he received the letter and showed anxiety to meet worker immediately, although on coming he only asked for the psychiatrist's address to make a contact which evidently required no haste. His telephoning to see if worker could wait after one o'clock was contradicted by his setting the time at 12:45 when given a choice. He also stayed one-half hour after stating several times that his visit would only take five minutes. One gets the impression that father wanted help of some kind and used this rather trivial errand as his ticket of admission to some contact which he really wants—perhaps without understanding just what he wants.

While father did not show the extreme guilt and anxiety evidenced in previous interviews recorded since his daughter's commitment, he did seem guilty about the kindness of employer, and one wonders if he is not punishing himself by depriving himself of letters and visits to Celia although he covers his guilt about keeping her there by stating that it is doing her a great deal of good.

Worker's questions were designed to help father articulate his problems, relating to the mother's willingness to have the girl stay and to his understanding of the psychiatric treatment. Certain comments were for reassurance, such as "this may happen to anyone" and worker's saying she knew the family had done their best. Some explanation was given for worker being available to parents at the office at this time. Father seemed to take this as a very natural thing. The suggestion of a possible motive for contact in that parents may wish to do something to get ready for the return of the child, however remote, was responded to by father only in terms of the family's moving. He did not indicate whether he was conscious that other preparations in the attitudes of the family might be necessary.

In regard to the transfer to the regular visitor, worker felt that at this time the father is either not conscious of any problem or that he is unable to talk of his problems, or is possibly using this visit only to feel out the situation in regard to making further contact later. Worker saw no indication for introducing the regular visitor at this time and feels that if father does return, she will continue to work in the direction of helping him to face his problem until he has more clearly articulated what he wants.

A talk with the acting superintendent at Cedar Knolls confirms the impression from the record that the father's attitude to Celia is more like a lover than a parent. In the office at Cedar Knolls, he was conspicuous for constant fondling and expressions of affection to which the girl seemed entirely cold. Mother, on a recent visit, wept and said she knew Celia would never confide in her, and begged Miss D to take her place as a mother and try to win the girl's confidence. Miss D said she could not do that and would not want to. She would try to make girl see that mother has a place. Mother was sure girl did not love her.

The psychiatrist also confirms the impression of father's extreme nervousness and his need to see her as a link (it seemed) with Celia. She was impressed with the seriousness of father's emotional problem for help for which, however, he seemed able to go no farther at present. He responded to her suggestion that he come in to see worker if he wished, since the psychiatrist was not often in the city for appointments, by saying that he would, but has not done so.

It is interesting that this father and mother, both having serious emotional problems, did not feel able to go for help to a centre set up for that purpose, i.e. to discuss the problems definitely with the psychiatrist or the social worker, by either of whom they would have been steered to some source of psychiatric help. The agency sees these people as centres of steering to therapeutic help. It seems certain that the parents either did not or were afraid to seek it, afraid of having to do something about a problem that is too painful to touch.

Sometimes it seems as if mental therapy is in a stage corresponding to the pre-anesthesia days of medicine. Unfortunately each individual carries his own anaesthesia for mental distress—repression. To incur the pain of treatment requires a courage perhaps greater than having a tooth pulled without even a local anaesthetic. How do people ever get help? It seems that the pressure from the subconscious becomes at some moment too great to bear and breaks through. Whoever is present at the time receives a flood of confidences, rich in material of a significance that a psychiatrist would envy, but which is usually misunderstood and often, so it seems to the listener, inappropriate to the occasion.

Is it possible that our planning to place skilled therapeutic service where it is available to those who need it fails to take account of an immense amount of fear and inertia and inability to face pain and grapple with distress? After all, most people are pretty fatalistic about suffering. Perhaps it is a characteristic of trained case workers but not of any large number of other people to greet a perception of need with "What can be done about it?" Do social case workers read into what they expect others to do a background of an attitude which they themselves owe more to their training than to ordinary human experience? Perhaps the function of the first interview is to awaken some feeling that something *could* be done about this problem *if* and *when* one wished.

It seems to the writer that probably never (and certainly not now when public appreciation of what is possible in mental therapy is so undeveloped) will people come readily and joyfully for therapeutic

help anymore than they go to doctors when a patent medicine that costs as much as an office visit is at hand. Why do they prefer the medicine? Among many reasons, partly because they keep the control of the treatment in their own hands, do not have to admit defeat to another person or to risk that other person's insisting on measures they have not the courage to take. It seems likely, then, that any effective program of mental hygiene will have to place at every strategic point (in schools, industrial establishments, stores, churches, relief agencies, everywhere) people in touch with the public who are trained enough to see needs, to interpret the possibilities of help, to make real to people what they can do about their problems if they wish, and to tell where counseling service may be found.

The case workers trained to professional skill should perhaps be scattered about at these strategic points or in close touch with those who are there, for one doubts greatly whether the most important step toward treatment is not that first preparation to accept it which takes place in settings other than the clinic office. For this, case workers who are employed by an agency giving a concrete service which the community understands are in a position of advantage. They are the ones to whom people come, secure in being able to discuss clothing or coal or a home for a child, and they are often the ones to whom the revealing confidences are made. It is they who should have psychiatric insight second to none, to see the meaning of what is said, to go as far with the client as he can go at the moment, to pass him on to more labelled therapeutic help when, and not before, he is ready to use it. It seems to the writer that the major part of the psychiatric social case work of the future will be done in this skilled, and often long, preparatory treatment for what we now call therapy, for which only a minor fraction of cases now coming to agencies are ready. It will come to be, she believes, not a frustration but a privilege to work in an agency where clients come freely (for any reason) and whose service is so well understood that the client does not commit himself in coming to any but the service he thinks he is willing to ask for. Case workers in public relief agencies, for instance, may at present find their way badly blocked by faulty administration, attitudes, ignorance of all sorts, but they have a chance to be the "shock troops" of the finest kind of skilled psychiatric service. Even lack of time is no barrier, if they have discernment and the best quality of personal preparation to bring to their task.

Interview 2 (Morris W; age 14)

Admitted.—Hawthorne School, Oct. 16, 1933, on remand until June 11, 1934, after which father is to pay $3.00 a week for support.

Previous court record.—On Oct. 9, 1933, boy was adjudged a neglected child and remanded to J.B.G. for investigation of his story that stepmother does not want him, refuses him proper food, and accuses him of stealing from her. On Sept. 3 he had run away for four days and said he would rather go to an institution than go home. Probation officer thought he wanted to be with his brother, Abraham, 16, who has been at Hawthorne since Dec., 1932.

History.—Mother deserted the family several times, and children were placed in an orphan asylum. In 1927 parents were divorced, and father was given custody of the children. He remarried in Aug., 1930. Stepmother has a boy, 11 years old. Mother has married an Italian. The two boys were in the orphan asylum till July, 1932, when Abraham ran away. Father took him home, hoping he would help in the store, but found him incorrigible, stealing from store, staying out late, using vile language. At court Abraham said he had no use for father or stepmother and wanted to be sent to an institution. This was done, after probation had failed. Morris has done the same. A sister is with father's sister-in-law.

Interview (2-13-'34).—Since father did not respond to form letter sent to parents of Hawthorne boys, family was visited on a research basis.

Family has a small stationery and notion store, in the rear of which they live. The name Goldie W (stepmother) was painted on the window. The stepmother was talking to a customer in the store when worker entered and spoke to father, who took her to family's apartment. He did not introduce stepmother, who was at leisure when worker went out, and to whom worker made some remark about the weather. Father left interview once to answer a call of stepmother from the store. A boy was in bed with a broken leg from an automobile injury in the bedroom next to the kitchen where interview was held. Store is located in a mercantile district where the shops have a fairly prosperous air. The side streets are filled with single and double houses and apartment blocks.

Father is an alert man in early middle life, one would judge American-born. As soon as worker, on entering the store, asked for him and indicated, so that customer should not hear, that she came from the J.B.G., father led the way to the kitchen and talked with apparent ease and interest. He accepted worker's explanation that she had come because she is consulting parents about how the society could be most useful to them. He spoke enthusiastically of what the school had done for the older boy, Abraham, who was still there and how pleased he was with the care that Morris was getting.

Father traced the source of his troubles to his divorced wife, who keeps in touch with the boys and influences them to demand money and undermines their respect for him. Father said he placed the boys in the orphan asylum and took Abraham home only after his marriage to his present wife. He said he did not blame her; she tried to do well by his children. He married her with the understanding that he had these children. He said naturally he supposed she did not anticipate how much trouble they were going to be and of course was more interested in her own children. He said he was given custody of all

three by the court but that mother tried to take the girl and influenced the girl to want to go to her. This developed into a scheme to get him to pay the mother money for the girl's board and when he purposely was not very regular in his payments, girl was returned to him and is now placed with his sister-in-law.

Abraham was uncontrollable from the time he came home. Morris has not been as much of a behavior problem but insisted he could not get on with his stepmother and would not live at home. He was in a foster home for a time but wanted to be with his brother.

Worker's questions were such as this: "If you had it to do over again, would you have placed the children in an institution or with a family?" Father said, by all means an institution, because they have discipline there and are in fear of someone. When worker asked tentatively if he thought that they had, for this reason, had difficulty in adjusting to community life, father did not seem to see any connection. He thought that if they had been placed in a family, they would have been still more uncontrollable. Worker explained to him the society's desire to be useful to parents at the point where they are beginning to have trouble with their children but, so far as worker could tell, father saw nothing in this period of his difficulties except that of the mother's interference. He did not know why she wanted to act that way but showed no indication of seeing where case work could have helped him or of knowing what it was. When the parole visitor was explained, father assented to the prospect of having a regular visitor to consult, although worker doubted whether he sensed that there would be any difficulties which he could not cope with himself. He was looking forward to Abraham's being retained at Hawthorne in some kind of work. He said he would give the boys a good start in life and then expect them to take care of themselves.

This case illustrates (as do most of the others) the ease with which blame for unfortunate outcomes may be projected upon one outstanding circumstance with no real inquiry into what else may have been contributing to the poor result. This father sees his boys turning out badly and connects this with their mother's interference. Given such a mother, they *would* be bad, and there is nothing else to relate it to which a counseling service might help him to think out. Mrs. C (Interview 9) has a sick husband, who leaves more responsibility to her than she can carry. Other parents blame bad companions. Unemployment is a common focus for a search for causes of maladjustment these days.

The difficulty of case-work counseling is obvious when there is a prominent factor of this sort which is all too real. Even to imply, in a time of business depression, that there might be other problems if the needed job were obtained is to give an impression that the social worker is not sympathetic, is to seem to be forcing her idea of what is a problem, is to be engaged in the thankless task of trying to

make people remember what they had found peace in forgetting under the all-enveloping blanket of the major disaster. The man who never held a job because of his disagreeable disposition need no longer be so painfully aware of that fact when most of his friends are out of work, too, and he can share in general sympathy for the victims of disaster. If he admits that he was once "foolish" in giving up jobs or getting himself fired, he is sure he has learned his lesson and will have no more trouble if only business picks up.

The case worker who would do anything more than relieve misery by dispensing the community's gifts—the case worker who wants to do counseling, in other words—finds herself faced with the barrier which has prevented clients from facing their real difficulties before; a natural inertia and desire to avoid the pain of self-criticism. The comparative comfort achieved by having a good excuse for what has gone wrong cannot be easily given up. The desire to improve is not, it seems, deeply rooted except in neurotic individuals whose pain is so bound up with unsolved conflicts that excuses do not satisfy. A large number of normal (not neurotic) people do not wish to take the trouble to learn to deal with life more effectively and have a great deal to back them up in blaming the sins of the social order and of other individuals for their plight. The case worker's dilemma is, then that if she takes the responsibility for trying to effect an improvement which the clients do not want, she becomes paternalistic, and if she does not, nobody does and the same old mistakes are repeated over and over with great cost in human misery.

The answer which public health has found would seem to be the reasonable one for social work—a group approach to problems which are recurrent in the majority of families, and social case service where the education of the group fails to reach the individual or has stimulated him to want an individual service which the group method could not supply. Thousands of families have come to include tomato juice and spinach in their diet as a result of education of the public to the need of vitamins. At first only a few take any interest in the publicity about this, but after it has spread to a point where the individual is impressed that "everybody is doing it," it would take a counter revolution to turn back the tide of tomato juice.

A great deal of education for parenthood, it seems, will have to be spread through the usual channels by which travel the forces forming public opinion before case-work service in individual parent-child problems will be appreciated or used. It would seem as absurd to try to

bring about a general understanding of the uses of spinach by the house-to-house visiting of dietitians as to count on social case work for raising the general level of child care. The very disproportionateness of the effort conveys to the public something unnatural in the paternalistic interest which the case-work agency is taking either in remedy or in education. We can be as paternalistic in giving individuals what we have to give in education as in anything else, and if we refuse to be paternalistic, we can be as ineffective as if we left the creation of a public love of spinach to the spontaneous impulse of human beings to improve themselves.

Does this mean group mental hygiene, group education in social relationships, in family life, in marriage adjustments? Why not? And why should not social case work find itself in relation to some such creation of public sentiment, functioning soundly only where the group approach proves inadequate?

GROUP II

Interview 3 (David C; age 15)

Admitted.—Hawthorne School on remand, March 29, 1933.

Complaints.—Complaints that he was uncontrollable have been made to this organization since boy was seven years old. Frequent requests for placement of all the children have been followed by mother's taking them home again almost as soon as placement was made. Parents quarrel and alternately separate and return. Economic conditions always bad, in spite of much relief from social agencies.

Committed.—Hawthorne, August 30, 1933, at expiration of remand, for an indefinite term. Hawthorne School recommended this, since boy was infantile, complaining, ill adjusted to the group, but improving in school work. Considered to need further training, and home situation thought unfavorable for return.

Family.—Father, mother, sister Bessie, 17, and Ida, 9 years.

Interviews (12-15-'33).—In response to letter sent to parents of children at Hawthorne, Mrs. C telephoned the office asking to see worker on Monday, Dec. 18, if possible. Since worker is at the office only on Thursdays, it was arranged that Mrs. C should see someone else if the matter was urgent. She agreed to come on Thursday morning.

Mrs. C at office. She is a short woman, with pale face and pale blue eyes. She was warmly dressed in a sweater and leather jacket which she did not wish to remove. She seemed a little embarrassed at first and asked what worker wanted to see her for. Worker explained the general interest of the society in meeting parents of boys at Hawthorne and said she thought that perhaps mother wanted to see her. Mother said she did not know where to begin. She speaks with an accent which makes understanding difficult and said herself during the interview that she supposed she got everything all mixed up, because times were so bad that she was confused. In the end, worker found that she got a fairly clear picture of the situation, however.

Mother said that her husband has had no work for three years except an Emergency Work job at $15 a week for three days' work. Before the depression he was a clothing operator. Mother said it might have been better for him if he had not had this work with the city, because he has been afraid to hunt for another job lest he lose this and have a long wait to get on the list again. Now he has not been paid up to date, and the family is threatened with being dispossessed tomorrow. Father is to be at court to see about this. Mother did not think that the court could do anything with the landlord but did not seem exceedingly worried about it. She said that the landlord lives in the house, and they are two months behind in rent after Dec. 15; said she gave the landlord five dollars this month but got no receipt for it—also failed to ask for a receipt for the last rent that was paid. She realizes she should not trust people. Mother herself has had no regular work for several months. She has been an examiner in a dress shop but those jobs are hard to get and her shop is closed down. Bessie, who is a bookkeeper, sometimes gets work and gives her mother all her money when she does. Mother says Bessie is a good girl; "so settled down." She is troubled that she cannot afford to visit David, and she knows that he is very anxious to come home. He writes once a month, a very short letter, asking when she is coming to see him. She is not able to send him presents and has only seen him in August when he came down for the court hearing. She cannot write to him in English but Bessie writes for her.

When worker asked how David and Bessie get along, mother indicated that they fight, as most children do, but that Bessie says now she will let David alone if he comes home. Mother has thought that the boy might get working papers and help her a little if he could be home but has been told by the judge not to take him out until there is a job for him.

Worker asked mother to wait until she inquired about the possibility of visiting. Mother said that she did not like to ask for favors as she knew many other people did, but sometimes, she knows, tickets are provided for visiting. She says it is too bad that since her husband has three days' work a week they can get no help of any kind while families entirely on relief have gas, electricity, food, tickets, etc. She said these things, not in a particularly complaining way but rather as a statement of fact. She says Ida is at home from school because she has no shoes and that she has a toothache but the school dentist will no longer give any treatment and the girl does not want her tooth pulled out. On the whole, mother's attitude seem to be, "What can you do when times are so bad?"

Consulted with the Director, Brooklyn branch, who has known the family for some time. Previous record gives little hope of permanent adjustment for this family. Mother and father do not get on well; there are frequent separations. Mother has often had the children placed and taken them home again. Mother has had a great deal of help from social agencies, without being able to make constructive use of it and is, on the whole, quite resourceful in emergencies. The indication is not to go into the family economic situation unless there is more need for it than at present. The matter of visiting David does seem a point at which some study of the situation should be made. There is

no way to tell whether contact between mother and son means a great deal to them or not, but they are certainly cut off from each other since mother cannot afford to visit, and letters are unsatisfactory and gifts impossible. It was agreed that mother might be promised a ticket to Hawthorne on the next visiting day and, in the meantime, worker will get in touch with Miss D at the school and try to find out more about the boy's adjustment. Case will remain with worker until it is clearer whether there is more to be done in the situation or not.

Later: Talked with mother again, promising her a ticket, with which she seemed much pleased. Worker asked her what she would say to David on her visit that would help to make him more contented. Mother said she did not know. She did not wish to worry him with the family troubles. There is little to talk about because he will not tell her how he gets on there. He just says, "All right." She showed a report card which gave some improvement in marks —a B for woodwork and in effort, C in conduct, and a deficiency in arithmetic. Mother says that a former employer of hers, a lawyer, might be willing to take David out and be responsible for a week-end visit. Worker said that if this were so, the man and his wife should come in and talk with us at the office some Thursday morning. Mother will call at office tomorrow for ticket.

This family is one whose difficulties could occupy close to the full time of one social worker. Twenty years ago it seemed that social agencies were loaded with such families. What can be accomplished in such a situation by case work? It seems that parents like these must inevitably create an environment destructive for normal growth of children. Modern thinking about case work (less obsessed than that of two decades ago with a sense of responsibility for everyone) would tend to define more clearly the point at which the community should interfere and remove the children, and might conclude earlier (and therefore with less waste of effort) that short of removal with authority little or nothing could be accomplished.

