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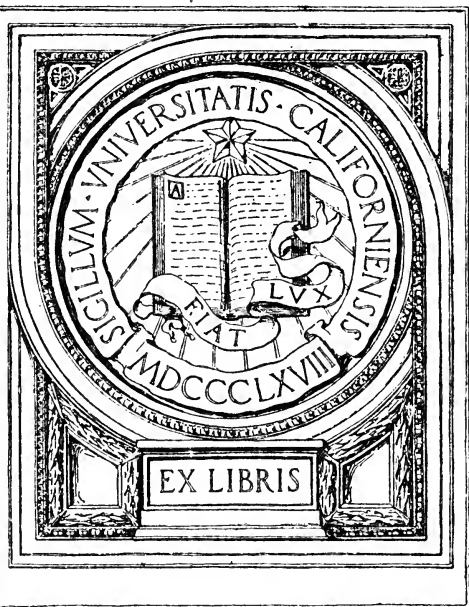
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HOW TO START SOCIAL CENTERS

BY

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PREFATORY NOTE

A pamphlet which attempts to deal with all the difficulties in the path of a new undertaking unavoidably gives the impression that future promoters will encounter an enormous amount of trouble. As a matter of fact, however, there are few localities in which the initiation of social center work will meet with all the obstacles mentioned in the following pages.

If in his calling for the establishment of a social center the reader can skip a large part of the treatise. If the disposition to appropriate funds is present but the legal authority is lacking, only the section on the "Removal of Legal Obstacles" will be found pertinent. By consulting the table of contents freely it is hoped that quick access can be obtained to the part which seems to apply to the situation at hand.

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How to Start Social Centers

PART I

GETTING THE IDEA

Mill City, Kan., Oct. 12, 1912.

MY DEAR SIR: In the effort to get social centers established here I find myself in need of certain information that is not contained in the "Wider Use of the School Plant." I have recently come home from college with a desire to do something for our town. In the president's commencement address he dwelt very earnestly upon the responsibility of leadership conferred by a college education. I asked the professor of sociology what I could do at home to discharge that responsibility and he said: "Push social centers!" Well, I've been pushing, and pushing, now for a month and they don't budge at all.

After reading up the subject in your book I went to the superintendent of schools fully expecting an enthusiastic reception. When I had explained my object he looked nonplussed for a moment and then referred me to the members of his board. It seems that he seldom starts anything new himself for fear of being considered a faddist. The first board member I encountered asked me what a social center was. He was so unlettered I tried to be very simple. "It's a place," said I, "where they have entertainments and meetings, play dominoes, read magazines——"

"Dominoes in the schoolhouse!" he shouted. "Young lady, how long do you suppose the taxpayers would keep us in office if we spent their money on dominoes and checker boards? Home's the place to play games. As for the entertainments and meetings, we have those now."

Some of the difficulties "But you ought to have more of them," I urged.

"We have all the people want. They don't ask for any more," he replied conclusively.

The second member said he didn't believe in having anything in the school building which would draw young people away from home evenings.

"But they are away from home evenings now, whole multi-

tudes of them, in the poolrooms, cheap theatres and dance halls," I rejoined.

"Then that's the parents' fault, not ours."

The third member said he would look into it, but he never has; the fourth I have never found at home, and the fifth, who is somewhat more conversant with school matters than the others, enumerated all the affairs now going on in the high school and some of the ward schools, and remarked that they were "society centers" enough to suit him now.

The whole experience has left me confused and discouraged. I believe it would help me if you could enlighten me as to (1) what, precisely, a social center is, (2) what must be added to a school system to bring about the development of one, and (3) ways whereby I can make an impression upon the board of education. . . .

New York City, Oct. 18, 1912.

MY DEAR MISS —: Have you ever observed a group of boys gathering in the yard just after school? Suddenly one of them cries out: "Let's play duck on the rock!" And immediately they all scramble for cobblestones. Their engagement in this healthful game instead of some mischief, say, down in the railroad yards, is determined by three things, (1) the spacious grounds about the school, (2) the presence of the cobblestones, and (3) the fact that their leader said what he did instead of, "Let's go down to the freight yard and have some fun in the empty cars."