The difficulty of knowing enough about a family to be sure of the correctness of such a decision without a long period of expensive failure in treatment makes us long for more development of the idea of "exploratory treatment" which is being studied in the Philadelphia Family Society. How does this differ from the treatment which has always been administered with so little result? Three points of difference come to mind. (1) Treatment for the purpose of diagnosing a situation would be more carefully watched. (2) The social worker would consider the effect of procedures in committing the agency to certain courses, creating certain attitudes in clients, etc. and would try to select such forms of treatment as had diagnostic value rather than a supposed efficacy in solving the situation—in other words, action that disturbed the situation least while revealing most about

it. (3) Since the major point to be understood would be the family's own capabilities and resources, "exploratory" treatment might take the form of stimulating them to do certain things that they could do for themselves and studying how they responded to responsibility. In this way, the social worker would also best avoid committing the Society prematurely to doing things for the family.

The problem is riddled with difficulties because there is so little knowledge of what is the significance of these "diagnostic" or "sample" situations. Mrs. C showed clearly from the first a completely disorganized way of living. Not knowing what combination of causes was operating, however (whether her personal incapacity, her husband's lack of cooperation, the presence of spoiled children or other causes) one could not say whether the same disorganization would continue if the children were removed, wife and husband were separated, and so on. If she met small responsibilities badly, such as keeping clinic appointments, could we say, without trying it, that she would also be unable to cooperate so as to make foster placement a success? Some people rise to great adjustments much better than to small ones. Why? We do not know. Our only conclusion at present seems to be that we may have to spend as much effort as ever in finding out conclusively that nothing but radical measures will do any good, but we may direct that effort a little more consciously toward understanding the real situation if our aim is not too exclusively tied up from the start with a desire to play Providence to some children who certainly seem to need it. The tragedy of the latter is that it is a question if the children are not worse off for well-meant but futile attempts to help them, and whether the possibility of a real change is not delayed by such efforts. The whole philosophy of palliatives confronts us here.

When is relief not relief? Mrs. C's case sets up the question whether we are not so sensitized to "something given" that a bell rings inside us, as it were, if a certain bit of treatment has money costs attached to it, and we have to justify it on somewhat different grounds than if it were detached from money considerations. A ticket to visit Hawthorne might be thought of as a gift. It might also, if one were strongly emphasizing the mother's cooperation in a plan for cultivating what might be helpful in the relationship of mother and son, be as incidental a means of enabling her to serve the case work objective as a social worker's expense money for a similar visit. In the first instance, the social worker thinks, "Here is a favor this mother wants.

Shall I give or withhold?" In the second, she is trying to achieve a result in which the mother can be a big factor in success or failure. She invests a certain sum in an experiment in parent-child relationships. That it is given to the mother has little importance. This second way of thinking would certainly be likely to produce very different attitudes in both, and would lead the social worker to proceed very differently.

Neither point of view, however, covers quite all we want to find in modern case work thinking. It is not a question of "Is the mother trying to use me?" (in which case I am on the defensive unless I find some reason why *I* want to give what she asks) or "Can I use the mother for my purpose?" Such a purpose as the fine-sounding one of establishing a healthier mother-son relationship has no vitality unless rooted in some desire on the part of mother and son for such a relationship—unless, that is, it is their purpose, too. The case worker may think farther and feel more truly than they are able to; she may be several steps ahead of them but must be on the same road. Otherwise a visit is arranged, but nothing in the way of better relationship happens.

This ties up with something the writer learned by taking foster-home applications.[10] We cannot expect complete altruism on one side of any human transaction. Foster mothers and placing societies have purposes of their own (each selfish if you like). If they can reach an arrangement whereby both are reasonably satisfied, there is a healthy basis of cooperation; otherwise not. So with social worker and client relationships. I do not believe that a social worker should have no goals which spell success in the case for her—only that she should be willing either to find them on the client's road or to forego their attainment for this case. If both discover that their paths go together, well and good; but there is no sound relationship when one cannot be satisfied without forcing the other into his way.

Interview 4 (Sylvia P; age 13)

Admitted.—Cedar Knolls School, July 1, 1933, on a remand to expire Jan. 30, 1934.

History.—Girl was referred to this society by the Crime Prevention Bureau in June, 1933. Was known to the School Attendance Department because of truancy. Had been written up in the papers because she lived six days in the subways after a scolding at home. Mother complained that girl stayed out late and was incorrigible. Psychological and psychiatric examinations showed average intelligence, but an unhappy child, feeling herself rejected in favor of brother. Plans for treatment at home on probation failed because girl ran away again. She was found after six days at Coney Island.

[10] *An Experiment in Short Contact Interviewing*, p. 45.

At the School: Girl has been under treatment by the resident psychiatrist.

Family.—Father, mother, Alfred, 15, Rosalie, 8, Norma, 3. Ladies' Benevolent Society interested in raising money for a scholarship for Alfred.

Interview (12-24-'33).—In response to the form letter sent to parents of Hawthorne children, mother sent postcard asking worker to visit her Jan. 4.

Home and Neighborhood: The home is in a district of single houses, duplex dwellings or blocks of six or eight houses set close together. Houses are somewhat run-down in appearance, though evidently comfortable when built. Home is a single house in a block, with glassed porch. Mother says they moved here from Ridgewood a few months ago to get rent of $20. Mother is not sure how to run the steam heat and has asked advice of neighbor. Rooms are comfortably furnished and neatly kept.

Circumstances of Visit and Observations: The porch door stuck and seemed to be locked. Worker heard a voice calling to her, and thought it was a young girl, with a mop of wavy black hair, who was waving from the stairs and who led the way into the rooms talking incessantly. It was soon apparent that she was the mother. She gave impression of being quite a dramatic person. Worker thought at first that she must have been an actress. She did not relax and slow down her rapid flow of speech for some time. She was explaining the chill of the parlor, and talking to Rosalie and Norma who came in, trying to get Norma to sing for worker, all as if she were talking to gain time. Rosalie is a small, thin child of eight; Norma looking so big in her zipper suit that her mother's sending her for her nursing bottle made her look ridiculous. Norma refused the milk and asked for candy, which mother first refused and then sent for the box and took out one piece for each, telling the girls that if they had the candy now it would soon be gone and they would have no more. She then sent them out to play and talked more at ease, crying when she mentioned her unhappy life at home. Alfred came in before the close and joined in conversation, asking about psychiatric examinations. He is a tall, thin, good-looking boy, gentlemanly, and asking questions in a responsible way. He brought his mother a china swan for a vase. Mother says he often brings her little gifts from the ten cent store.

What Mother Wanted from the Society: Mother apologized for sending for worker. Said she set this date because she was selling neckties before Christmas and was not often at home. She is much concerned whether she should try to get Sylvia home when her remand expires Jan. 30. Feels "terribly" to have her child away from her (she cried here) and thinks Sylvia has learned a lot of sophistication from older girls at Cedar Knolls. If she takes her home, she fears that Sylvia will be just as bad as before. Her husband blames her for Sylvia's being sent away but she can see nothing she could have done differently. Says her husband has changed a great deal since Sylvia was sent away. (Cried and said she is not happy at all.) He is away from the house almost all the time, and she does not know what he does. When asked if father was fond of Sylvia, mother said she thought so but he was never one to pay much attention to any of them. At another time, she said he had hardly ever taken her anywhere, was not interested in amusements, always at home to eat and go to bed. At still another time, mother said father is restless—has wanderlust, and she thinks Sylvia has it "in the blood."

Mother: The mother gave a picture of a hard-working girlhood, which is

not easy to connect with her appearance. Said several times, "I'm a Hungarian girl, and I was brought up to all kinds of work." She brought up her nine siblings after her mother's death. Did not mind the hard work because she was happy then. There was nothing to disgust her with life, as now. Her home was a religious one, while her husband is German and cares nothing for religion. Sylvia, too, would run out when her mother lit the candles for Friday evening. Mother speaks in praise of her father who came from the old country two years ago. When he visits, mother tells him nothing about Sylvia except that she is away at a camp. She cries and says she has no one to tell her troubles to, for she does not want to worry her father.

Mother says her husband used to make a good living but now works in knitting mills where he has only a day or two of work a week. He was on strike in the fall when work was good. Mother made neckties to sell as long as there was any demand. The teachers at Sylvia's school bought a number. Sylvia's teacher was sympathetic, and one day mother told her all her troubles. Says she has never had what she wanted from life—always hard work and nothing for it. Mother says teachers and workers at court have told her to leave Sylvia at Cedar Knolls as long as court permits. They say she must think of herself and "be strong for the others."

Mother beamed when Alfred came in. Had told worker that he has said that he would not write to Sylvia. "She is not my sister when she acts that way." Mother seemed to look to him and value his opinions. Asked worker to tell him about the psychiatric service at Cedar Knolls which worker had told her about. Alfred was thinking in terms of a "mental examination"—not of treatment.

Throughout, mother filled the conversation with descriptions of Sylvia's behavior—how she would take her lunch to school and run away at noon, how she lived in the subways for several days and came home sick. Her two first menstrual periods coincided with trips away from home when she was without adequate food or rest. Mother says the doctor whom she called the second time told her Sylvia deserved to be sick and mother should not bother any more about her. Mother, herself, complains of pain in her back and vaginal discharge and says her family doctor says she is all run down. Is giving her a tonic. All through, mother's expressed concern about Sylvia was closely connected to how Sylvia's behavior has made her feel. She is much hurt that on her visit Sylvia seemed to care nothing for her but wanted high heeled shoes, a wrist watch and bracelet, etc., though she knew how little money mother has.

Worker's part in the conversation was that of an assenting listener. At times she asked questions, such as whether father had been fond of Sylvia (when mother described the change in him). Impression was that mother hardly noticed questions and passed on with the flow of her own thoughts. Several times mother paused to ask worker what she thought she ought to do about taking Sylvia home. Worker explained the nature of a remand, the possibility of psychiatric treatment for personality difficulties, the time necessary to effect any real change, etc. Mother probably gathered that worker thought girl should remain longer—at least, she seemed to lose her attitude that she might be harming or punishing her child by not making an effort to have her come home, and said that she felt greatly relieved by the opportunity to talk.

How Case Was Left: Worker explained that there would be a visitor later, but that for the present, mother could find her at the office on Thursdays, if she wished to talk over anything.

Comment.—In this case one has the impression of an unhealthy family relationship and rejection by mother as the main root of Sylvia's difficulty, and the psychiatrist's opinion that the child is a personality in deep conflict would confirm this. Superficially, mother's weeping and complaining that life had given her nothing that she wanted would seem to indicate a need for therapy in mother. Worker is not sure that mother wants any therapeutic help, however. She talks much of her unhappiness (as she says she has done to the teachers) but the impression is that she wants sympathy (this is what she reports that she got from teachers and physicians) but not that she feels any need of change in herself. It seems to be her husband who is all wrong. There is a suspicion that her relationship with Alfred is sufficiently lover-like to give her some satisfactions, in addition to those of being an unhappy married woman. Her relation to Norma, as observed, reminds one of a mother animal alternately licking and cuffing her cubs. She wants Norma to show off as soon as she comes into the room, but one wonders if swift rejection will not follow if Norma hurts her pride or becomes rebellious.

As far as worker can tell, mother got what she wanted from this interview—a sympathetic hearing and relief from guilt about keeping Sylvia at Cedar Knolls. Worker did not intend to convey to mother that it was her advice that mother let her remain, although the information given about need of time for personality study might be so interpreted by mother. It seems likely that mother will need to think that someone else has taken the responsibility for this decision, to relieve her own guilt over rejecting the child.

This case brings out clearly the difference in thinking if one has a paternalistic as contrasted with an educational philosophy of case work. Under a paternalistic philosophy, an agency which comes in touch with a family for any purpose would feel responsible for seeing what the needs are and for meeting them as far as possible, or, if not, seeing that some other agency equipped to do so is in touch with the case.

It is quite obvious that all the children in this family stand a chance to grow up with unhealthy personalities. Alfred, at present, is a socially acceptable young man, in the protected atmosphere of high school, with an attractive mother to protect and buy small presents for. One cannot conceive of his making a normal adjustment to the other sex, and one wonders what will happen when he has to compete with others for a job. Perhaps some benevolent society (they already have) will give him a scholarship to go on and on in school, and if he does not get into too much emotional conflict to do his school work well he may end as a professor, single or unhappily married, with a

mother very proud of him, but a wretched misfit in human relationships.

Alfred's need of mental hygiene help is something that a case worker would forecast rather than anything at present apparent. I suppose the best type of case work, under a paternalistic philosophy, would exhaust every means to get into rapport with members of the family, including the father, and if it saw therapy for one or more as a goal try to get them to accept it. There would be a study of the economic situation and an attempt to meet the needs if possible. This would probably be picked as a good case for intensive work, with an unhappy mother as the focus of treatment.

With an educational philosophy of case work, the steps in the mind of the case worker would be not (1) perception of need, (2) assumption of responsibility for it, (3) devising ways to get into contact with members of the family to make them see the need. Instead, there would be (1) a discriminating study of what the individual who makes the first contact sees as needs; (2) relation of this to resources in the society or in the equipment of the worker; (3) meeting this need (or not meeting it, according to circumstances) with the major consideration how to do either one in such a way as to stimulate the client's sense of responsibility for problems and his capacity to meet them; (4) developing a relationship with the individual who first makes contact and with others with whom contact grows naturally out of this—a relationship in which counseling help is known to be available if, as, and when desired; (5) proceeding always from the known (i.e., problems seen by the client) to the unknown (problems seen by the worker) but only as fast and as far as the client can go.

This educational approach involves more faith than most social workers have in the pressure of emotional difficulties for outlet when any understanding person is available as listener. It implies willingness to wait for an educational process rather than to drive ahead for a result, such as connecting a client with therapy or some other opportunity. (It is sometimes forgotten, incidentally, that these very opportunities mean little unless there is educational preparation for them; the client gets therapy but cannot use it.)

The most marked difference of the educational from the paternalistic philosophy of case work is its acceptance of the fact that there are many evils which cannot be cured by either social case work or psychiatry. Where paternalistic case work takes responsibility for any case that it "accepts," working thereafter till it has exhausted all

resources to see that needs are met, the educational philosophy sees no use in trying to meet needs which people cannot be educated to meet for themselves. (See, in connection with this, later comments on material relief, Interview 5.) If it is associated, as sometimes happens, with a philosophy of the responsibility of the whole community for social welfare, it sees no reason for making exceptions of individual victims of wretched social conditions, but rather sees education for social and economic change as essential and only to be retarded by palliative treatment of individuals. It treats individuals, then, as they are ready for its counseling service in the handling of their problems of life adjustment, stopping at any point where the client can no longer be stimulated to see further needs or to make further changes in the relationships between himself and his environment.

Interview 5 (Samuel S; age 14)

Admitted.—Hawthorne School, Dec. 23, 1933, on remand until June, 1934.

Complaint.—In Children's Court, Sept. 27, 1933, for stealing pocketbook containing $60 on street. Placed on probation. In another court after breaking into house with two other boys on Nov. 25, 1933. Stole jewelry valued at $425. Caught by owner in house. Sent to Hawthorne on remand because of good reputation of family and because boy confessed and told names of his companions and seemed to court officer sincerely repentant. He had been stealing and selling wine from cellars and gambling with the money.

History.—Parents, born in Turkey, are citizens of the U.S.; here 26 years. Father in grocery and fruit business until forced out by the depression. Living standards and reputation good. Samuel left school in 8B grade and was sole wage earner at $13 a week, working in a brush factory at time of his arrest. Public School had given sister Mary (15) and brother Mark (12) free lunches and clothing. School referred family to Home Relief Bureau after Samuel's arrest.

Interview (1-25-'34).—Postal card received from father in response to the form letter sent to parents of Hawthorne boys. He asked for a visit on January 25.

House and Neighborhood: A Jewish residential district, fairly newly built up apparently. Home is almost opposite Public School 79 on the corner of B Avenue. Family lives on the third floor front.

Circumstances of the Interview: Worker was admitted by Mary, a thin, pale-faced, tired-looking girl, who took her into the front room, used as a bedroom, and introduced her mother. Mother is a somewhat stout woman with straight black hair, combed back into a large knot. She was alternately taking up and putting down a baby of about a year, just beginning to walk. Mother speaks English with some difficulty and indicated that her husband would soon be back. She said that he had seen from the window worker coming across the street and had felt sure she was coming to their house. She seemed to find this an amusing little thing to talk about which helped her to keep her conversation going.

Before father came in, mother showed a letter from Samuel, a formal invitation to his graduation next Monday. Mother says she cannot go. She has been taken to the School once by a friend who has a car. Mother says that she has very bad headaches and points to a goitre in her neck which she thinks may be the cause. The father came in shortly. He is a small man, apparently not in very vigorous health. He sat on the edge of the bed and talked fluently. Before the end of the interview Mark came in from school. He is a quiet, pale-looking boy, who listened attentively to his father. Father shook hands and asked if worker had seen the letter from Samuel. He said that the School was a good place and he was glad Samuel was there even though it was a terrible thing to have him sent away. Worker explained the relation of the J.B.G. to the School. Father said he was glad the society was interested in Samuel, for he is not a bad boy even though what he has done is bad. Father said several times, "I thank God this has happened, for nobody knows how far he would have gone if something hadn't stopped him from stealing." He was trying hard to help the family, however. His earnings were the family's support before his arrest. Father says, of course, he wants him home but "not because I need him, you understand. I do need him and we suffer without him but even more I want him to have a chance. It doesn't matter so much about me. If I can't get work, we suffer but then I'm an older man and my life is not so long. But he has his life to live yet, and he ought to have a chance."

Then, as if beginning a new subject, father asked if he might ask a favor of worker. He said he didn't suppose it could be granted but would she please try, at least, to help him get a job. He said he had registered with the Civil Works Authority in all the boroughs but could not follow this up by daily visits, as he would like to, for lack of carfare. It would cost twenty or thirty cents a day, he said, and they do not have it. He said he was referred to the Home Relief Bureau by the school where he had registered for a job. He was reluctant to take relief but knew he had to, and if not they would not keep him in mind for a job. He said he could do anything with his hands, although he explained he is not expert. He can do carpentry, painting or odd jobs of all sorts. "Everything except office work," he said, at which his wife joined him in laughing. When worker said that the society was in as bad a position as he, since there are almost no jobs to be had, father said he knew that; nevertheless, he knows that influence has something to do with it, for men registered at the Civil Works Authority long after he did are working today, and he has never had an offer. Father says it takes someone to speak for you. He, himself, has friends, many of them, people of influence in the Riverside District where they used to live. He says, however, he could not go to them for help.

Once he had a good business there. Worker asked if he thought they would blame him for being out of work. Father said, no, it was not that but "it hurts me here," putting his hand on his chest. He says that they moved to this neighborhood when their fortunes went down, partly to get away from the pitying looks of friends, and here they have had very little to do with the people around them. Worker asked what father did all day, and he said the days were very long—just tramping the streets and coming in again with nothing accomplished. Samuel could have work if he were home but not his father. The brush shop has sent for him and also a dress factory in Manhattan which had his name. Father told both places that boy was in hospital. Father asked the dress factory if they would not employ him instead but they refused; said they wanted only boys. Father explained boy's leaving school by saying that he was ill in the hospital after an accident from Dec. 1932, when he left school, until it was nearly summer. Then he wanted to go to work and help the family. Father said he was told on visit to Hawthorne by a man who, he thinks, was the superintendent that boy is one of the best there and that, regardless of what he has done, they think he is a fine boy.

Worker asked how the boy himself has reacted to being sent to Hawthorne. It was a little difficult to explain to family that she meant that while he would naturally have regrets, it was not healthy for him to be overcome with shame and to lose his self-respect. Worker allowed her struggle for words in saying this to be apparent to family, with the expected result that they seemed to have a fellow feeling for her difficulty in language and seemed to make a special effort to understand. Father thinks boy does respect himself and feels sure that he has the respect of the school authorities. Worker explained that there will be a regular visitor before boy comes home and that she would like to pass on the father's requests immediately. Explained that she is herself on special work and has more time to get acquainted with the parents than the regular visitor and is only filling in until active work is to be done. Explained that while the agency might not be able to do much, father could feel free to talk with them at any time. Father said he was sorry to bring worker to the home but he had no money for carfare. Worker assured him she has another visit in the neighborhood and was glad to come to meet them.

Her impression of family's attitude was one of self-respecting cordiality.

Comment.—This family is one of thousands in New York, brought from a condition of comfortable livelihood to the edge of destitution, if not beyond. None of the family looks well. The home, although clean, is bare and cheerless. They have to face the monotony of existence without any of the things which would make the day pass with any pleasure. From the court record worker learned that probation office was convinced that boy was sincerely repentant and the family was one with standards, with whom it will be worth while to work intensively. Regardless of whether it is true or not that boy has given up his dishonest ways of making money, the fact that he told on his confederates would make a complete break with his former life necessary. In any case, it seems undesirable for family to continue in this neighborhood where they have nothing but misery to remember and none of the ties to their community, which they left behind in Riverside. It would seem to be a mental hygiene problem to work out with them their emotional difficulties about return to a neighborhood which has much meaning for them.

In relation to Samuel, it is impossible that an adolescent boy, craving all the things that money could give his family in increase of comfort and some of the excitement and pleasure of youth, should return to a factory job at $13 a week, all of which must be given to the family for barest necessities, and should maintain morale and make any growth of personality. It would seem that he must have the reinforcement of something to enjoy, something to live

for besides monotonous labor to keep just out of starvation. For the sake of the boy's rehabilitation, then, it would seem that everything possible should be done to reinforce the family in its own struggle to maintain morale. It would seem that this family has possibilities for using educationally, for growth of personality, any betterment in their condition which can be given them through the interest of the society.

Comparing this situation with the philosophies expounded in commenting on Interview 4, one asks whether an "educational" philosophy of case work (as distinguished from a paternalistic one) is compatible with the administration of relief. In this case, of course, the basic necessities are taken care of (probably very inadequately) under the Home Relief Bureau, but there are so many things the family needs before they can have anything like a stable foundation for maintaining their morale and starting the children out in life with any chance of success that a case-work organization has to think seriously about relief in relation to its treatment. Discarding the paternalistic philosophy that case workers are responsible for meeting all the needs they see or for getting someone else to meet them if they can, there have grown up various attitudes toward relief. By relief here is meant not only coal and groceries, but recreation, scholarships, gifts of clothing, anything that costs the agency money directly or means a transfer to the clients of material goods. Generally, relief of any kind seems to be thought of as a sometimes necessary evil. If a family is interested in nothing else, then it might be used to form a contact in the hope that the client would then be able to consult about his personality difficulties, but some would condemn even this concession to the flesh. If the contact cannot proceed without something being done about pressing needs, then somebody else should attend to the relief, says this theory. The writer objects to the use of relief to "buy" a relationship and equally to the fear that it will kill it. Sound human relationships outside of case work do not seem to be made or destroyed as easily as all that. The writer objects equally to an attitude which would see it as a professional duty either to divert people from preoccupation with material needs, which are all too real, or to refuse to do anything for them if they cannot be thus diverted, on the ground that they do not want case-work service. It reminds one of the religious missions that give meals and a bed only as a means to saving a man's soul.

There are a number of dilemmas all mixed up here, but a fundamental error lies in the conception in the mind of the case worker

that money is power. With this association of money-power, a largely subconscious one and never thought through, case workers who want power over others use relief with a paternalism which is kindly or dominating as the case may be, while those who revolt from having power exercised over themselves or from using it on others shun relief. Of course, clients usually think that money is power and have all kinds of emotional reactions to their lack of it and to the supposed power over them that is bestowed upon the case worker when she has something to give. All the more reason, then, that the case worker should clarify her own emotions about it, so as to be able to help the clients with theirs.

As was discussed in the comments on Interview 3, money may be used to carry out a case-work plan with the attitude that the case worker has used power or bestowed it upon the client in the process of carrying out the plan, or with quite a different attitude in which money figures as something as incidental to the plan as the matter of choosing trolley or subway for transportation. The plan is made by the client (so runs the educational philosophy of case work) with the case worker's encouragement to think it out *as if* what was needed could be done, what resources are necessary, where if anywhere they can be found. The case worker contributes a relationship which gives confidence where, with no one "standing by," the client might not be able even to imagine a way out of his difficulties. She may contribute considerably in information and knowledge of how to help clients think clearly, along with psychiatric skill in sizing up at every point just how much she needs to help the client think things out, and when, with a little stimulation, he can go on his own.

Suppose this plan, as evolved, takes money. The client has exhausted his resources. Where shall it be obtained? If the case worker herself has ceased to associate money blindly with power, and especially if she has a social philosophy which looks upon the resources of a nation as rightfully used for human welfare, she will feel neither guilty nor grateful nor humiliated to approach a person or agency which has funds on behalf of this well-thought-out purpose. Perhaps the client should approach such a source himself. Perhaps the case worker could contribute a point of contact with the fund or giver through being a professional person, as a doctor would ask for a medical report from another physician for his patient (with the patient's permission) knowing that he would be told more. The point is that the case worker

must divorce herself entirely from the idea of power or merit in getting this gift to the client. If she does this and puts her energies into helping the client to make the same divorce, this writer can see no damage resulting to the relationship. The client may or may not get the lesson in detachment from his childish attitudes that a person who gave was "nice" and one who did not "real mean." If case work is like any other educational process it takes time, and no teacher expects perfection from every pupil. But in this "progressive school" called life, where giving and receiving relationships are so important for all emotional development, there seems to be great advantage, both for case workers and clients, not in evading them but in learning to deal with them constructively.

As more and more of relief, at least for basic necessities, is taken over by public agencies, and its administration becomes a business in itself then case work may be freed to use relief or not as it is needed—not to wield power and force plans through, but to provide the wherewithal for plans soundly conceived in the best case-work practice.

Group III

Interview 6 (Jacob M; age 15)

Admitted.—Hawthorne School, Dec. 8, 1933, on commitment for violation of parole.

Court Record.—April 13, 1933, was in Children's Court on complaint that acting with four other boys, he engaged a jewelry story keeper in conversation about a fountain pen while his confederates stole watches from the show case. Was placed on probation. On Dec. 1, 1933 complaint that boy, with two adults, stole a horse and wagon and laundry valued at $250 and concealed goods in vacant apartment, abandoning the horse and wagon.

Family.—Father, mother, brother Hyman, 13, sister Beatrice, 12, Sarah, 8, Millie, 6, Tillie, 4.

Interview (1-2-'34).—Visited after having received a postcard requesting visit in answer to form letter sent to parents of boys at Hawthorne. Interview took place in the kitchen, the only warm room, heated by a cook stove. Two rooms open from this into which mother sent the children while she talked with visitor. Mother was standing by the kitchen table sprinkling clothes for ironing. Mother did not sit down until urged to do so by visitor. The room was small and had little furniture but was well kept. Mother is young-looking, rosy-cheeked woman, with alert face and friendly manner. During the interview the children came in from school and stood about in a circle listening and talking. Beatrice, at mother's request, read Jacob's letter to visitor. Hyman, the boy of 13, was bringing coal for mother from the basement. The children are bright-looking youngsters, healthy and well-kept.

What Mother Wanted from the Society: Mother's first remark was an apology that she had sent for visitor when she ought to have come to the office herself. She said she did not realize this until after the postcard had gone. Visitor reassured her that she saved the time in the afternoon to visit and that she knew many mothers are too busy to leave home.

Asked mother how she was. Mother shrugged her shoulders, continuing to sprinkle the clothes, saying she was pretty well but she had troubles. Worker asked her what they were, and she said it was her boy being sent away. Asked how much worker knew and gave her her own story that Jacob was involved with other boys aaginst whom she had warned him, telling him to stay by himself. It was no good to be around with the boys. She said he had said he could take care of himself. When the boys stole laundry from the wagon Jake helped them bring the packages upstairs to empty apartments in the house. He claimed he did not know the goods were stolen. Mother had sent him out to school to pass an examination the day the police came for him. Mother said he was a bright boy, and it was too bad he was sent away, although after all she thought it might be good for him to stay and learn a lesson until he was 21. If he was at home, though, he might get a job and help her out a little for times are bad.

When questioned about her husband's work she said he is a tailor in a shop on L Street. He has only two or three days work a week. Mother explained, although worker could not see in what connection, that her husband had been married before and had three children when she married him. The stepchildren are now married and out of the home. One of these sons got a job for Jacob last summer in the shipping room where he works, and Jacob made $8 a week. He did good work, and they have been asking for him recently. Mother hopes no one will tell where Jacob is, as it may spoil his chances for a job when he comes home.

Mother produced a letter from the Superintendent at Hawthorne telling her that Jacob will have his tonsils and adenoids removed about Jan. 17 unless the parents object before that time. Mother was worried about this and telephoned the School today (at a cost of thirty-five cents, which meant much to her) to find out more about it. She wishes she could only be there over night but the School told her it was impossible. She will be allowed to visit on Jan. 19. She said it is hard for her to get away because "I am a housekeeper too. If there is no hot water everybody will be crying for it." Evidently the expense of visiting is also a large issue. Visitor reassured her about the tonsil and adenoid operation, which none of her children had had. Two boys have had operations for appendicitis, and worker told her this was less serious, but mother had heard of a child dying of hemorrhage and was evidently very fearful.

A letter from the boy was read by Beatrice. It is full of praise of mother and the good advice he had received at home, etc., the kind of letter a boy might think it good for him to write. He sent greetings to all his sisters and his boy friends, especially Eddie, a boy who, mother says, has warned him against bad company. A letter to Eddie written on the same paper was in quite different language from that to his mother. In this he said the school was a "lousy place" and he was glad Eddie was not there.

Although worker prolonged the visit, the children bringing samples of Jacob's drawings and worker telling mother a little about the school at Hawthorne, mother seemed to have nothing further to say or to ask of the society. Worker's

conclusion is that the mother was worried by the letter from Hawthorne about the operation and primarily needed reassurance. She asked about the office at 19th Street, and worker told her that she could come at any time on Tuesday morning if she wished to talk with visitor. Explained to her that the society will have a man interested in Jacob when he is ready to return home. Mother pressed worker's hand with a great deal of warmth as visitor left. Evidently she felt the need of some personal contact with the School and appreciated the interest of the society in her boy.

Although it is probable that the family is living on very small means, mother did not bring out any need for assistance. She did misunderstand something that worker said about the boy's coming home and asked at whose expense this would be arranged. Worker explained that visits are sometimes allowed if the Superintendent thinks best, but did not indicate at this time that there was any question that expenses could be paid.

There seems to be nothing to be done in this case except reassure mother. It may remain quiescent unless mother appeals to the society for some service.

Comments.—In the absence of information which might reverse the opinion, the M family shows no evidence of the social pathology that might produce delinquency. One suspects, rather (and there is information lacking on this also) that a sociological study of the neighborhood might show a delinquency area (similar to those studied in Chicago by Clifford Shaw) in which it is the normal thing for adolescents to become involved in delinquency. Mother seemed to have some consciousness of this when she said she tried to keep boy from going with other boys, and when she said she supposed the sons of people who lived uptown did not get sent away like this. When the case worker said that they came from all parts of the city, she replied, with what looked like relief, "Oh, I thought maybe it was only from districts where—you know—cheap people live." Worker had the impression from the way in which mother told her that they had lived in this district twenty-two years that mother does feel at home here and has a sense of "belonging." One wonders whether she has just begun to realize that there are influences threatening her children which she cannot control by the admonition to "keep away" from the crowd.

Observation during this visit would suggest that the mother was one who devotes herself utterly to making her family as comfortable as possible and expects from them in return obedience and a loyalty that may have in it considerable shutting out of other interests. She was proud of the boy's school and athletic ability, and one does not doubt that she wants her children to "get on." But the penalty of living in a neighborhood which must have very mixed sorts of attractions for young people is that one "gets on" by being highly selective of companions and interests. Naturally parents do not trust youngsters to have the judgment for this, and in trying to select for their children cling to the things they know—which may not be the newest resources or those most enjoyable to the child. Also, the whole

emphasis is apt to be on picking out what gives the child the most, not what he can contribute to in such a way as to develop social-mindedness. Youngsters may or may not get this in extra-curricular activities at school. Chances to participate in something worth while, even at some personal sacrifice, are rare in our present civilization, and, if there were such an opportunity, parents might easily object to a youngster's embracing it. "What do you get out of it?" "Why waste your time?" "You may get into trouble." These are natural enough things for parents to say, little realizing how valuable a part of education for socially-minded citizenship is being lost.

It seems to be a penalty of the monstrous growth of cities that community spirit does not develop or is so dominated by the elders that the young have no place and no education for participation. The "will to cooperate" still seeks an outlet, but on the immature gang level where the goals are the crudest sort of personal advantage (fruit from pushcarts, adventure, money for fun, etc.). An admonition to "keep away" solves nothing then, and a good family life cannot maintain its health without roots in a sound social fabric.

It seems that case work would take on quite a different emphasis if case workers were more aware of the relation of their clients to the whole community. It seems as if they often repeat the mistakes of parents, described above, in which they try to create a world such as they approve for the young person, or to "make an exception" of their child, giving him advantages not enjoyed by other young people of his age and group. Youngsters often react like Jacob in refusing to be made an exception of or to take an artificial world. Then the case worker is as surprised and hurt as the parents would be, and perhaps as little understanding of the youngster's seeming perversity. The question is whether the young are not healthier in their reactions. Is not the issue basically one of making communities fit for them to be a part of, with real participation in their community as a *sine qua non* of healthy mature adult life?

GROUP IV

Interview 7 (Irving F; age 15)

Admitted.—Hawthorne School, Nov. 1, 1933, on remand for four months.

Complaint.—Acting with three other boys, he boosted John Smith into the window of a house, where he took a purse. The boys later returned the purse with five cents missing and were caught on re-entry.

History.—No previous record of delinquency. Father, mother and two sisters, Amy, 20, and Elizabeth 18, live in an apartment in a good neighborhood.

Interview (12-5-'33).—Mrs. F telephoned, asking worker to call. Appointment made for Dec. 7, 1933.

Place and Circumstances: Interview was held in the combination sitting and dining room of the apartment, mother sitting on the couch by visitor and father standing leaning against the table. On arrival visitor met father and another man just leaving the apartment. Father came back for the interview, and mother later explained that the second man was his business partner and that father had to go out with him in order that no one should know of her son being at Hawthorne.

Father is a well-dressed, thick-set man with florid complexion. Mother is a rather pretty, middle-aged woman, growing stout and rather worn-looking.

Parents' Story: Mother began by saying she cries every day since her boy was sent away, that she is sick with high blood pressure and therefore asked worker to call. Both parents said that they had no idea the boy would be sent away for a first offense. They told story as given in the court complaint with the comment that the neighborhood boys had been in mischief, had boosted a younger boy to a window where they took a pocketbook in which they had found five cents. It was on returning the pocketbook that they were caught. Mother said Irving had always been a good boy, in fact too quiet, and she had had to "chase him out on the streets" to play with other boys because he was always in the house reading. She and father repeated several times that they had lived eighteen years in one apartment house and never had any trouble until about two years ago when the neighborhood deteriorated and they moved to W Avenue where they paid $60 rent and expected that the neighborhood would be unusually good. There was one boy in the house that mother did not like from the first, and she feels that this boy was a ring leader. She said Irving would be called "yellow" by the other boys if he did not join with them in any mischief they were undertaking. It had been his habit to tell her everything that happened but she knows now that they were getting into trivial misdemeanors and were tending to more serious delinquencies.

Parents said if they had had any idea the boy would be sent away they would have engaged a lawyer. As it was, the boy was crying too much to say anything for himself and of the four boys involved, he and another one who had been accused of beating a little girl were the only ones sent away. Two others were released, father has been told, because their fathers went to a politician and fixed it up. Mother said tearfully that they would have done the same for their boy had they known, but they supposed it was a misdemeanor to offer a bribe and did not dare do so. They had no idea the boy would be sent away for a first offense anyway. They were told by the probation officer that it might be advisable to move, so they arranged for removal to this apartment at the very day the court was in session. They both said the boy's school teacher "cried like a baby" when she heard Irving was sent away and said she would have gone to court if she could have gotten away from school to testify to his good character.