Now there is no law of nature which states that, wherever growing boys are, there you will inevitably find the conditions for wholesome play. Some good people who live where the back yards slope down to the creek and fish poles grow on the premises still believe that the two go together, but even in such favored spots as these the boy is frequently found who suggests to willing ears, "Come on over to the livery stable!" Of course when the city blocks and tenements appropriated the vacant lot and the back yard, and squeezed the school yards to lifeless proportions so that even the traditions of play were finally lost, then the desperate state of boyhood attracted attention and the rescue began. The playground movement got under way with a demand for adequate play space, suitable apparatus and wise leadership.

The significance of leadership in play

But there are other periods of life besides that of childhood in which wholesome character development is dependent upon the proper place and the right leader. Many well-meaning youths are spending their evenings around card-tables when they might be playing basket-ball. Coteries of hopeful young people are "turkey-trotting" in socially disintegrating dance halls when they might be waltzing in the atmosphere of happy and permanent social ties. Large, intelligent communities are allowing their civic questions to be decided for them in back rooms and barber-shops when they might more economically settle them themselves in the dignified meeting-places which they own.

The public schools have always contained ample quarters for these activities, and in the rural districts they have been, and in some sections still are, more or less used for these purposes, but in the urban communities they have not been thus utilized generally because the leaders, the "pullers-in," were lacking. And so the social center has come, making the schoolhouse the place plus the leader. It is an institution which aims not only to supplant the dive-keeper, the dance-hall proprietor, and the corrupt political boss but to furnish also that initiative and stimulus which will connect unattached musicians with musical clubs, help dramatic aspirants to find a means of expression, bring the lonely into friendly groups, organize forums for the clarification of community questions, and, in fine, do any service whereby Society is strengthened in its ability to give opportunity to the Individual.

The answer to your second question is, I trust, now obvious. To develop a social center a school system needs most the "leader," or as he is usually called, the director. The place and much of the equipment it already has; what it lacks of the latter the director can usually find ways of obtaining. If there is more than one center there will need to be a director in charge of each one with an expert supervisor over all. A knowledge of the theory and practice of play, familiarity with social usages and the questions of the day, experience in public school administration, a working knowledge of social psychology, as well as unusual tact and executive ability,—these are the chief qualifications of a social center director. His center will serve his neighborhood just to the extent that he can divine the needs of the people and set up pro-

**The function
of the social
center**

**What must be
added to a
school system**

grams of activities in the carrying out of which those needs will find satisfaction. His suggestions will derive their force from their fitness, not from his position, and the center will become as many-sided as his ability, working directly and through his assistants, can make it.

This letter is already unconscionably long, so that for an answer to your third question I am going to refer you to the accompanying manuscript, but before closing I wish to set down one or two reflections which you may find pertinent to the task you have undertaken.

It is unfortunately true that many people, even some school authorities, have forgotten that the original purpose in providing state-supported education was to make it certain that *all* children would grow up into *good* citizens. Our forefathers were familiar with the unevenness of home education, and since they were entrusting what seemed to them an enormous share of the government to the common people they felt obliged to ensure that everybody would be properly trained to discharge his civic duties. In those days a drilling in the three R's by a master of conspicuously moral comportment was considered adequate for this purpose. Perhaps it was then, but lately we have come to see that the manner in which the young person spends his spare time is all-important in determining his character and future civic usefulness. Play-time as well as study-time must be directed by reliable agencies if young people are to become good citizens.

The task of getting the School to assume this enlarged function is not merely that of converting the educational authorities.

The prime reason for state-supported schools The whole community must be converted because its servants, the school committee, will very properly not feel at liberty to devote the people's money to a new project unless they know that the people's approval is back of them. Impress the voters and they will impress the board of education.

And so, as you will see, the accompanying sheets outline a plan for creating and organizing community sentiment. The suggestions made are those which have "worked" in other places and I trust they will in yours. Hoping that . . .