What Parents Want of the Society: Almost before visitor was seated, mother asked if boy could come home for Christmas. Visitor explained that this might not be possible and that the Jewish Board of Guardians could not interfere in the orders of the court. Parents then went into the preceding story and when a pause occurred, visitor asked them if they had any previous knowledge of the Jewish Board of Guardians. They said they had not. Visitor then explained that the society, while it has nothing to do with the commitment of children, does endeavor to run a school which shall be the best possible for the boys sent there and that it is interested in meeting the parents and being of any service to them that is possible while the child is in the institution.

It was evident that the parents had not visualized any service except possibly getting their boy out of Hawthorne. Worker asked them this question: "What could you do when you go to visit Irving to make this whole experience seem to him something that is not a disgrace but will be helpful to him all his life?" In this connection she asked if Irving seemed to have a great deal of shame. They said he did and that he cried when they visited him and asked if anyone knew about his commitment. They have carefully concealed it from relatives and friends. In fact, mother has cut herself off from all her friends in order to have no questions asked as to where Irving is. They hope to keep the secret until he returns home, although boys in their old neighborhood know it. Worker suggested that it is not good for a boy to have too much shame and asked them how they could explain the situation to Irving constructively. Mother suggested that she would tell him that he must be a good boy, that he could come home if he was good and no one would know, but if he was not good papa and mama would not want to see him any more, that papa and mamma were anxious to do everything for him, etc. Worker asked father to wait a moment to discuss this question before his return to his work. Father thought he would say about the same thing. Visitor then said that this suggestion of hers might not apply to their boy, but she thought often a boy of his intelligence could be appealed to by speaking to him in a somewhat more grown-up fashion. For instance, that everyone makes mistakes but a fellow has to learn to pick his own associates wisely and to depend on himself for decisions, that there is nothing to grieve over but rather a real need to make the most out of this experience and to regard it as an opportunity to go to a school which has much to offer.

Parents said boy has been quite pleased with his work in the mechanics shop, that he had a good deal of mechanical ability. They showed worker some tiny models of aeroplanes that they said he had made. Mother said tearfully that he did these things very well but she thought he was too much alone in the house and had "chased him out" in order to play with the other boys. Worker reassured them about the educational work in Hawthorne and the fact that the shop is of great value to many boys. Father said that after Irving's commitment he went down to Central Office to ask about the school and found there a graduate of Hawthorne who had been in school four years and who gave him an encouraging report of it. Mr. F gave this boy carfare to go to the home and tell his wife the same thing, and she had gained some comfort from this.

Returning to the subject of what they could tell Irving that would help him when they visit next Sunday, father thought the boy was old enough to be put on his own, as visitor suggested, rather more than they had thought of doing. Mother gave a number of illustrations to show that Irving had been made a good deal of a baby. She had catered to him in food and now was worried lest he should not eat but is told by his letters that he is eating

everything and gaining weight. She has prided herself on her particular care of him but she said that she would hate not to have him grow up to be a real independent man. She blames herself for not having watched him more closely. Visitor tried to reassure her on this by saying that there are hazards in every neighborhood and it is impossible for a mother to protect a boy. Rather he must learn to take responsibility for his own actions. Youthful mischief need not ruin a life, but, on the other hand, if an experience like this is unpleasant, the only thing to do is to extract all possible good from it.

After father went to his work, mother talked of her own loneliness, being cut off from her friends and how the "day is as long as a year." Worker asked her what she could do to fill up the time that would perhaps not only interest her but enable her to be even better equipped as a mother after Irving's return. Asked her if she had ever taken any course which she enjoyed. Mother said she had not, although she had studied English by herself and learned a great deal, learning also from the captions in the movies. She said she came to this country at sixteen; married at nineteen and was a mother at twenty. She reads more easily in Yiddish but also knows Russian and English well enough to have taught her children their first spelling and reading in English. She does not believe she could take any courses because her time is so tied up with irregular meals in the family. The children and father come in for lunch from twelve o'clock until three and for dinner for a like period of several hours. Also mother said she has "no patience." She used to do a great deal of sewing for the children and showed with pride photographs of the little girls in dresses which she had made, also beautifully embroidered curtains of her own making. She said she gets so nervous she cannot do these things now. Her blood pressure has gone up a great deal since Irving was committed, and she does not go out except perhaps to the movies by herself or with her husband. Worker suggested that constant grieving cannot but be bad for her health and make things worse in the end for Irving, and that if possible she should do everything to be well and happy when he returns.

Mother said the daughters are very satisfactory young girls who have graduated from high school and would have gone to college if the family could have afforded it. They are now working in their father's business. They have always been steady and no problem to bring up. She believes it is much harder to bring up a boy in the city. She expressed much appreciation for visitor's coming, saying that it was so long since anyone had come to her home, that it was a pleasure to her.

She was told that the family can communicate directly with the School on matters connected with the life there, but that if they wish to talk over anything they can reach the visitor at the J.B.G. on Tuesday mornings. They understand that the boy is on remand until March 1 and that then the case will be reconsidered in court.

Comments.—This case was one in which the parents' greatest conscious need was for the undoing of what seemed to them a terrible injustice. Not expecting this miracle to happen, they wanted a visit from the boy for Christmas. Their story stressed how they had done the best they could as parents and how neither they nor the boy deserved the disgrace that had come upon them.

A situation like this is at first glance a poor one in which to experiment with

the capacity of parents to take responsibility. It seems as if there is nothing they can do, as if others are to blame and they may justifiably feel themselves helpless. In fact in two striking instances they have done the best they knew, only to regret it later. The mother "chased the boy out to play." She said at one point that the father now blames her that she did not watch Irving more. (Had she begun to realize his babyishness and was she reacting to her own guilt for coddling him so much or to a real appreciation of his need to grow up in social life with other boys?) Then the parents failed to fix up the case with the politician as others did. (Do they think now that their friends would blame them for not "spending a couple of dollars" to save their boy?) Whatever the parents did, therefore, they now feel was wrong. It is not much stimulus to self-confidence or renewed effort of any sort.

The case worker saw, however, an opportunity to make this single interview not only one for "placing the problem" but one in which some treatment in trying to produce different attitudes might be possible.

The problem was not to try to show them how to undo what could not be undone but how to make it a constructive instead of a destructive experience for the boy. She was helped to diagnose the stage of thinking which the parents had reached by the way they met her question of what they would say to the boy on their next meeting. She asked the father to wait and contribute to this discussion because she felt that he especially might appreciate the boy's need to have a less emotional type of handling, putting him more on his own for the future in regard to companions and activities. The parents expressed in their imaginary address to the boy their wish to keep him dependent on them, his conduct shaped and motivated by their good name and approval. Yet they were at a point of despair in regard to their ability to protect their son. They were tying him around their necks when they felt themselves most helplessly in the mire.

The worker does not feel that she did a particularly good job in introducing to the parents a new conception of the boy's responsibility for himself and of their rôle as parents. This was partly because she knew too little either of the boy's capacity or of the forms of presentation which would mean most to these parents. The most she hoped to accomplish was to set a somewhat different emotional tone for the visit to the boy on Sunday, to stimulate the mother to rouse herself from her flight into illness and grief and to help her to see some connection between her attitudes and activities now and a constructive or destructive outcome for the boy. She was rather conscious that the relationship to the worker was the chief factor in whatever might be accomplished. Circumstances favored this. The parents expected a harsh organization; they are pleasantly disappointed by evidence of some interest in them. They could tell their story; any connection with the court was disclaimed, yet the agency stood for the same sort of attempt to make the best out of a bad past that the worker was urging upon them. The worker took no responsibility for things at the School or in relation to the boy's return home but was available and hence might represent some security if the parents attempted to carry out her suggestions.

One important sentence of mother's the worker forgot to record (perhaps because she did not know how to evaluate it). The mother said toward the end

that she was glad "in a way" that boy was caught when he was. Otherwise he might have gone on with the same companions into worse delinquencies. The worker does not know whether this was evidence of a real attempt to begin to see the experience constructively, or an echo of something the worker had been saying. She does not recall, however, having brought out just this point in any way.

The writer was interested to find herself taking the typical case-work attitude of acceptance of a possibly rotten situation in connection with the court. She asked herself why she made no effort to study that situation as well as the family and personal one. She thinks it should have been taken into the whole picture if the case were worked with intensively, and that would involve discussing it further with parents. For whether they were really the victims of injustice or only thought they were, there was good foundation for the formation of grudge attitudes. What political corruption means to people who have to live under it, how some people may be even more helpless against it than these clients, what an ordinary citizen can do about it (their idea, guided by questions perhaps, but not by a lecture from the case worker) these seem as valid subjects for discussing in case-work contacts as anything else that parents find to be a problem in relating themselves to their world. The extreme adherents of a "passive" therapeutic approach would not introduce such a discussion unless clients showed anxiety about it. But it seems that its prominence in these parents' story was itself an introduction of the subject; the case worker had somehow to convey that she was interested, or the clients would not think it relevant enough to themselves to go on with it. The therapeutic goal of stimulating their participation in all that affects their life might well include more conscious facing of their place in the larger community. In fact, one of the most valuable tools of treatment is to translate what seems isolated, peculiar to the client's situation into terms of the suffering of others and terms of effort, at least, to find when some responsibility may be taken by the client, however indirectly, as a voter and citizen.

In an experiment of this kind, with a limited contact, there seems to be no reason for going into more than can be assimilated or than appears to be entirely relevant. One point involving change of attitudes was taken up, though the case worker quite consciously knew that it might take many interviews to get parents to a point where they would really change emotionally. One such problem seems enough for most parents to grasp in one interview. To attempt more would be

to degenerate very easily into being "preachy." (See discussion of premature "giving of insight" in comments on Interview 8, following.)

Thinking over this case and comparing it with Interview 8, the writer felt for several reasons more justified here in having attempted to give suggestions. First, she had sensed an immediate problem. The parents were to visit the boy and showed evidence of carrying an unhealthy attitude over to him. Second, their story suggested a maternal over-protection from which the mother was possibly trying to free herself and which a father can usually be counted on to resent. The case worker therefore saw a chance to connect her suggestion that the boy be treated more as an adult with the latent wishes of the parents for him. The counter wishes (to protect and cherish) were probably over strong at the moment in reaction against the injury done to the boy and the family, but the worker's treatment aim was to restore a more normal balance by trying to set in motion again patterns of responding "for the good of the boy" which would result in fostering growth of personality. As she sees her treatment function, it found its place in a situation which would probably anyway have made its pendulum swing back from emotional reaction to some sort of constructive planning for the boy's future. Left to itself, however, unhealthy shame and dependence might have been fostered in the boy and neurotic illness in the mother, so that constructive planning would have nothing but damaged people to work with, and planning might be indefinitely delayed by the absence of an undamaged person in the situation to make the first move. The case worker, then, might speed up the return to normal planning for growth, enough to prevent some of the unhealthy attitude formation and give stimulus to normal planning before too much damage to personality had been done.

Interview 8 (Bessie G; age 15)

Admitted.—Cedar Knolls School, Oct. 31, 1933, on remand until March 1, 1934.

Complaint.—On Sept. 27, 1933, father complained that girl is a delinquent child beyond control of parents. "Remains out till two A.M., uses vile and indecent language." Stayed away all night on Sept. 22, returned home and then left again.

Family.—Father, mother, brother Harry, 18, Simon, 13. Older stepbrothers and sisters out of the home.

Interview (12-12-'33).—Home visited in response to a return postal card sent out with a form letter to parents of Cedar Knolls girls.

"People, Place and Circumstances: Apartment is in a block of stores and is fairly comfortable and well kept. Father says they have lived in this neighbor-

hood for over twenty years, since it was a region of farms. Father answered the doorbell and conducted worker to the combination sitting and dining room where mother was. Father did most of the talking, mother following his remarks in a sort of echo. Brother, Simon, came in from high school during call. He is a slender boy, very tall for his age. Father is a man of very evident vigor of physique, white hair, ruddy complexion and with not an ounce of spare flesh. He speaks in quick, business-like way. Mother is frail-looking with short stringy hair about her face and no teeth. Much of her speech consists of ejaculations—"Isn't it terrible?" and the like.

Parents' Story: The card was sent to visitor because parents want Bessie home for Christmas. The brother Harry is in a Civilian Conservation camp and is coming home, as is also the older sister. They understand that Bessie is allowed to come home at times and that they can take this up with the School. Worker explained the plan by which the form letter was written and indicated that the central office was willing to be consulted if they feel any need. When it was explained that this organization might be the parole agency, father said he wanted Bessie under supervision.

Father said he is a special police officer assigned to a dance hall in the neighborhood, and his work makes him very conscious of the dangers to young girls. He said, "Only respectable organizations use our place," but the law is evaded by young men, many of them Italians, from the Park section, who hire a basement, call themselves a club, get a victrola and for admission of ten or fifteen cents draw in the young people of the neighborhood. These places are hardly visible from the street, and they keep open until all hours of the night, since they are supposed to be a sort of club and the law cannot reach them. Father said that he and his wife made the rounds of these places and turned a lot of them out on the street. He said it seems that Jewish girls go crazy over Italian fellows. He does not know why.

He took Bessie to court expecting to give her a lesson. He would not want her put away for a long time, but he does want her under supervision when she returns. He likes the School and the freedom there and believes in the honor system. Says there is a good young man who would marry Bessie tomorrow if she would have it, and parents are encouraging it. Bessie is only fifteen but looks eighteen or nineteen and has gone with older girls, claiming to be their age. Parents think she is not too young to marry and from their point of view would prefer it to having her run around with all kinds of men. They say that they were fourteen and fifteen years old respectively when they were married. If Bessie returns and is not married they have made arrangements to have her transferred to the trade school she would like to go. She has been interested in beauty parlor work at Cedar Knolls.

Worker's Questions and Remarks: Worker's responses during the parents' story were in the nature of questions about what opportunities Bessie had had for recreation aside from the unwholesome sources which parents mentioned. Father said there are frequently well-run dances at the hall where he works but the price of admission is 75 cents. He implied that Bessie could have had a reasonable amount of recreation without indulging in the basement-club night life. When father was out of the room to attend to potatoes cooking in the kitchen, mother said that she had tried to have Bessie bring her friends to the house and dance to the victrola but that often the girls would say, "Let's take a walk," and then they would not return. She said Bessie has many good points. She mentioned that she is good natured and that she is anxious to have mother get well of the diabetes which makes her a semi-invalid.

At one point worker volunteered a little dissertation on the fact that at adolescence girls who have been obedient become more independent, and it is hard for parents to decide how much to trust to them and how long to continue making regulations for them. Worker doubts if parents got very much from this. Her impression is that father is a strong personality, dominating the family. It is not possible to tell whether this domination is kindly and intelligent or the reverse, or whether it is well accepted by the family or not.

Parents seemed concerned that Simon should have a chance at camp next summer and asked if the J.B.G. could arrange this, since they are not able to pay. Father said he has only one or two nights' work a week as special policeman and it is hard for them to afford even a visit to Bessie. Worker suggested that they speak of this again in the spring. They are anxious to have Bessie home for her birthday in February, although they are told she must stay at the school until March 1. It is evident that the father has thought of this stay away from home as something to be determined by himself, the court acting as his agent. Apparently, he visualizes Bessie as a penitent and very obedient girl when she returns but he wants some authority outside himself to back him up in controlling her. It was explained to family that by the time of Bessie's return, a visitor would be assigned, but that they are free to consult the society if they wish in the meantime.

In this case, as in Interview 7, parents who have ideals of bringing up their children well are helpless to control bad neighborhood conditions. The father's attitude is interesting in its reflection of his occupation. He wants to proceed actively against vicious resorts; he knows the law does not reach them. When roused in a search for his own daughter, he takes the mother and makes a raid on them himself. Where the ordinary citizen might helplessly move away, he accepts these resorts as the police accept them—to be cleaned out one by one if there is sufficient reason for getting at them, expecting that they will be back tomorrow. We are reminded of the individualistic case worker's or physician's attitude in contrast to that of the public health physician or the community-minded social worker.

The question arises of what means the father would have had for expressing an ideal of good citizenship which would inquire into ways of getting at these basement night clubs. As far as the writer knows, there is no civic organization to focus the sentiment of the community unless it be some settlement house. Citizens are apathetic because they are used to being helpless as individuals. There is no community de-

mand for adequate public recreation facilities because no one has thought of the possibilities of taking them out of commercial competition. People too poor to pay the admission price to parties of private organizations, which are often run as money-making projects, are left vainly trying to keep their children from adventuring wherever they can.

For two reasons it seemed rather futile to offer these parents any suggestions about understanding adolescence. In the first place, the parents apparently saw no need of advice; the offering of it was a mistake and an intrusion. The case worker did not get well enough acquainted with them to learn where, if anywhere, they felt inadequate (except as the father wanted some more authoritative supervision to back up his own). In the face of bad community conditions she does not question the father's need for a resort to repression, but she does not know him well enough to know what forces in his own personality also made him take this method. She notes with interest from the parents' account how little they have grasped any picture of Bessie as a person. All the mother could say was that she is "good-natured." They saw her under the label, "young girl," who must be kept from disgracing them.

The second reason that the case worker's remarks were a futile gesture was that she herself, so it looks in retrospect, was not able to speak with the confidence she had used in talking to the parents of Irving F about putting adolescents on their own responsibility to choose their associates and activities. Public sentiment will not give the girl adolescent the same chance as the boy to make mistakes. There is not the same opportunity to say, "The past is past. How can we make a fresh start for the future?"

The case-work method of giving responsibility involves some risk. The case worker who does not believe in forcing her point of view has to see parents fail to take the risks she would like them to take in order to give their children a chance to grow up. Her wish to make the child her client might lead her to try to take the problem away from the parents and to say to them, "I say to you that you should try this," thus making herself responsible for the risk. But, after all, this is an unnatural situation, and the parents know it. In the end they are responsible until the child reaches the age when public sentiment would place responsibility on him. The case worker, then, is thrown back upon a process of education, without coercion, for both child and parents. She must give what they can take of a new point of view and no more. Probably this has to be usually "education by the current event" or in answer to questions; seldom by exposition, which subtly implies, "You take this because I say so." In other words, discussion with parents of their impressions of the honor system at the School, for instance, might mean something to them. Attempts to save time by premature "giving of insight" do not really save time.

Interview 9 (Harry C; age 14).

Admitted.—Hawthorne School, Nov. 1, 1933; committed Nov. 8, 1933. (Not identified with previous record at Hawthorne where boy was for eight months ending June, 1933.)

Complaint.—Refusal to go to school, hanging about the streets with gang, unable to get work. Complaint of violation of parole.

Family.—Father, an invalid; mother supporting the family by janitor work; brother Louis, 12, Morris, 7, Jack, 3.

Interview (1-2-'34).—Mother telephoned 19th St. office, making an appointment to come in. This was following a form letter by which worker had advised parents that whereas in the first letter she had stated that she would keep office hours for three weeks, she was now regularly at the 19th St. office on Tuesday mornings.

Mother asked how much we knew of her boy's case. When worker told her that we had little information, as yet, about what had happened, mother said that her boy had been at Hawthorne before and had graduated from the grammar school there last June. She attended graduation and was very pleased with what the School had done for him and hopeful on his return home that he would get a job and help her out a little. She found, however, that he was still under age and had to attend school. She registered him at the Industrial School where he might learn a trade, but boy refused to go after the second day. He hung around the street with a gang, protesting that he wanted to go to work not to school, and really doing nothing. Since he was on parole, he was brought into court. Mother rather resented it that "a Jewish man, Mr. T, talked against him and told the judge that he would be no good running around the streets and advised sending him back to Hawthorne." Mother plead for one more chance, and she says the boy "raised a terrible holler in court right in front of the judge," which did not help his case. She feels sure boy felt very badly about being sent away.

Early in the conversation and woven all through it, mother referred constantly to her difficult home situation. For the past six years her husband has been ill from the effects of a stroke, and most of the time unable to work at all. He lies about the house, reads a little, looks after the fires, etc. He talks to the children but they have little feeling that they have a father, saying to mother, for instance, "Why did you marry such a weak man? Why can't we have a good father like other children?" Mother makes a living by acting as janitress for a twenty-apartment house and living in three rooms in the basement. For this she gets rent and $25 a month. Work involves cleaning the halls, running the heating plant, etc. She says that the neighborhood is good and that while their home is meagre, it is adequate to bring up the children, but she feels she has entirely too little time to give to them. They want so

much in the way of clean blouses, etc., and she gets very tired and nervous. She lays boy's delinquency to the lack of time to supervise him; says that while the neighborhood is good, he went outside the neighborhood to pick up rough boys for friends. She is expecting now that she may lose her position, since the owner lost the house and the receiver may discharge her. Worker got the impression that mother rather wished this, that she might be relieved of the burden of care of this house.

Mother speaks of a Mrs. Murphy, a social worker in B. Mother does not know her agency connection but she has been very good to her. Mother thinks she does "detective" work and has a "badge." She has advised her and offered Harry a chance to clean her office and earn some money if he would only go to school. Mother says Mrs. Murphy is a Gentile lady. "Her name is Murphy but she has a good heart. She said to me 'Why do you work so hard? Other people get relief that don't have half as hard a time as you do. Why not get some help and give more time to the children?'" Worker's impression is that mother was thinking this over as a possibility if she loses her position. She says with pride that she has asked for nothing and has kept the children together all this time, and she has counted a good deal on Harry, who is her oldest son and who disappoints her greatly. She does not feel that he is a bad boy and is glad to know from his letters that he is contented and is working in the printing shop at Hawthorne. She feels relieved that, since there are no jobs for boys of his age, he is out of harm's way, although she does worry lest he learn bad things from other boys at the School.

Worker's questions were to clear up doubtful points and also to lead mother to think a little of the general situation of adolescents and their parents at these times. Asked mother if Harry had changed very much from the time he was a little boy. Mother thought he had and is becoming more independent and unwilling to listen to her. Worker asked her whether she had known the children of her friends to change a good deal at adolescence and then to settle down later. Mother said she had some friends whose boys had given them no trouble at all, and she lays this to the fact that they had a father and a mother at home, able to supervise them. On reflection she could think of others, however, who had some difficulty, even though these conditions of family life were favorable. She says that her sister's son, who is 21, has graduated from high school and has been looking for a position for two years without success. Worker talked to her a little about the changes of adolescence, the fact that a boy can neither be as obedient as he was as a youngster nor as independent and helpful as he will be as a man; that this half-way stage is very difficult for both the boy and his family. Mother said he was very good at first when he came home from Hawthorne and stayed in the house reading all the time. Then, gradually, he got in touch with the boys again. Worker asked her if she would want him to be the kind of man who would stay in the house reading all the time; asked if really it was not natural and right that he should be out if there were the right kind of things to occupy his time. Mother assented to this but with how much understanding worker did not know. It was not clear from her conversation why boy had so instantly hated trade school and refused to go to it.

Worker felt that the result of the interview could be little else than the fact that a contact had been made. (Mother says she has been to this office before. Through some failure of identification, previous record was not located, and this was supposed to be a new case.) It was explained to mother that there will be a regular visitor later but that mother is free to come to the office to see worker if she wishes at any time this winter.

In this case, again, the case worker tried the experiment of giving some explanation of the adolescent's conflict over growing up and of the effect of community conditions (such as unemployment) on that process. (Cf. comments on Irving F, Bessie S, Nathan B.) Regardless of whether this particular explanation was effective or not in stimulating the client's thinking, there is something to be said about its relation to initiative. If the client is expected to choose whether or not he wants case-work service, it is reasonable to offer some sample of what it would be like. Is this a fair sample? Or is it merely a sample of the case worker's equipment being put on display so that she may feel more comfortable in thinking that she has contributed something? Whether the "sample" will prove attractive enough to the client to lead him to seek for more cannot be prophesied in advance, any more than can the effect of a clever advertisement in inducing a given potential customer to buy. A merchant can count on a statistical certainty that if his advertisement reaches large enough numbers a certain proportion will buy, but he knows nothing about individuals. There is an essential difference, of course, between merchandising and case work—the former wants to stimulate a choice of its product; the social agency, which deals in the miseries of men, cannot want to stimulate the use of its service except as that service may be needed. It is a question, however, whether the case worker's wish to be needed does not sometimes operate in a subtle fashion to the same effect as a profit motive.

Returning to the question of samples of service, what could a client normally want of an agency, or for what would an agency which had thought out its philosophy wish to be desired? It is quite normal for clients, we suppose, especially immature personalities, to want to have their problems taken and solved for them. Paternalistic case work will always get an eager response from a certain proportion of clients. An agency which conceives its case-work service as an educational process, preparing the client to solve his own problems more successfully, will ask itself what prevents the client from doing so already. It will find in the way a lack of material resources, perhaps, physical

and mental handicaps, lack of information or lack of ability to use what is known, or emotional problems preventing the use of any of the resources in these categories.

What are the relative chances of the agency's showing samples of any of these? Giving material resources may be an excellent introduction to a case-work contact if it is properly organized as a business in itself, and if the case worker's attachment to a relief organization is just an incidental thing—his way of being where clients will naturally meet him (see comment on Celia L) just as he might be connected with a bank, a school, or a hospital. As a sample to be used by an agency whose main purpose is case work (not an administration of another system of activity) material giving has the danger that if it creates an expectation of more (as a sample should) it draws largely the clients who least want to be stimulated to independence and defeats the purpose of educational case work. Information or help in using what is already known is something a client may need before he can make a more successful attack on his problems. If it is true that emotional problems are reached only through a relationship with an understanding person, a sample of this may be given in the first contact, although usually a very limited sample, for clients may be as easily frightened as drawn to return by a perception of an understanding relationship that is new to them. That it seems to have no ulterior motive, when life has taught them that strangers always do have, may be a profoundly disturbing thing to many clients, especially if there is the slightest hint of pursuit of them.

Summing up, then, it would seem that while a case worker must give some warmth of relationship as a sample if clients are to choose whether they want more of it, there are dangers of making them feel pursued by some motive unknown to them, or of setting their expectation in the direction of being cared for in paternalistic fashion. Material gifts carry the same danger. Giving information which the client lacks is about as safe as any "sample" that can be shown. The writer does not see any objection to giving it if (1) the case worker is as willing to see it "wasted" as a merchant is to see some individuals pass his display window and not buy; if (2) the case worker does not feel it necessary to report (to herself or her agency) some result from every act; and if (3) the case worker does not make the client feel that he is being talked down to or coerced into accepting it. Are we perhaps just outgrowing the crude stage of the earlier salesmanship when the salesman all but held a customer by the coat tails until he bought something? In other words, when we say we leave a client free to choose, do we give him a real choice and then really leave him free?

Interview 10 (Nathan B; age 14)

Admitted.—Hawthorne School, Nov. 22, 1933, on remand.

Family.—Father and mother, brother Adolph, 13, Andrew, 9, Meyer, 6.

Interview (1-4-'34).—Parents came to office in response to form letter sent to parents of Hawthorne boys. Mrs. D, representative of the J.B.S., in court later met worker in office and said parents came in to see her at court this morning and she sent them to J.B.G. even though it was late and although they said they had planned only to do a little shopping. (Had probably not understood letter from J.B.G. and wanted to find out about it before coming in.) Mrs. D has impression that mother is rather dull and exasperates father because she cannot carry her end of the home responsibilities adequately.

Circumstances of Interview—Observations: Father apologized for coming later than the office hour mentioned in letter. At end of interview, which lasted nearly an hour, he apologized again for having "wasted" so much of worker's time, although he said he was very glad he had come. Worker had assured them that she was glad that they found her in and that she had no set appointment. Father took the lead in conversation though mother asked a number of questions about the School. Father interrupted her impatiently several times and once said to worker that the details mother asked about were a housewife's business and that he believed in her taking full charge in her own domain. Both were well dressed, mother with some make-up. She seemed much younger than father, with some carrying on to middle age of the ways of the "flapper" period. Father is very serious in manner and appearance. Speaks English with a slight accent but very good vocabulary.

Father's Statement of What He Wanted: Father said he came in to ask some questions about Hawthorne. Had not understood at court what kind of place it was. Had expected to visit, but was ill on last visiting day. As the conversation progressed, it was evident that he was puzzled by boy's behavior and had really come for help in understanding it and in knowing how to treat boy when he visits. After worker explained the relation of the J.B.G. to the School and said that we had no information as yet except the routine card from the School, father told of his difficulties with boy, most marked for the past two years. Worker asked questions where points were not clear, most of them in relation to time—"When did this begin?" or "When did that happen?"

Father's Story: Nathan is the oldest of four boys: Adolph, 13, Andrew, 9, Meyer, 6. He alone has given the parents any trouble. He has been crazy to earn money always. Before he was eight, he made himself a shoe-shining kit and earned a good deal at odd jobs. Father says he is a barber, "willing to do two weeks' work in one to take care of my family" and proud of the fact that he makes a good living and no child of his needs to earn. Customers used to ask him if he knew Nathan was selling candy in the park. Nathan developed salesmanship in selling balloons at Coney Island. He would place a balloon in the hand of a baby who looked interested, and the mother would

usually buy it rather than take it away from the child. He has between two and three hundred dollars in his bank account.

Father noticed a change in boy from age of eleven to thirteen in growing independence of father's wishes, spending more and more time away from home. At thirteen he "seemed to change back"; then more serious difficulties began. Father said, "For the last few years, I could count on his getting me into some kind of trouble about every six months."

Parents have always kept in close touch with school and never had a complaint till boy began to lose interest, fail in work, and then to play truant. He would stay out late evenings, watching cars for movie patrons, then perhaps not go home; sleeping with some of his pals, would wake too late for school and not go. Father works at a shop in Manhattan and is away from home from 3 P.M. to midnight. Father was advised by school principal, Public School 38, that boy was getting nothing there and should be under stricter discipline, so he was transferred to Public School 49, a disciplinary school, grade 8B. Nathan hated this school and refused to go. Father reasoned with him that he could graduate in a few months and then be free to go to any Junior High he wished. Boy seemed to agree but finally rebelled absolutely. Father thought he would not be so independent before the judge, but Nathan defied the court to make him go. Father thinks he made a mistake in handling boy, seeming to side with the officers against him, but he had no idea that the boy's defences would not break down. Agreed with school principal who told him boy needed a lesson before he gets worse. Father admits that boy has hurt him by his defiance, and he has planned not to visit too soon, and when he goes, to take an uncle who gets along well with Nathan and let him sound out Nathan's attitudes before father sees him.

When asked by worker whether Nathan had gotten into delinquencies other than truancy, father said he did not know that he had ever stolen anything. He has stayed out nights fairly often and once disappeared from home for over a week. This was in the summer of 1932. Father sets up a shop in summer at some beach or mountain resort and thus, "I give the family a vacation, though I don't get any." Nathan on this occasion grew restless and wanted to go back to the city. Father told him grandmother was too old to look after him, and he would have to stay until the family went home. He then walked off and was not heard from till one of the state police officers notified father to come and get him. He had been picked up on suspicion as a wanderer and had, as father suspected, been supporting himself by odd jobs in the city.

Worker asked in what way boy's activities were different from those of a rather independent boy—unusually ambitious to make money. Father said they were not different except that they were leading him into dangerous associations, were ill timed, and not appropriate to the family's situation. Boy's defiance of his wishes seemed inexplicable. Once he said, "We have to show him who is boss," but said it apparently more in sorrow than in anger. Mother wanted to know about the food, what clothes were needed, etc. Boy's letters had told them very little, apparently. Both parents seemed relieved to learn of the educational emphasis, that boys did not wear uniforms and were not treated as criminals.

Treatment Attempted: Worker saw a chance that this intelligent father, frankly puzzled about his relationship to his son, might want to talk out some of his difficulties. She wondered what his conception of adolescence might be, and what were his own attitudes to his father at Nathan's age. In answer to a question about this, father said he grew up in Russia, in a village where there were few vocational opportunities, so that at twelve he was sent to an uncle sixty miles away to learn his trade. Before this he had had little time for play, for they were kept in school till after dark. "The worst I could ever do was to get together a gang of boys and throw rocks at another gang." From age of twelve to fourteen he did not see his home, having no money to travel, and at the end of his apprenticeship had only a suit and a little money, some of which he spent for presents for the family. He regarded himself as a man then, and cannot remember any such attitudes as Nathan shows. "That is the difference between him and me."

Worker said she wondered if it was only the difference between them, or also the difference between life in Russia and America. Father gave a thoughtful analysis of his impressions of American schools. They fail to "qualify" boys, to study their individual needs. Boys are pushed along in a machine-like way and not prepared for anything. He thinks there is more purposefulness in education in Russia today. When worker suggested that part of Nathan's difficulties might be that he did not find what fitted him in school and that his ambition was concentrated boy-like on an immediate goal instead of on preparation for something worth while in the future as father would have liked, father thought that might be so. Father says he reads a great deal and thinks a lot, but he can't make out where boys are heading. Worker asked if he and mother had known any children of their friends to create disturbance during adolescence, and both said they had. Cited boys who were "far worse." Thought some had become very satisfactory citizens. Worker talked a bit about how accidental occurrences or the timing of certain happenings, for instance, can easily make a normal boy or girl at adolescence look quite hopelessly delinquent. Father thought sending boy to Public School 49 was such an unfortunate occurrence, for, though he saw nothing else that could have been done, it did drive Nathan into a stubbornness which could not be deal with at all except by more coercion. Father says boy expresses penitence in his letters, as he would expect he would when his anger cooled. He has always been sorry after his escapades but always repeated them.

Worker tried to bring out a little of the adolescent boy's conflict over achieving independence. She compared awkward efforts at self-assertion to the absurd performances of young roosters trying to crow. Father said he had read a lot and thought he could recognize this in others, but "it is hard to see in my own boy." Worker agreed with him that parents find it hard to take the things adolescents say, which to them do not mean ingratitude and hatred but only the normal desire to grow up and be free.

Close of Contact and How Case Was Left: Both parents said they were much relieved and father asked if they might come in again before the next visiting day. Worker said she would be in office every Thursday until one. It was left that they would probably like to come after the visit to talk further. Worker told them that before boy comes home, they will have contact with

a man on the staff who will be boy's visitor, but that for the present, since worker has more time, they may come in to talk things over with her any Thursday, if they wish.

Comment.—One observes that this father, in stating why he came, made a commonplace request for information about the School, then began to talk about visiting boy and finally it was clear that his concern was as to how he should treat the boy on his visit. In other words, the problem, as it appeared to the worker, was one of relationship between father and son. What had it been all through the boy's life? What had it become under stress of boy's commitment? Father himself seemed concerned about the latter. How could he meet the boy, not knowing how Nathan regards him? He is troubled that he seemed to side against boy at court. He will take the uncle along to try out the situation for him.

It is by no means certain that father, intelligent man though he is, would have wondered very much about the original relationship with the boy if he could have settled the immediate problem of attitude. True, he had been hurt by boy's seeming disregard of him. The behavior was inexplicable to him, and he seemed to be unable to link his reading to what was happening to his own boy. It seemed to worker that there was a simple service of interpretation which might be useful to father. Her questions and remarks about adolescence, therefore, were designed (1) to see what concepts of the adolescent period father already had; (2) to give him a little further relevant information; (3) by so doing to link father's problem to that of other fathers of adolescent boys; (4) to connect the problem of the individual with community conditions in so far as father is aware of these. She felt fairly certain that this father was accepting full responsibility for dealing with his son's difficulties, that he had been disconcerted when the court took things out of his hands, that he was nevertheless going on thinking about the boy, and that the purpose of the visit would be served if he could see his problem in better perspective, that is, in relation to that of other boys of Nathan's age and of an American metropolitan setting. She felt that she helped him to "place" his immediate problem, and therefore to take some steps toward solving it with the whole father-son relationship in mind rather than as an isolated episode. Father said he felt much better and wanted to come again, indicating that whether or not he had expressed, or worker had understood, all his problem, he had received enough to make it worth while to come.

The giving of interpretation about adolescence in this case may be compared with that in the cases of Irving F and Bessie G. In those cases information about adolescence was linked with suggestions, given without pressure but nevertheless suggestions about how parents could use it in future dealings with the child. Here it served to interpret the past behavior of the boy which had been misunderstood, so that the father was reacting to hurt feelings rather than with understanding of a reason in the background which made age-change rather than deliberate intention the cause of the seemingly defiant acts. It seems that there is less risk in giving information for understanding than in making suggestions in a first interview.