PART II

ORGANIZING THE PROMOTING AGENCY

In starting a new community enterprise an individual can seldom go far alone. For the person who wishes to initiate a **Selecting the organization** local social-center movement and who is not a member of any voluntary organization, the first step is to join one. In selecting an association for this purpose regard should be had as to its local influence and its disposition to get behind such a cause. Where to look for one in your town may be suggested by this list of societies which have been active in various parts of the country in promoting playgrounds, social centers, or allied activities:

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN SOCIAL CENTERS

Alumni Association	Parent-Teacher Association
Associated Charities	Playground Association
Chamber of Commerce	Public Education Ass'n
City Club	School Extension Society
Civic Association	Social Service League
Civic Federation	Social Settlement
Civic League	Twentieth Century Club
D. A. R.	Ward Improvement Ass'n
Educational and Industrial Union	Woman's Club
Fortnightly Club	Woman's Municipal League
Home and School League	Y. M. C. A.
Local Council of Women	Y. W. C. A.
Neighborhood Association	

Sometimes new organizations are formed for this specific purpose, e. g., the School Extension Committee of Jersey City, and the Civic Recreation League of Elizabeth, N. J.

On deciding to take up a new enterprise an organization usually places it in the hands of a special committee. The Federated Woman's Clubs of Hamilton, Ohio, have a Committee on School Social Centers, while in other clubs this work is entrusted to the Civic Department, the Civic Committee, or the Civic Section. In Louisville, Ky., it was the Committee on Education of the Woman's Club which set the social centers agoing. In South Bend, Ind., it is the Social Welfare Committee of the Chamber of Commerce which has become interested in this sort of work.

If the promoting organization finds, through its first conference with the school authorities (see Taking Up the Matter with the School Board, on page 9), that the task will be a difficult one, then the co-operation of other bodies is usually sought. Sometimes the combination is made up of only two

or three groups, as illustrated in the following actual instances:
 The City Planning Committee and Playground Commission
 Board of Trade and Playground Association
 Chamber of Commerce and School Extension Society
 League for Friendly Service, Town Improvement Association,
 and Neighborhood Club

Co-operation in social center undertakings may usually be had also from the university extension departments of local colleges, charity organization societies, ministers' associations, and the men's clubs of various churches.

Co-operating bodies In Columbus, Ohio, Dr. F. A. McKenzie, a professor of sociology in the State University, who was the moving spirit in bringing about the establishment of centers in that city, began by organizing a School Extension Society. In appealing to the Board of Education for the use of a schoolhouse, the Society was assisted by the Charities and Corrections Committee of the Chamber of Commerce. Later when it was decided to raise funds for the employment of a director, the Society was aided by several playground organizations. Out of their efforts grew the project for a Department of Public Recreation which has since been realized.

In Rochester the movement was initiated by a "School Extension Committee" which was composed of delegates from the following organizations:—Central Trades and Labor Council, Children's Playground League, College Women's Club, Daughters of the American Revolution, Humane Society, Labor Lyceum, Local Council of Women, Officers' Association of Mothers' Clubs, Political Equality Club, Social Settlement Association and Women's Educational and Industrial Union. Thus a body was formed which represented more than 50,000 citizens. It held its meetings in the Chamber of Commerce and had little difficulty in obtaining from the Common Council an appropriation of \$5,000 with which the work was begun.

In organizing a representative committee it is important that the delegates have the power to act without needing to refer each matter back to the groups from which they come. Otherwise the progress of the work will be greatly impeded.

The federation Further information regarding the organizations which are interested in the welfare of young people can be obtained in Miss Elsa Denison's book, "Helping School Children."

TAKING UP THE MATTER WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD

Before laying out an extensive campaign it is always wise to confer with the educational authorities. Sometimes there is needed only a show of interest by some influential group to secure not only hearty co-operation but willingness to be the initiators of the new movement.