There is always the risk that the case worker may be wrong in talking about the usual traits of adolescents when, with the individual in question, some other feature of the situation may be a great deal more important. For instance, Sylvia P was showing exaggerated delinquent adolescent behavior and yet was probably reacting much more to deep personal conflicts. The same may have been true of Nathan. One suspects something out of gear in his relationship to his father which exaggerated the usual desire to be independent, perhaps emphasizing the very thing in money-earning activities that would hurt the father's pride the most. Even if this were so, however, since the story of behavior does bring out traits so usual at adolescence, it would seem wise to treat first what can be most easily understood. If this is not done with an excess of reassurance (which might seem unwarranted to a father who felt the problem was serious) there is no apparent reason why it should not be a good foundation for a later return, in case the parent wants to say, "I can see where a lot that I worried about is what happens to all boys, but here is something I can't explain that way." To face the existence of abnormal behavior it must be best to begin by appreciation of what is normal.

To help a father to "place his problem" in relation to the whole matter of father-son relationship is not to say that a case worker should try to get the whole picture of that relationship in one interview, or even that she should probe for it at any time. It seems to the writer quite important to stick to a focus on the immediate problem, letting the father see the whole sketched in as background, but not forcing his attention upon more of it than he is himself able to see as related to the problem in hand.

To take a medical analogy, a patient may need to see his sore finger in relation to a general diseased condition, and it may be the doctor's duty to inform him that there probably is a connection and to advise a more complete examination. But it is not customary to make every finger-dressing case one for complete examination unless there is some indication for it. Case workers seem to have a need to be paternalistic, to solve *all* a person's problems, if he puts his head in at their door, before they let him go. Probably this has done more than anything else to discredit social work as a profession and to drive people away from it who are in real need of the "finger-dressing" services and possibly of much more which could have been reached naturally by way of the finger-dressing.

VI. FREED FROM AUTHORITY—FOR WHAT?

I felt that I had no business meddling, which was what I was doing if I gave the individual case no chance to grow. That's all they need, not pushing, just a chance, and that's why the job isn't *heavy* to me. *I'm not pulling or pushing anybody anywhere.* All I'm doing is opening doors, windows, and . . . painting a picture of how it would feel to them to use this added air, light, sunshine, bypaths. . . . Casework is anything but a puppet show. If people are going to be real characters in whatever rôle circumstances have left them, they need to have an understanding not of their rôle alone but of the whole drama and their rôle in it.

So wrote a student of social case work when she began to practice the philosophy of self-determination for the client and to glimpse what it meant for her own happiness as well as for her work. What do others say who have worked with this philosophy? Most of them find it hard to describe except by noting the differences from case work that takes a parental attitude. One outstanding difference seems to be that they have ceased to make themselves *responsible* for the social betterment of their clients. They do not guarantee anything, as if, indeed, they were powerful enough to make desirable changes come to pass if only they exerted themselves enough. Stated thus baldly, it seems incredible that one would ever believe that they could, but anyone who has known case workers well for very long will recall abundant evidences that there has alway been an undercurrent of self-accusation and guilt if clients were not demonstrably better off for their ministrations. A psychiatrist lecturing to a class in social work ten years ago had no hesitation in saying that a social worker should always blame himself, not the client, for an unfortunate outcome. The implication was that case work is a personal matter, with the environment forgotten except as stage scenery. The contributing public demands something tangible in the environment to show for the effort expended in case work. By and large, there has been widespread in the community a belief that there is *some* solution for every ill, and that those who set themselves up to help their fellow men are negligent if they do not find it.

Scientific training tends to dissipate this sense of responsibility for outcome. First, there are the stubborn facts which no amount of wishful thinking can alter—the effects of heat and cold, of nourishment or the lack of it upon living organisms, irremediable damage to tissues and nerve cells, arrested development and the ineffaceable marks of early experiences upon personality. Physicians are frank to say that

there are some conditions they cannot cure, some patients they cannot help. As social case work becomes more scientific, it, too, must face the truth that its normal use is to take care of the exceptional cases in an otherwise soundly functioning social order, and that it can not undo, any more than medicine can, the effects of mass starvation or the paralysis (for lack of opportunity to exercise it) of creative ability. Social case work as such has no power to set straight social conditions, nor to provide escape from their consequences.

In addition to their inability to set aside natural law or the impact of social forces, social case workers can not guarantee the response they will receive from other human beings. Indeed, the attempt to do so itself raises barriers of resistance. I remember a discussion in which a number of case workers related instances in which a surprising response had come to them after they had given a client up as hopeless and had ceased to exert any pressure upon him. They wondered if they ought to become hopeless of their clients earlier. Today we should say that it was the pressure of their need for some desired response which created a resistance which it then took all the energy of the case worker to combat, so that case worker and client progressed not at all toward any common goal.

Another difference from case work of the parental type is that there are no commitments in advance to certain procedures, such as an automatic requirement for a full history, checked with other sources, before anything can be done. If a case worker is responsible, as under the older philosophy, for solving a situation, then he must have information on which to do so. He is right in resenting the client's refusal to cooperate in giving it. If the client is responsible, the need for information is his. He has a right to expect information from the case worker whom he selects as his adviser, if it is available, but he need give no more than is necessary to make the worker conversant with the problem on which he seeks help. The case worker may see the necessity for more than the client does, and may give him more information about the bearing that certain added facts would have, but the client makes the ultimate decision how much to give. (Again we remind ourselves that if the case worker is in an auxiliary relationship to some administrative service, be it relief giving, child placing, a school system or whatever, there must be requirements for information for that administrative function, but not for social case work as such.)

One difficulty with the present practice of the newer philosophy is

that social agencies are usually set up to do certain things, such as to give relief or to place children in foster homes, so that the client comes to them only when he has pretty well made up his mind to ask for the service for which they stand in the community. He does not get to them at the time when he most needs help to clarify what he really wants and needs. Then, too, it often happens that the referral service of the agency to which he comes is also preoccupied with the the kind of service to be given, perhaps sending him where he can get a special form of it, with no opportunity anywhere for the unhurried and open-minded consideration of his problem. A review of a number of "difficult" cases active in a family society has shown that without exception there was an immediate drive toward making a relief plan, to which the client, for one reason or another, set up resistance. Even though there was much "investigation," this came after the client felt that his case had been prejudged; there was lost that period of exploring the situation together which has proven so fruitful for mutual understanding and future cooperation. Some such period of exploration ought to be available wherever a client meets a case worker. It is tragic to repeat the specialization which, in medicine, has resulted in the patient's having to diagnose his own case in order to decide what specialist to go to, and then being sent from one to another because each one thinks of his own technique and no one can see the man himself in relation to the symptoms of which he complains.

This is the new form of *social diagnosis*. Miss Betsey Libbey calls it "exploratory treatment," emphasizing that it is a period of working together on obvious needs while the case worker is feeling out what kind of help the client both wants and can take in the situation, and what function the agency can perform. It has the best of the tentativeness of the social diagnosis of twenty years ago, without its delay of service for the sake of information and without quite the same danger that with the diagnostic label once put on there will be little else that the client can hope for. We still know next to nothing about treatment (as we call the process of trying to make our knowledge of some use to the client) but we now begin at once to focus attention upon it, and the very lack of a satisfying way-station like a diagnosis may increase the amount of understanding we shall eventually reach.

A third difference from the older case work is that it is not the client but the case worker who is "accepted" or "rejected." The case worker can bear to be left out if he has no lingering notion that he

is responsible to somebody, somewhere, for being in. There is no need, for purposes of professional practice, even to know the outcome in the particular case. For research, of course, it is very desirable to know, and many clients would not object to helping on a well-conceived research project. The point is that just by coming the client does not commit himself to being used for research without his consent. The case worker has less difficulty than formerly in knowing when to open and close cases. It is the client who, in the last analysis, decides both. When the case worker can no longer stimulate him to want more, and he is quite satisfied to go on by himself, the purpose of case work is served. If the community is not satisfied, it has ways of making its displeasure felt by the individual, and once again a case worker may meet him, this time in an administrative public service rôle perhaps, until he again "opens" his case for counseling service. Counseling without this voluntary acceptance by the client means nothing. With it, the aim of counseling is to make itself unnecessary.

"After all, it is the client's problem" sounds as if the social case worker were about to receive a well-earned rest. Clients now go about to assemble their own work references, they hunt their own apartments, take their children to dispensaries more frequently than formerly, and even come to the office for interviews. Consultation results in their making their own plans. Are social case workers to become fat and obsolete? Where is their professional skill if they only sit by while the client does as he likes? What does the community pay them for?

This is much more than a rhetorical question. It has brought confusion and a haunting sense of futility to case workers themselves, and, unanswered, will mean the withdrawal of support from case-working agencies which do not have some obvious administrative function on which their case work service can ride as concealed baggage. As the community accepts the responsibility for subsistence relief, for instance, family case work agencies must either understand their function so clearly that they can interpret it to the community or be discarded as useless.

The answer to this question of what is the case worker's function has not been made easier by the way in which the philosophy of self-determination for the client has been applied by some who have been most enthusiastically in favor of it. In their desire to avoid a dominance which was hateful to them they have rushed to an extreme which has seemed to others a *reductio ad absurdum*. A few illustrations from case practice will show what is happening.

A case worker says that she did not call upon a family of her clients after their baby died because that would be unprofessional. If they wanted her service they would take the initiative in asking for it. Another says that she is in misery during a call because the mother keeps begging her for advice about how to deal with her uncontrollable little child, and the case worker can only listen, as her supervisor has instructed her to do, or ask, "How do you *feel* about his temper tantrums?" She thinks the client is trying to lead her into a trap by getting her to give advice.

Commenting on these instances, there is discernible the not unusual tendency to reduce to rigid formulations what should be applied with imagination and common sense. Would not ordinary humanity direct a visit of sympathy to a bereaved family one had known, regardless of whether they asked for professional service then or later or never? In the second instance, the social worker's surmise that the mother's need was for something other than advice may have been correct; for instance, a search for someone to blame if advice was given and failed may have been behind her questions. But what if it were? Is not an attitude of that sort just as truly as any other a part of the client's real self at the moment and just as much something to know and use in counseling with her as is a genuine eagerness to receive the worker's advice? The social worker's use of the word, trap, suggests a defense of herself and a preoccupation with trying to beat the client at her own game. Her silence may mean not freedom for the client but punishment. What stimulus for the client could come out of such a battle of wills fought in the name of the latest creed of self-determination?

Another instance of a rigid formulation, this time in favor of having no history, is found in the case of a young teacher who asked for advice about her vocational adjustment and felt repulsed when her attempts to explain how her working life had been conditioned by her long struggle to get an education were dismissed as of no importance. "It is only how you feel in the present job that matters. What is your present relationship to your superintendent?" The relation of her present confused feelings to her past was the very thing this young teacher had not understood and which she wanted an opportunity to talk out. Her case worker, thinking she sensed an automatic offering of history, missed a chance to help her find both release and reorientation.

A client considering child guidance treatment for her son who was "different" from other boys was told that no examinations and no treatment would be given the boy unless the mother was willing to come in for weekly interviews for as long as the clinic found necessary. This was explained as "talking over the boy's problems with you, so that you may help us to understand how to help him." The case worker saw this mother as neurotic, the real cause of her child's difficulties and in need of something like psychoanalytic therapy. She realized that the mother would not accept help offered as help for herself, so she presented it as for the child. The mother remarked that she had talked about her boy to no end of people before, and it had done no good. She departed.

Desirable as it was to sift out those who did not want to be helped to better parenthood, one wonders, first, whether the clinic was not really following the paternalistic philosophy, sure what treatment the mother ought to have and testing her willingness to accept it by presenting an opportunity to talk—the modern substitute for the "work test" which relief workers used to apply. One wonders also if the mother was in any position to make a choice. The alternatives to her were probably a series of burdensome visits, with expense for car fare, over against no prospect of help. She may have been more than half conscious that her own personal need was her real reason for coming and have resented in another the subterfuge she had herself made. If the social worker had been keenly aware of the gap between her own and the mother's understanding of therapy could she have dealt more wisely with a possibly simultaneous desire for and retreat from it? Would not the answer be found in the beginning of such a relationship in the first interview that the mother would be able to face some genuine part, even though a fractional part, of what she really wanted at the moment? She might ask for diet advice, a psychological examination for the boy, or what not. The case worker's job would be to stand by with help in "taking soundings" until she was satisfied that what was presented was genuine, even though an unimportant fore-glimpse of what the mother would eventually want to say. Then they could begin to work on that. The case worker's skill would consist in accepting the mother's partial insights, not as final but as something they could use together in exploring the situation. More would come as the mother was able to face more. Needless to say, the relationship to the case worker would be an important factor in the mother's gaining an ability to face more.

In presenting clients with choice as to whether or not they wish case-work service, one needs to remember, therefore, that ignorance of what the alternatives are vitiates the choice at once, and that, equally, there is no choice when it is weighted with conflicting emotions or with a desired benefit on one side. If this mother had sought a free camp placement and had accepted the clinic interviews as the only means of getting it, she would have shown no real acceptance. Preparation of the client for the making of conscious choices is an area of social case work practice which has been much neglected. All one may have to begin on is a tacit acceptance of the opportunity to make a contact—shown by the client's making one. To be able to say, "I want case work," and, even more than that, to say, "I want therapy for my own personal difficulties which are too great for me even to get help from counseling"—this is as late a stage in the diagnosis of readiness for help as is a hemorrhage from the lungs in the diagnosis of tuberculosis. The most skillful and understanding work must precede that stage in order that the client himself may know what he wants.

A third group of instances of mistaken application of the new philosophy concerns its supposed breakdown when it meets the hard realities of the client's life. There is the case worker who evades dealing with the reality by throwing the client back into it, and the one who protects his client from ever meeting it.

For instance, in a time of business depression a man has lost his job and is demanding that the case worker get him another. The case worker says, "That is your problem," and turns to other applicants. True enough, but what *is* the real problem? Is it lack of work alone, as the client tends to think it is? Perhaps so, but even then there is the difficult task of organizing all possible resources for job finding. The client may need encouragement or suggestions to carry this out when competition is bitter and he is panic stricken. He may need help in finding interim relief resources. If there is no hope of a job, the task of learning to live without one may call for as much skilled leadership as a blind man's problem of learning to live without sight. Incidentally, every weakness of personality which has been masked in comfortable times is likely to come to the surface and constitute an extension of the problem as the man first saw it. The case worker who turns aside because the man's request seemed a bid for a dependent relationship has missed an opportunity to give a form of professional service for the adjustment of a personality under difficulties which could probably be obtained nowhere else.

To give an instance of protection of the client, a homeless single woman refuses to accept the decent but cheerless shelter which is the agency's only way of providing a living and chooses instead to live, at nearly double the expense, in a furnished room where she is inadequately fed on meals that she cooks herself. Her case worker makes an exception in the agency's policy because she believes that the client's choice should always be followed. The situation remains unchanged for some time until the worker is called to account by the agency.

Commenting from the point of view of one who believes in the philosophy of self-determination for the client, the choice made must have had meaning for the young woman which the case worker would do well to understand and with which she would sympathize. But the next question the worker would ask the client would be, "How are you going to finance this plan?" The client has no resources. Neither has the case worker, under an agency policy which has become necessary because funds are badly needed for other things. How about helping the client to face this reality like any other disagreeable necessity? This case worker does not live by the new philosophy, even though she seemed to. *She must take the responsibility* for seeing that the client has what she wants, and she robs others to do it. She has not made it easier for the client to call forth all possible latent resources to better her condition, nor to develop a philosophy of meeting unavoidable deprivation with as high a morale as possible. Instead, the case worker takes charge of her. She has only made her comfortable, or perhaps a little less uncomfortable, and there is no end to that, except what is put by a careworn and irate executive.

This is not to say that there might not be circumstances reversing this interpretation. For instance, if there were a landlady in the lodging house who was especially successful in dealing with young women in special need of personal and stimulating kindness it might be well worth the agency's making an exception to pay for her service in a crisis in a client's life. It might be best to let a young woman learn to meet hard reality in some other way *after* she had had a tonic experience with such a remarkable woman. The point is that one must discriminate and must consider carefully whether avoidance of the natural consequences of the client's choice really aids her de-

velopment. To be free to choose means to incur risks. Is the choice a genuinely self-respecting one when someone else takes away the risk and governs the consequences?

There is a final group of instances in which the case worker forgets to discriminate between an administrative function, which a case worker may also have, and case work itself. An illustration of this was given in *An Experiment in Short Contact Interviewing*[11] when the case worker taking foster home applications failed to judge as severely as her duty to the agency demanded, because she was too anxious to see that the applicants for boarding children got what they wanted. As a case worker she would have been justified, had they been her clients, in helping them in any way she could. Here, however, she was in an administrative position in which she had no obligation to the applicants except for the courtesies of a business relationship, but had an obligation to use her judgment (trained in case work, to be sure) to see that the agency was not put to unnecessary expense in investigating applications of people entirely unfit to have the care of children.

A case worker accepting a child for placement undertakes to stand *in loco parentis* to that foster child as long as he is in care. This responsibility may be shared if there is a living parent or responsible relative, but there is in principle a certain unavoidable obligation assumed by one who administers the function of choosing a home for a child and supervising his care in it. He must know the pertinent facts about the child and his living relatives—more than he would need to know where he asked to advise about the care of a child in his own home. He must have a workable financial plan. He must go to people whose cooperation is necessary without waiting for them to come to him. He may or may not be chosen as confidante by the child or relative, but, if so, that is in addition to the carrying out of the function of seeing that the child has proper care. This latter is done *in a different way, a more individualized way* because a case worker and not a business agent does it, but it carries its own right to take initiative, seek contacts, and make plans, just as being a parent carries the right to do the things necessary for a child's care.

The field of medical social work presents a problem to those who are confused by failure to make these discriminations. An exponent of the new philosophy shocks a medical social worker by failing to follow a case in which neglect of a child's eyes may result in blindness—

[11] Bertha C. Reynolds, *op. cit.*

this, because the family has not indicated any desire for service. The medical case worker takes responsibility for prevention when the education of the parents in self-determination would be at too great a cost to the child. There is something of taking control for the community's sake in a good medical institution, even though it may be supported by private funds. Public opinion usually tolerates fairly well this invasion of private rights in health matters, perhaps because it better understands the hazards of disease than some social hazards, and partly, I suspect, because sentiment is already forming to demand a more inclusive community health program and already thinks of the hospital as a community institution. Medical social workers, then, by common acceptance, carry a rather large proportion of duties in the administration of health work, in addition to the counseling service for which they may be chosen by their clients. They "follow up" as well as being sought, and they do this because they are auxiliary to a system of coordinated services in the medical care of large numbers of people.