Approaching the board of education may well be preceded by an interview with the superintendent of schools. He will be **Method of approach** able to give the committee valuable information regarding the board's attitude, its legal powers respecting social centers and the precise character of the obstacles, if there be any, which stand in the way of their establishment. If the board already has the disposition, the necessary statutory authority, and the funds required for maintaining centers, and awaits only the evidence of popular approval before setting them in operation, then the committee's task becomes very simple—that of demonstrating the existence of a favorable public sentiment. This may be accomplished in a number of ways, through a mass meeting ending in resolutions, the presentation of endorsements from local charitable and educational organizations, or by means of a lengthy popular petition.

Many times, however, a longer procedure will be necessary and one of the first formal acts of the committee will be to ask the board for a hearing. This formality cannot usually be avoided even if it is believed that the appeal will be denied. It puts the committee upon record and, if well managed, occasions considerable publicity for the movement.

The argument before the board will proceed much more smoothly and effectively if it is based upon a carefully thought out statement of what the proposed centers will cost, copies of which may be handed to the members after the presentation in case action is to be deferred. This paper should be in fact a plan of the work, showing in detailed, concrete terms the number of schools to be used, on what nights of the week, how many workers will be needed, precisely how much will be required for salaries, what sum should be set aside for supplies, and what activities it is proposed to set up in the centers. Any other information which will tend to forestall administrative difficulties will aid in securing a careful consideration of the plan.

Previous to a hearing, it is profitable to learn, so far as pos-

sible, the views of the individual members. The committee may quietly accomplish this through such of its members as have acquaintances on the board or know persons who have. With the attitude of the various members known, it will be possible to present those arguments which will be most effective.

A public hearing is an occasion calling for great tact and diplomacy. At one such meeting a strong opposition developed in an unsuspected quarter and as the hearing progressed it became evident that the board was going to deny the proposition. One of the delegates then made the happy request that the matter be laid upon the table for consideration at a later date, so that the adherents of the plan could gather additional information regarding one of the points which had been raised. The board was about to agree to this when several representatives of a leading club arose in succession and indicated in no uncertain tones their displeasure with the board's attitude, and followed this up with the statement that they would continue to fight until the board was forced to grant their request. This brought the issue to a head at once, and the board immediately voted against the whole plan.

If the board acts unfavorably upon the committee's proposition it will be because of one or more of the following reasons:

The conditions which may prevent favorable action (1) it lacks legal authority to expend funds for maintaining social centers; (2) it has sufficient authority, but the funds at its disposal are insufficient; (3) it does not wish to have social centers in school buildings.

The task of overcoming these difficulties may be considered under two heads: (1) removing the legal obstacles and (2) creating public sentiment, since both funds and school policies depend ultimately upon the popular will. While the suggestions under this latter head are here given as remedies for shortness of funds and school board apathy, many of them will also be found applicable in the securing of new legislation.

To be successful, especially in a campaign involving the conversion of a community to a new viewpoint, it is practically necessary to form a city-wide organization and the Rochester School Extension Committee, already described, is a good model to follow. The persons selected for the active positions in it and upon the important sub-committees should be those who by

reason of their attainments and circumstances will be able to bring to the work abilities of a high order as well as a large amount of energy.

REMOVING THE LEGAL OBSTACLES

The commonest of these is the one already mentioned, the absence of a specific provision in the state education law empowering school boards to maintain social centers. In some instances this difficulty has been overcome by a liberal interpretation of the existing statutes: perhaps the funds for the centers have been taken from appropriations for evening instruction or some allied activity. But until the law says, in so many words, that boards may maintain centers and makes financial provision for them, their permanency will not be assured, while getting them newly established upon so slender a legal basis cannot be done without the active co-operation of the school authorities.

For the task of securing the necessary amendment, the school extension committee, or whatever body has been formed to act **Committee on legislation** for the combined organizations, should appoint a special committee on legislation. Its membership, which need not be limited to the school extension committee, should include (1) a prominent lawyer, preferably a member of the state legislature or the local bar association, (2) a social worker who is familiar with the administration of recreational activities, and (3) some person who is unusually well acquainted with political forces and public opinion throughout the state.

Before framing a bill the committee will generally find it advantageous to consult the state department of education or any **Drafting the bill** commission which may have been appointed to revise the education law. Through conferences with these bodies the committee will learn how far the existing law is inadequate and precisely what amendments need to be made to legalize the maintenance of social centers. Oftentimes the state department will be willing to stand as sponsor for the bill, especially if it is already contemplating other changes in the school law.

The statutory conditions differ so much in the several states that it is impossible to suggest a model social center law which **The essential provisions** would be generally available. But this much may be said: an adequate law would contain the following measures:—

1. Authorizing the local school directors or boards of education to establish, equip, and maintain social centers on school premises, specifying some of the principal activities to be maintained therein and providing for the employment of competent persons to conduct them.

2. Authorizing local appropriations for the maintenance of social centers.

3. Indicating the method whereby, in case the school board does not establish social centers, the question of their establishment can be submitted to the electors of the district upon the initiative of a certain minority of the electors. (See provision in the Wisconsin law to this end.)

4. Prescribing for what purposes and under what conditions schools may be used by individuals and organizations.

5. Authorizing school directors or boards of education to permit voluntary organizations to maintain and operate social centers in school buildings. In communities where sufficient public sentiment has not developed to warrant the appropriation of funds for this work, it may sometimes be created by permitting a voluntary organization to support and conduct a social center demonstration (see page 19).

In putting the above provisions into the phraseology of a bill it will be found helpful to consult the comprehensive laws **Sources of in-** upon this subject recently passed by the New **formation** York (see Appendix B) and Wisconsin legislatures. Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and several other states also have enactments which pave the way for the wider use of the school plant. Copies of these laws can be obtained by addressing the respective secretaries of state, the state education departments, or the extension divisions of the state universities. The Department of Recreation of the Russell Sage Foundation also furnishes information upon legislation of this character.

Since public sentiment varies so greatly as to the propriety of permitting social dancing, political meetings, and religious activities in public schoolhouses, the bill should be framed so as not to include, specifically, uses which will prevent its passage within a reasonable period.

After the bill has been drafted it has been found useful to prepare a brief of its provisions showing concisely what they are and giving concrete illustrations of the things they make possible. This brief will facilitate its discussion by other persons and bodies.

Consultation with persons familiar with the attitude of the various legislators will enable the committee to determine whether **Pushing the bill** or not it is necessary to organize a state-wide campaign in order to get the needed bill through. Frequently the committees of the legislature through whose hands the bill will pass are all that need to be converted. Should opposition appear probable, however, it will be advisable to get the largest possible co-operation from social welfare agencies, both at home and in other parts of the state. Many of the larger charitable and educational associations have experienced legislative committees whose co-operation can be obtained for urging the enactment of a social-center law. Other organizations to which appeals could be hopefully sent for assistance in the legislative campaign are the following:

Playground and Recreation Association of America
 State Federations of Women's Clubs
 National Congress of Mothers
 Association of Collegiate Alumnæ
 School Patrons of the National Education Association

The methods employed by these organizations in securing educational enactments, as well as an account of a legislative campaign waged by three thousand Michigan women, are described in Miss Denison's "Helping School Children" on pages 177-201 (see also pages 311-320).

If a city ordinance needs amendment, the campaign will be of much the same character, but on a smaller scale, and the persons to be convinced will be the aldermen, instead of the state legislators.

CREATING PUBLIC SENTIMENT

As I see it the initial stages in progress are first, to see accurately; second, to describe clearly what is seen; and third, to find a group of persons who see the same things and who use the same words to describe them.

We see as individuals; we socialize as we use a common language.

Social movements like plants grow of themselves if put in the sunshine.

SIMON N. PATTEN.