Family welfare societies are similarly in a transition stage in which, though privately supported, some are carrying the duties (elsewhere recognized as a public function) of administering subsistence relief. In this rôle they must make financial investigations and make decisions invading, to some extent, a family's self-determination. As this rôle is turned over to public bodies, it is to be expected that private family welfare agencies will have less trouble than at present in defining their relationship to clients.

Relief which is incidental to a case-work plan fits in more easily than subsistence relief with a philosophy which cultivates the self-determination of the client. (See discussion under Interviews 3 and 5, Chapter V.) An important point under this philosophy is that the handling of relief should be such that the client sees his receiving or his being deprived of money as inherent in the situation, not as due to the case worker's personal whim or arbitrary decision. The case worker might well talk out with the clients the fact that these decisions are governed by principles which bind him no less than the client and are the reality which they both must face.

A social case work organization for the prevention of delinquency in a social order which makes crime faster than all its public spirited citizens can ever cure it is in a very difficult position. It is sure to be expected to undo evils which would not exist in a healthy social order where economic security, work, and wholesome recreation could be

taken for granted. In such a social order the case-work function would be needed only to guide parents and teachers who were having trouble in their relationships to children and to individualize the public service of a socialized court system to take care of exceptional problems. At present, there is bound to be a large element of protection for the community in any undertaking dealing with delinquency, and a good deal of responsibility of a semi-public nature such as we have seen in the fields of medicine and family welfare in this time of transition. What relation should a case work agency in this field have to a public Crime Prevention Bureau, for instance, or to a city-wide probation and parole system? The writer has no competence to answer that question but is convinced that case work in this setting must find itself tied in with the administrative functions connected with the care of delinquent children in its institutions and its parole service. The filling of these rôles will demand the taking of initiative and the making of decisions in certain areas. Could these areas be better defined, it seems likely that within the framework of limitations set by them the case-work relationship would be freed from uncertainty and enabled to do its unique work.

The wounds that the new philosophy has suffered in the house of its friends are summed up, then, in failures to discriminate between the application of a formula and the application of principles with imagination and common sense; in failing to see the difference between preparing a client to make a choice of case work service and offering him what merely looks like one; and in evasion of reality either by refusing help or by protecting the client from the consequences of his own choices. The assumption that a good case worker is never employed where he has also an administrative function seems to be as fatal as the older one that he always had an administrative function just by being a case worker.

We have traveled a long way from our question, "For what are we freed from authority?" We have attempted to define our function in terms of what it is *not* and in terms of the absurdities which it must avoid. But what *is* it? Has it any special skills or any responsibilities in place of those it has cast off?

The student who was quoted at the beginning of this chapter speaks of giving people a chance to grow, of opening windows, helping them to an understanding, not of their rôle alone but of the whole drama and their rôle in it. Vision and perspective—seeing more in life and in

better relation to the whole: is that not as good a simple definition of what its clients should get from social case work as we may ever hope to find? But there is one question about how this can be achieved which revives the old query about paternalism. Is it not just as destructive to self-determination to give people your vision as to give them anything else? John Erskine has put it charmingly in his essay, *The Cult to Service*. Speaking of the contributions of science to human well-being, he says:

> Yet you can no more be scientific for your neighbors than you can be holy for them. If you persuade them to submit to the experiment, they will lose what little intelligence they had. Do we not see that the average man is more and more disposed to honor a few scientists, superstitiously exalting their skill into a kind of magic, and relying less and less upon himself? For every service science has rendered, some common intelligence has been taken away. She gave us the barometer, and we ceased to be weather wise; the almanac, and we forgot the stars. If this service from without left us free to apply our knowledge in other fields, there might be a compensation for the intelligence that has been taken away. But with intelligence departs the willingness even to be intelligently served, and just as religion falls back upon threats of hell, so at last science calls in the police. If my house is ventilated and sanitary, it is not because science has made me intelligent, but because the expert to whom I have delegated my intelligence is now applying it on my behalf, with or without my consent. When my fire escape was cast in the foundry, perhaps for the rescue of my life some day, they fixed in the mold a threat to fine me ten dollars, if ever I should block it up.

All of this goes to show, of course, that gifts of another's intelligence are no better than any other gifts till we have made them our own. Without them, we should be poorer in resource. With them, plus intelligence, we enlarge greatly our capacity to deal with our world. Professor Erskine does not state how good an opinion of the human being's desire and capacity to use intelligence he may have, except that he argues eloquently that it be given a chance. It ill becomes us in these days, when we are just beginning to realize the deadening effect of our whole social-economic structure upon mind and feeling, to give up hope that men can be developed toward more aliveness in their world. The amazing result of the social changes in Russia[12] (in spite of many forces of repression also at work) upon the people who have come under their influence gives us pause as we think of our regimented education, our "yes men" in industry and the professions, our long hours of ill-rewarded labor, our constant insecurity regarding the es-

[12] See, for instance, Maurice Hindus, *The Great Offensive;* Frankwood E. Williams, *Russia, Youth and the Present Day World.*

sentials of existence, our frustrations in self-fulfillment in love, in social relationships, in opportunity for creative activity. Thinking of it all, we wonder, not that we think dully, but that we ever think at all.

But "the question," as a chairman might say, pounding with his gavel. Suppose that social case work, like education, aims for a result in the development of human beings in the art of living; that, like progressive education, it seeks to lead or draw out what is in them, not to instruct or draw up and set forth information for them. Like progressive education, social case work is concerned with relating men and women and children to life, and seeks first to understand where they are in adjustment to their own life aims and their social group. There is need for a very great skill here, which we have only begun to glimpse. It is diagnosis in the dynamic, not the static, meaning of the term. A teacher of a craft, such as basket making, is a good teacher only as he senses quickly what it is that the pupil is having trouble with and can help him to help himself with that. It may be that the reed is too stiff, the fingers too weak to draw it tightly enough, the touch too nervous and jerky. A good teacher devises ways to overcome these—perhaps by such a seemingly irrelevant process as a relaxing run around the yard. If he is not skilled enough to diagnose the difficulty, he sees nothing between "Let me do it" and "Do it yourself." Such a person may make beautiful baskets himself, but he is no teacher. The pupil wants to feel that the basket is his own, and that at the end he could make another basket without help. The rewards of the teacher are not on exhibition shelves but in more confident, happy faces, more *alive* human beings. So social case work finds that a new, a vitalizing thing has come to it when it seeks its rewards not in changes which it makes itself in the condition of its clients so much as in changed human beings more able to make their own better conditions. It takes responsibility for a *process,* not a result which may be dependent on many things which are out of control, such as the client's capacity or an unchangeable social situation.

Illustrations from case work practice are not easy to find, partly because we are just beginning to feel our way in the conscious and consistent use of the newer philosophy and partly because, when we practice it most successfully, it seems so easy and natural that we find it hard to tell just what we have done. The two instances following illustrate the case worker's responsibility for helping the clients to work their own way out of an impasse, in contrast to taking the responsibility for choice of the road to be followed.

1. A woman in the middle thirties came to the home of case worker, Miss O at dusk one evening to ask if she might have an appointment to consult her. Miss O had met her once before through a mutual friend and knew that she was Miss C, who belonged to a cultured foreign family, that she had traveled for several years and was now taking a year of study in psychology. Realizing at once that the young woman was crying and was terribly ashamed of her loss of self-control, Miss O asked her to come in and led the way to a window seat in an unlighted room where her tear-stained face would not be conspicuous. "Perhaps you would like to talk here where we can see the city lights come on," she said. Miss C assented and almost immediately plunged into a story of emotional distress that had made her desperate. She was unable to concentrate on her studies, was eating very little, and able to get only fitful and unrestful sleep. The picture was distressing enough so that Miss O might have thought it obviously her responsibility to secure psychiatric assistance.

Miss O, however, was not as sure as she would once have been that this was the solution. Even if it were, she was more interested in knowing what kept Miss C from finding this solution. She took responsibility for guiding an exploration, without predetermining where the search would end. She did take the precaution, however, since later treatment by a psychiatrist was among the likely possibilities, to keep the relationship with herself one which could be easily broken or transferred to someone else. She realized Miss C's immediate need of emotional release in tears but knew that she must not, in giving a sympathetic hearing, reproduce a mother-daughter relationship which was possibly at the core of the problem for this unmarried woman. Neither should she, she knew, put herself in the position of a physician who makes the patient feel that the case is now in expert, responsible hands and the patient has only to follow directions and get well. The case worker tried to keep Miss C the active centre of the exploration process, even though a few moments before Miss C had thought herself utterly at the end of her resources. She consciously gave her, first, such reassurance as might be conveyed in voice and manner that she herself was not alarmed nor overwhelmed.

Knowing that Miss C was used to an intellectual approach to problems and that accepting her at once as a fellow-student would give common ground for their relationship, Miss O replied to Miss C's statement that she could find no reason for her distress by suggesting a process of orderly exclusion, beginning with possible physical causes.

When there seemed nothing in health factors to account for a rather sudden loss of all sense of confidence and well-being, they explored in turn the nature of the subjects she had been studying and the relationships with instructors. Miss C was sure that these were not important except as they may have touched off conflicts which she knew she had been carrying all her life.

Miss C began to talk about her family relationships, and Miss O sensed that she might soon be the recipient of confidences which would later be embarrassing to Miss C unless she, the case worker, were to fill definitely the rôle of therapist. Miss O suggested, therefore, that the question might be this: could Miss C probably work out of this for herself with such help as the case worker could give her (judging by what they had just been doing together as a sample) or was she likely to need the special services of a professional psychiatrist? Miss C thought probably the latter was best, for her problems were deep and of long standing. Miss O then outlined for her choice the different kinds of psychiatric service available. Miss C was not sure that she would need a psychoanalysis, but reached the conclusion that it would be wise to select a psychiatrist trained in psychoanalysis to help her to explore her problem further, so that if an analysis proved necessary she could go on without change.

A practical problem appeared in that she knew no one in the city who could advise her as to choice of psychiatrists except instructors at the university, and she did not want anyone there to know that she was disturbed. She realized now that part of her panic had been that she knew her poor work would soon draw attention to her, and she could not escape being considered unfit for professional training, which she had sacrificed a good deal to obtain. Miss O suggested that she might get the information for her, and Miss C gratefully assented. When she left there had been no plan presented beyond this. Two days later when Miss O met Miss C and gave her a list of psychoanalysts whose qualifications had been ascertained, Miss C said that she had gone home from the interview to the first good sleep in several weeks, that she was feeling much better but realized her need of further help and would make contact with an analyst immediately. She went through an analysis successfully and when last heard from was in a responsible position in her own country.

2. Another young woman, Miss F, well known to the case worker, Miss O, wrote to her from another city for an appointment. She asked a reply by wire, as it seemed to her that she must see Miss O on the following week-end or she could not endure her situation another week. Miss O wired that she was away from home but set a time a week in advance. She suggested in a letter that in the meantime Miss F would probably recover her own fine balance and common sense and not see her as so terribly important in her life-picture. But she added that she was glad of any excuse for a good visit and would set aside Saturday afternoon and evening for it. In assuring a welcome, she took the responsibility of trying to convey her belief that Miss F could do a good deal for herself. She realized that this was a hazardous guess, for even though she knew that Miss F had unusual capacity for solving her own problems she also knew from the desperate tone of the letter that something very disturbing must have occurred. She took the responsibility of setting the tone of the coming interview, however, on the level of a high expectation of Miss F's capacity, knowing that the relationship between them was well enough established so that if Miss F could not live up to the expectation she would be able to bear that fact and let Miss O help her work through it. (With a new client it would have been dangerous to have set the expectation so high lest the client be driven away from the case worker by a sense of inadequacy and fear of loss of esteem.)

Miss F arrived in a state of mind seemingly as desperate as that of Miss C. She was holding a one-year position for which it was an honor to have been considered. Her work was to terminate in six weeks, but she could not endure those weeks. She reproached herself for cowardice. She thought she understood intellectually the reasons why she had not succeeded as she had hoped and as her friends expected. She could see the part played in the situation by personalities other than her own, but still she was emotionally unable even to go through the motions of continuing. If she left, however, as the director had suggested she might if she wished, she knew she would be accepting the interpretation of the director—that she lacked the emotional qualities necessary for success in dealing with people—and would be leaving forever the profession which had meant to her not only a vocation, but a means of creative self-expression.

To a case worker whose philosophy was to take charge of the client's problem, it might seem as urgent as in the preceding case to get this young woman to a psychiatrist. Miss O felt responsible, however, for knowing, before she even made such a suggestion, whether it would be something which could be discussed impersonally or whether it would add to Miss F's already intolerable emotional burden. Miss F was

trained as a teacher and young people's counselor. She was overwhelmed with a sense of inadequacy in her profession. How would she feel if someone she believed had confidence in her were to suggest at once that she needed similar professional help, and of a sort generally associated with serious maladjustments? Miss O did not feel sure that psychiatric treatment would be a solution, and she would not have suggested it if she had. Her responsibility was to be at hand to relieve Miss F's distress enough so that she could move about a little in the emotional impasse in which she was caught, and to aid with stimulation or trail-blazing until Miss F could herself find the road she wanted to follow.

Miss O had two clues to Miss F's inability to solve this problem without help. One was the excess of emotion, a state of panic quite foreign to Miss F's usual reactions. Psychiatric studies have shown that ordinary events in life (and Miss F's inadequacies had not been at all conspicuous) do not prove devastating except as they are associated with some of the basic conflicts of personality. It is as symbols of something close to the biological sources of personal development that they become intolerable. Secondly, Miss O knew that Miss F had suffered in an accident an injury which had left some permanent residuals, not important for social adjustment, but possibly so in their effect on a sense of personal well-being. As she listened to Miss F's story, she became sure that there was some connection between criticisms of Miss F's work, which reached a climax in her being told that she lacked essential emotional qualities, and the injury which had made her feel that she lacked the physical strength which others had. If a defect in physique and in emotional capacity had become associated in the subconscious, it would be quite possible that this would symbolize for the individual a degree of inadequacy which would be profoundly disturbing.

With this as a working hypothesis, how could Miss O proceed? Should she tell Miss F what she suspected? That question could not be answered until she knew how nearly Miss F was able to bear the pain of bringing to consciousness whatever conflict she might have over her physical injury. If she was not ready to bear it, telling her would have no value, for the information would be a foreign body in her consciousness which she would at once surround with a wall of defense and put out of the range of awareness. Miss O listened, growing more convinced of her hypothesis as Miss F repeatedly from different angles of her story came almost to expressing a recognition of a connection with the

former injury only to turn the conversation into some other channel.

They went out to dinner together, this coming naturally at a time when fatigue and tension had accumulated, and permitting a fresh start. The relief of emotional strain was now apparent, and Miss O now dared to assume that Miss F might make the connection herself if given a little help in getting started. Miss O does not remember whether a story told at this point or a question furnished the stimulus, but in a moment Miss F was saying, as one would tell of a new discovery, that she had never felt this way before except when someone told her after her accident that she would never be able to work again. She had proved that prophecy false, and somehow the present doubt of her capacity for emotional relationships seemed to have lost its terrible power to hurt her. A few weeks later, Miss O heard that Miss F had finished her six weeks of work and had received a recommendation for another position stressing her unusual ability to surmount difficulties, and stating that she had demonstrated in the latter part of her stay an exceedingly rare quality of feeling for people.

Seeing the whole social situation, Miss O was aware that there were real personal difficulties in the people associated with Miss F, including the director, and that anyone would have had some adjustment to make. Miss F had found this impossible only because the effect of the situation upon her had been to inhibit the very gift for feeling with others which would have been her greatest asset. This vitiated her personal contacts in her work and brought upon her the criticisms which were devastating to her. She had to have counseling help because it was her own adjusting mechanism which was crippled for the time. Freed emotionally to the point where she could become conscious what it was that had rendered her helpless, she regained confidence in her own "wholeness" as an individual, and solved without trouble the real difficulties in her situation.

These two cases of similarly intense emotional distress would be judged, under the case work philosophy of taking parental responsibility for clients, as cases for reassurance and probably for referral to a psychiatrist as soon as the client could be persuaded to cooperate in such a plan. To make it easy for the client, the case worker might offer to telephone to the psychiatrist and see him in advance. The satisfying outcome would be a successful referral followed by a cure. The philosophy of self-determination for the client, on the other hand, does not take responsibility for getting the client anywhere or seeing that he does anything. It does take serious and well-considered re-

sponsibility for the case worker's part in a skilled process whereby the client is freed from some entanglement which makes further progress or growth impossible.

How can we take responsibility for assisting so unseen and mysterious a thing as a growth process? In the first place, it is foolish to hope to discover independently, in time to use it in one lifetime, all that science can tell us of what conditions favor or retard growth. There is not the same excuse for guessing how personality *ought* to grow as existed before biology, psychology, and psychiatry began to pour into our field an understanding of how it *does* grow which was quite lacking a quarter of a century ago. Psychoanalysis has been as dynamic in its effect upon all fields of knowledge as was the hypothesis of Darwin in the last century. The road is not easy, but anything else is unsafe for our clients. We cannot afford to make such mistakes as stopping a symptom like temper outbursts in an adolescent only to have them replaced by apathy and withdrawal from social contacts. We cannot now ignore the emotional and psychosexual factors back of the difficulties of a quarreling married couple and assume that the issue is between having and not having enough money for a separation. We must *know* what we are doing (to the limit of the knowledge we can get) and must know how our relationship to the people concerned is affecting a tangled emotional situation, before we can assume that we are accepting a professional responsibility in being in the case at all.

Secondly, in addition to theoretical knowledge, we have to develop much keener powers of observing and sensing social situations than the average adult has. Children and dogs put us to shame in that. We learn to see and hear what is going on around us only by constant practice and the exercise of all the interested intelligence we possess. We have to cultivate an alive curiosity to know the meaning of what we have learned accurately to observe. A client rambles on about his interfering mother-in-law. Our observation, coupled with a trained ability to catch the emotional meaning underneath his words, may tell us that what he really wants to know is whether, in this new venture in applying at a social agency, he is letting himself in for another mother-in-law. Another person goes into an emotional storm over a very trivial occurrence. Our knowledge of emotional mechanisms tells us that it must be linked with something very personal and tragic in the fundamental relationships of his childhood. We follow our clue and learn by many little signs how to fit in with his need of help.