"Sunshine," in this sense, is publicity and it energizes new movements not only by making them mean the same to all but by transmitting personal influence. Every individual converted to the social-center cause becomes by example a force in converting others. The more important the convert the more effective and far-reaching is his influence. The fact of a man's conversion

does not, however, operate in this way until it reaches the minds of others. Hence the importance of facilitating in every possible way the dispersion of the new facts concerning the progress of the social-center movement. The soundest laws are the crystallization of public opinion, and any law that does not rest upon this basis is inevitably difficult to put into effect. But even more necessary is it to have a strong public support when it comes to securing the funds for the social center work.

The great modern agency for conveying facts is the newspaper. The food upon which the newspaper subsists is composed of **The press the chief agency** *events* which have a general human interest. Sometimes promoters in their zeal for the cause send to their local papers voluminous essays filled with arguments in favor of their project, and then they wonder why they are not published. The only place where a newspaper can use argument is in the editorial column, and that usually has to be arranged for through a personal visit to the editor, and this is an important thing for the school extension committee to do. But there is another way of getting arguments into the newspapers. Arrange a meeting and get a prominent person to utter them, and the press will give them columns of space, more precious than the most highly paid advertising.

The school extension committee should have a sub-committee on the press which will see to it that the reporters are furnished **The publicity committee** with full details concerning every step of the movement. Unless, as sometimes happens, some newspaper makes a special campaign in behalf of the cause, it is important that all the papers be treated alike in giving out stories. This does not require that no "scoops" be allowed to reporters who through their own initiative nose out some hitherto undiscovered bit of news; newspaper ethics do not require that all the papers be immediately informed of the facts in such a case. In order to protect the committee, however, it would be well to let it be known that the exclusive story was the result of the newspaper's enterprise and not due to any favoritism on the part of the committee. (For a suggestive example of the effective use of newspapers and up-to-date publicity methods, see Appendix A.)

In most communities there are writers upon special subjects who will welcome material about the cause for use in their **Special writers** articles. Notes upon the extent of the movement, the varied forms it takes, or some incidents from the lives of delinquents showing the need of wholesome opportuni-

ties for recreation—these are all fodder for the special writer and a little systematic attention to this possibility will often result in some excellent and extensive publicity.

After laying all possible emphasis upon the visible word as a means of enlisting support for the movement it is proper to consider also its shortcomings. In the first place a surprisingly large number of people habitually read nothing more serious than the personal items of the newspapers. These may give the steady reader some notion of the class of people connected with the social-center cause but they reveal little as to its precise significance. Even in periodical literature a contribution that yields much accurate knowledge is unusual, while the article that presents the subject so vividly that the individual is not only informed but moved to action is still rarer. As persuasive a writer as Ruskin experienced this difficulty so keenly that he was led to say: "The more I see of writing, the less I care for it; one may do more with a man by getting ten words spoken to him face to face, than by the black-lettering of a whole life's thought."

Politicians, whose trade it is to influence men's actions, place great reliance upon oratory, and just as public meetings play an important part in pre-election campaigns so do **The public meeting** they also in the conversion of a community to the social-center cause. It is not necessary to dwell upon the attention to detail which should be shown in getting up these occasions: the importance of arranging for some local dignitary to preside, a felicitous introduction of the subject of discussion by another dignitary, the interspersal of pleasing musical selections or effective pictures between the speeches, and a main address which can be distinctly heard, is entertaining, and to the point.

Any prestige which the local movement may be entitled to because of the prominence of its adherents should be utilized by **Preliminaries** providing seats for such persons upon the platform. Great care should also be shown in the form by which notice of the meeting is given to individuals, as nothing will be more influential in determining their acceptance than the character of the invitation. If this is neatly printed and either contains, or is in the form of, a ticket to be presented at the door, it will be much less negligible than a general announcement however impressively made. Neither is there any ultimate economy in using postal cards or one-cent postage in place of the sealed envelope.