How may we acquire the capacity to assume a really professional

responsibility other than by study of our scientific backgrounds and by constant observation and practice? Perhaps these, with the personal qualities they entail, are enough. We shall scarcely undergo the hardship of study in the midst of an active professional life unless we are really interested; and unless we greatly care about people our observation of them will be spiritless and unprofitable. It takes courage to pioneer in the relatively unknown fields of personality and human relationships. It takes courage to trust an educational process when the world clamors for miracles in quick results to relieve itself of the burden of the inadequate personalities it has produced. It takes courage to believe that seemingly stubborn resistance may be the paralysis of fear, and that loss of hope may be at the bottom of inability to use opportunity when it is offered. Believing in what cannot be seen, just because one knows emotional mechanisms well enough to suspect it is there, is not easy in a world which frowns upon the expenditure of time and money to cultivate intangibles. Yet results startling in their effect upon the solution of very tangible problems of environmental adjustment have come out of just such sensing of what was underneath and just such experimental courage to test out insights. Verily, we are freed from authority for something so much greater in challenge to skill and to responsible taking hold of great matters that there is no more comparison than between light and darkness.

VII. GROWING UP

Social case work is growing up. That is the conviction with which we turn from a long look back over twenty years and over the changes which have been so inadequately set forth in these pages. Any attempt to describe or explain what has happened must be barren in comparison with having lived through them and having seen them happen. Perhaps *growing up* is as good a phrase as any, for it is one which has acquired, in these same years, a richness of content for practical use not dreamed of before. In the childhood of some of us, growing up meant freedom to do as you please, and a little later it meant being a teacher or a policeman and making other people do as you please. Perhaps the conflicts which are rocking the old world to its foundations today are only registering the fact that most of the people in it have never outgrown the stage of conflict over authority—whether exercised upon them, or by them upon someone else. Where does social case work stand, young profession as it is, when tested by the criteria of maturing which biology and psychology have put forth? What happens to a young organism in that process?

The first thing that strikes us is that there is a constantly enlarging contact with its world. From self-absorption because of feeble sense perceptions, there is a growing awareness of stimuli more and more remote from the body itself; there is increasing response to environment; there is increasing power to become a part of the environment and to act in it—even to the point of influencing it.

Secondly, we think of a growing need to understand the world. Adults are tormented by a child's asking why in proportion as they have themselves ceased to ask it and have fallen into the habit of acting on their own idea of what the environment is and has to offer. They want to get on with the day's grist of adaptations and not to be bothered. Only when something new, and perhaps terrible, jolts them out of complacency, do they again begin to ask why and, interestingly enough, often revert to childhood and ask, "If God is a good father, why does he allow such things?" In face of the vast unknown surrounding the frail human organisms on this earth, it is a question whether our so-called adult freedom from question-asking is not an arrest rather than a late stage of development.

In the third place, growing up involves finding a place for the self in relation to other selves—a justly estimated place, be it as leader or follower, but a place in which one may feel one belongs, securely, and need not measure constantly whether others are putting him high or

low. The pain of adolescence is largely in finding that own place, with many a rebuff to be feared or experienced before the young person knows where he stands with his social group. Perhaps the peace of old age is that, whether as one would have liked or not, that matter is settled.

Lastly, one thinks of growing up physically as reaching maturity, being able not only to be alive but to give life. Intellectual maturity means, we surmise, not only a capacity to think for one's self but to help others, if need be, to think. Emotional maturity, we are just beginning to glimpse, may mean capacity to feel truly, in relation to the facts of our world and freely, without subjection to, although in relation to, the feelings of others; and also to create in our responses to others a relationship of "feeling together" which is something different from and better than single individuals could experience alone. So little do we know about this that we have scarcely any vocabulary to talk about it. But something like this is at the basis, we are sure, of acting together, for out of common feeling much more than from shared intellectual concepts comes the capacity to cooperate for valued ends. We know something about physical education and have begun to educate the intellect (although what we call that is too often piling up fodder which we hope, without knowing how, that the young animal will grow by chewing upon). As yet, we have not begun to think of educating people for sound, healthy emotional life, and so, of course, we leave to chance, and mostly evil chance, because of all the distorting influences that surround the young, the most important education of all—preparation to live in an interdependent world as beings capable of feeling and acting together.

Reverting to social case work, do we see any evidence of stages of development similar to these? It does seem, for one thing, that social case work is, or must become, more aware of the world of which it is a part. Once it might be possible to do what could be done for one after another of the cases of need which came to attention, and shut one's eyes to the existence of thousands of other cases of need as great which were never reached. Now they are so many that we can hardly fail to see them. Or perhaps our eyes are focussing a little better than a baby's do, and we have to see, whether we like it or not, that social conditions are making problems much faster than all the case workers in the world can solve them. We are not yet, as a group, very well able to get about in this world of wind and storm. We cling to our security in the familiar. But the conviction grows upon us that we will have to get

about in the world as it is, not the little safe world of the nursery that we once thought was all. We are studying economics and sociology, political science, psychology and psychiatry, and we are not only asking the why of things but what we shall do, not merely as social case workers but as citizens of the world. We are asking why we need take for granted that property should be more sacred than human life, and profits for a few than the welfare of all. Why need government be asked, if not bribed, only to let us alone, while we make as much money as we can, instead of being a public service attracting the best minds by the incentives of an honorable career? In Athens the noblest citizens spent their time in the affairs of the common good. This was possible in that age only because the work of production was done by women and slaves. Today we have the equivalent of many slaves in machine power to provide for all material needs. We lament an enforced leisure in which body and mind deteriorate from disuse, yet children go untaught, and adults craving richer life go hungry for it. The love of beauty in music and art is not fed; the forests and fertile lands are unimproved and wasted; natural resources for a richer life are not cultivated. Why? For lack of means to pay, we say. But why, when the best things can not be paid for anyway, and when those who have talents are only too glad to use them to create beauty, if only they need not starve while doing it? We social case workers are asking why others should have too much leisure and we too little. Are we trying to sweep back the sea with our little brooms, when we ought to be building solid dikes against misery? Are we trying to make the best of what should never be? If we see the stir of life in new movements for a more cooperative way of living, are we thinking in terms of need of leadership, and of ourselves as leaders, and are we saying, "I haven't time," when after all it is youth which should lead, and we who are older who should stand behind them with counsel but not with dominance?

These whys lead directly to the question of the social case worker's solution of the problem of authority. Are we grown up enough to find our place and be secure in it, personally as well as in our profession? In the narrow field of social case work, we have found ourselves seeking the case worker's function in a situation. We have first to be willing, we say, that the client shall be supreme in his own life before we are free to use all our scientific training experimentally to see where we fit in to his pattern of adjustment with real helpfulness. This is not to say that we have abandoned personal rewards. We could not, even if we would, for the need of them is as much a part of us as our need for food. We only find them in another place.

If we have not grown out of the childish relation to authority, we look upon supervisors and boards as parent-tyrants or protectors, and we demand from the clients that which will make us secure with them. We have to show results, we say, and clients who thwart us in that are not likely to get objective consideration. It is tremendously important to us whether we maintain prestige, whether our clients "put something over on us," who was "right" in an argument. I see no reason to believe that we ever outgrow a need for something above us, to which to trim our course as to a pole star. The difference is, as we become mature, that we find our authority in ideals which we have made our own —which we gained, it is true, from those we loved and believed in and who may have been in authority over us, but which we now use in an adult instead of a childish way, as a source of power and not of dependence. With our security in our loyalty to these, our need for achievement satisfied in bettering our own best, *but not at someone else's expense*, we are ready then to find that our mature ideal of a place for ourselves is a place in a social group in which everyone has his chance. It is to our enlightened self-interest to be more skilled, more understanding, in order that everyone may have a better chance. We want to open windows. We want to give life.

That is it. Our profession has gotten a glimpse, somehow, of what it would mean to put new life into struggling, miserable human beings, to cause to blossom what had been only latent before. Books on psychoanalytic therapy are eagerly devoured; meetings that discuss therapeutic case work are overflowing. We are dissatisfied that no one tell us how. "I want to know about the new techniques" is the most common form the question takes at the doors of schools of social work.

Even though this may reflect chiefly the personal insecurity of the case worker, a desire to solve one's own problems is surely not an abnormal thing in a process of growing up. Schools of social work which demand maturity as an essential characteristic of a successful social case worker certainly should not complain if people come to them because they want it. It is only disconcerting because a curriculum in social work is so ill adapted to do what should have been done in the years up to adolescence. It may be that some of those who wish to study "therapy"[13] are really mature persons who *have* life to give and want to learn how to give it better. There is, without doubt, a group

[13] I am using this term, as distinguished from case work counseling, to imply work with a sicker personality who cannot be stimulated to work with the case worker for the solution of his own problems without preliminary treat-

of exceptionally well-qualified people in the field of social case work who are explorers in the no-man's-land between psychoanalysis and case work, and who are finding possibilities for certain kinds of therapeutic work which may be of immense benefit to humanity. Not referring to these, it does seem that, by and large, the approach to therapy among social case workers does not take on the look of real maturity. Perhaps it is the pre-adolescent stage akin to that in which little girls play with dolls and little boys display great feats of prowess and cleverness. Are we not a bit in the stage of magic when we want to make a rabbit come out of a hat? Are we ready to say that there is no such thing as the giving of life except as one who has it has matured to the point where he can be creative in his relationships to others?

We have learned a few things about the conditions under which people have received help from psychoanalysis (not necessarily the most important conditions; perhaps no one knows them yet), and we try to reproduce those conditions in the hope that some of the seeming miracles of which we hear may be of our doing. Sometimes seeming miracles do occur, and harassed parents do become calm and patient, neurotic children lose their symptoms, a crumbling marriage is restored. We then have great faith in whatever method we have used and use it again, though we have no idea whether the conditions are the same, or what it was that produced the result. Better it would be for us to go back patiently to the simplest things and work experimentally with them, learning all we can, expecting not too much, and not too sure that we know all that went in to whatever good comes of it. Take parent-child relationships, the give-and-take of ordinary social intercourse, the relationship of client and professional case worker when the latter has enough of the freedom from self-interest in the situation (that is, has enough maturity) so that that relationship becomes something different from other relationships in its power to release emotion. Take all that we can learn from progressive education about how to develop personality through shared experience in common tasks; take all that we can learn from the Russian experience in the education of a whole people in the experiences of living in what is very like an experiment in education by doing on a hitherto undreamed scale. Social case work on a foundation of sound and growing knowledge such as

ment of some sort which exacts no responsibility for his social problems, but only a responsibility for getting well. There is a movement among case workers to experiment with this type of therapy, with or without the guidance of a psychiatrist.

this then becomes a thrilling adventure, out of which we may learn more about therapy as we approach it not in the spirit of expecting magic but in that of humble, scientific exploration.

For this we have to be mature ourselves. How shall we grow up? If we have become enough used to facing facts about ourselves, we may confess, honestly and sadly, that we are full of childishness, of need to dominate or be controlled and thus protected, that we serve childish ends (not mature ends) of our own too often, without intending to be petty when we make our clients pay for our tempers and our mistakes which we fear to acknowledge. But knowing these disabilities does not remove them, and our clients are not helped in proportion as we are not. The answer is not simple. Civilization (or what we call civilization) has given us for the most part damaged homes and unhealthy communities to grow up in. We have all failed of our full potentialities. A few may be able to get direct psychoanalytic help for themselves. Most will have to find help where they can: from books, from other people who seem to have grown a little farther, from willingness to be honest with themselves, even at the cost of some pain and humiliation. This latter is not the least in importance, for by consciously facing all that we can, we do grow in the ability to bear our deficiencies and avoid the worst pitfalls of having our childishness come out in devious ways over which we have no control—even though we cannot really raise our level of maturity very much. A good deal of cheer comes from two assurances which even our present knowledge of the growth process can supply: one, that life experiences will teach us much if we will put ourselves in their way (perhaps our problem is to learn to dare to learn from life); the other, that the life urge to grow is an immensely powerful thing, and great indeed must be the obstacles which can permanently thwart it.

Social case work is growing up, we say. It looks out upon a larger world than the circle of interests of a local group of people trying to relieve human misery in some small area that particularly appeals to them. Once it was easy to believe that in any locality the sum of these projects of good will would eventually make a mosaic which would cover the needs of all the people. Now we see that social case work is only an incident, necessary, to be sure, but subordinate to social planning for meeting the basic needs of the whole community. Planning for social control of the production, storage, and distribution of food, for instance, is beginning to seem as necessary to us as it would to a colony of people building a civilization in the midst of a primitive wilderness.

For such a colony to leave to chance, or the whim of individuals, the daily replenishment of a supply of food would be to go back to a savage society, unable to foresee or provide for seasonal alternations of want and plenty. We are beginning to see that if civilization is to survive, there must be foresight, recognizing the need for a constant supply of food, clothing and shelter for all, because society cannot afford the damage to itself which follows when any are deprived of them.

Moreover, if the increasing use of machinery in the production of material goods has reduced the need for human energy for that purpose to a point where idleness makes deterioration of human capacity inevitable, a civilization which is to endure must plan to call out the energies of all in some form of socially useful work, and must provide for all the opportunity to be trained to do work suited to individual ability. More and more, as we realize that we have passed the period of scarcity of material goods, we see that the energies of men, if they are not to rot in idleness, must increasingly be put into the social services, taking these in the broad sense to include education (not only for the young but continuing throughout life for all), the arts and sciences, the exploration of our world and the development of its resources for the good life.

All this may seem too far in the future to think about. If we do not think about these things, however, will there be any future? The imminence of war, with limitless possibilities of destruction of human life, makes some look upon our world as crashing to its doom. The chance that the people in it can overcome their deadly fear of one another and begin to exert intelligence in time to save it seems so remote to some minds that they begin now to live in the mood of futility. To others, in whom the healthy currents of life run deep, living would be a joyous adventure even though death were sure to be just around the corner instead of sure at some more remote time and place. They see the birth of a new world as vastly more important than the death of an old one, and see no reason why they should not begin at once to live and work for it. It is the beginning now which distinguishes one who really means business from the Utopian dreamer who escapes action by setting his ideal far in the future. It is surprising how many opportunities for building the foundations of a better social order come even now to the hand of one who wants to see them.

Social case work finds itself, then, in 1934 unable to regard the distribution of the basic necessities of life as an essential part of its function. Social case workers may be employed as agents of the community in carrying out its plans of distribution, but unless the whole community develops more efficient ways of taking care of its basic needs than it has heretofore, its survival cannot be much assisted by seeing that the victims of its mistakes are rescued, one by one, from starvation. Social case work will fill a place of importance if and when the social engineering of the future works out the problems of distribution of the abundant reserves of material goods and of human energy which are now spoiling for lack of use. Auxiliary to a rational system of distribution, and to the community services of public health, safety and education, social case work can provide the indispensable touch with individuals which no mass program can do without. Perhaps social case work will be the "personnel department" of the community of the future, available both to the community and to individuals who want to consult it about their problems of social relationships. If we see it today distorted in function and hampered in usefulness, it is because the community expects of social case work what it can never give. It may be an indispensable auxiliary to a rational social order, but it can never be a substitute for it.

Social case work today finds itself challenged, as we have seen, to show that it is not doing more harm than good in a time when the building of a sound social order is of vital importance. Doing case work seems to some like setting out deck chairs for the comfort of a few passengers when everyone on board a sinking ship should be manning the life boats. When the people are safe and have organized their life on a more seaworthy ship or on some shore, it will be time enough, so runs the argument, to look after the special needs of individuals. It is wasteful, if not criminal, to divert energy to those whose needs are not the same as all the rest. They must be brushed aside, even ruthlessly sometimes, if they get in the way.

Communities and nations which have become panicky about their own survival end by ignoring or suppressing individual claims in just that fashion. As we see that happening in nation after nation in 1934, we seek in history some perspective by which to judge where we are in the cycles of change. We see the probability that in the long run suppression of individuals will not be effective, and that again consideration for individual difference will come about, either because the majority finally demands it or because a ruling minority dares not any longer ignore the menace of large numbers of thwarted individuals. Social case work, the individual approach to human beings in trouble, may then no longer be cast aside as useless, but eagerly sought after.

But by whom and for what purpose? Will it be the "opiate of the people," providing palliatives for a degree of misery that might become dangerous to the prevailing social order? If so, a social case work which becomes either the indulgent or the dominating parent for its clients will fit to a nicety the purposes of those who rule for exploitation. Under these circumstances there is a sinister meaning to the question with which we set out: can social case work serve the community without being traitor to the individuals with whom it enters into a confidential relationship? It cannot if the community which makes an "effective demand" for its services is the pseudo-community of a ruling class whose interests are opposed to those of the individuals who become its clients. It can serve both and preserve its integrity only if the processes of social change lead to an organization of society in which the interests of all are safeguarded through the participation of all in political and economic power, a society in which none are exploited economically and none are deprived of some form of expression of individual will.

Perhaps all of the activities which we call social case work should be set aside until a just and healthy social order is achieved. This point of view again calls attention to the fact that energy diverted from the main objective in a time of emergency is not only wasted but aids the forces opposing progress. The major question, however, in a community faced with the necessity of some economic planning is who is to do the planning and in the interests of whom? If a better social order is dependent upon the cooperation of all its citizens in selecting for the technical work of social planning those who will respect the rights of all, how may any people be prepared for such responsible participation? Today we see millions of our fellow-citizens sunk in the apathy of utter misery, millions more burning with bitter and blind resentments, and many more (generally considered the more fortunate) ridden by fear that only as they say "yes" at the proper time and to the right people they can retain the small measure of security they have. If this is a true picture, never has there been such dire need of the kind of men and women who could make possible the building of a better social order. Every possible means of education for a high type of self-government has its place. Auxiliary, however, to every program of education is there not a place also for the development of personality, individual by individual? If social case work does this under its philosophy of self-determination for the client; if it frees men from crippling accumulations of fear and hate so that they may have energy

to use what intelligence they possess; if it educates in the best sense of the word for the use of freedom of choice and for healthier social relationships, it becomes not a luxury but a necessity in a time of social change. For after all, do we not know, when we are most thoughtful about it, that we are held back from a better social order not by the absence of some lucky chance to set in motion the wheels of normal living, but rather because we are not ready, as a people, to think or feel freely and maturely? If social case work itself can grow up to a maturity which will create the conditions of more abundant and responsible life in the individuals with whom it enters into relationship, then indeed it has a place in the cooperative commonwealth which is our only hope for the future.

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