Public meetings are important not only because of the immediate effect upon the audience, but because of the publicity which is given to the cause through the newspaper accounts of the occasion. For that reason it is always worth while to see that there are convenient tables and seats for the reporters and that they have in advance typewritten copies of the addresses to be given. Some speakers do not prepare by setting their thoughts down on paper and thus they are unable to furnish copies of their addresses in advance. It is always well, however, to suggest that the lecturer furnish material—he can at least dictate some of his more striking thoughts and facts—for the newspapers, and in case of very important speeches when there is reason to believe no manuscript has been prepared it pays to hire a shorthand reporter to make sure of getting an adequate account for the press or for private publication and distribution.*

When a lecturer is brought in from out of town it is well to see that the reporters get to him immediately after his arrival, if it is before noon, and obtain an interview for use in the afternoon papers. Such a story makes an effective advertisement for the evening meeting. If the speaker is advised of the prospective interview beforehand, he will usually be ready to respond.

Lecturers frequently prefer to be entertained at a hotel rather than in a private home. Where they feel under no obligations to the host they have greater opportunity for rest and for the final preparation of their lecture. Since custom varies so greatly regarding attire, a hint as to whether informal or evening clothes will be most suitable for the occasion is usually gratefully received.

Someone should be delegated to meet the speaker on his arrival, see that he is comfortably located, attend to any special arrangements for the lecture that may be desired, and give him such local information as might be used to advantage in making the meeting accomplish the desired results. In extending the invitation a full statement of the local conditions should be made, the preferred date or dates should be given, with alternates if possible, and an inquiry made about the expense involved.

* Suggestions regarding the sources of speakers and topics for public meetings may be found in Pamphlet R119, published by the Department of Recreation of the Russell Sage Foundation.

The cost of getting a speaker from out of town varies with the distance to be traveled and the conditions under which he works.

The expense In practically all cases, traveling expenses and entertainment have to be provided by the local organization. Whether or not an honorarium is required and its amount depend upon the time consumed by the engagement, the number of addresses given, and the circumstances under which the speaker does his work. Often some local person of prominence will bear the expense of getting the lecturer if he is told just what amount is required, the necessity of getting the right speaker, and precisely what results are expected from the meeting.

Experience has shown that the organization which has not enough energy to raise the money necessary for the expenses will not as a rule organize the meeting and follow up and clinch results sufficiently well to make a visit worth while.

In the Louisville campaign for social centers, Miss Pauline F. Witherspoon, who as chairman of the educational committee of the Women's Club was its moving spirit, arranged a number of afternoon mass-meetings for the women of the neighborhood in which it was proposed to establish centers. Since people in the outskirts of a large community will frequently not go down-town to the larger meetings this method may well be followed under similar population conditions. It is also well to arrange for the systematic presentation of the cause before parent-teacher societies, labor unions, ward improvement associations and other local groups which are interested in public welfare.

A very decided interest in social matters is now felt by the religious denominations, and through the local Ministers' Association it should not be difficult to arrange for a Sunday when clergymen throughout the city will preach upon the subject of the social center. In arranging for this it is needless to say that all of the various religious bodies should be approached.

Where it is possible to hold a motion-picture entertainment the photo-play can be used as an argument for social welfare projects. "Charlie's Reform," an Edison film, is a social-center drama and can be rented from the General Film Company, 71 West 23rd Street, New York City. Sometimes the proprietors of local "movies" will co-operate by getting social welfare films and giving a special performance for the sake of the advertising which may thereby be gained.

For its correspondence the committee should have an attractive letterhead displaying the names of the members of the committee and the organizations represented, and thought also should be given to the use of bulletins and handbills in various steps of the campaign. In the Louisville campaign to which reference has been made the Men's Federation sent out three thousand bulletins.

One of the Cincinnati papers came out last spring with a striking headline—"Need for Centers Shown in Survey. West End District has 158 Clubs in or near Saloons. More Theatres and Bar Rooms than there are Schools." And then followed a condensed statement of the findings of a recreational investigation which had been carried on in a certain section of the city. This illustrates the publicity value of a body of significant local facts. The promoters of the social-center cause may be perfectly well convinced of the existence of the evil conditions which create the need for social centers, but such convictions are not concrete enough to make effective ammunition for newspaper cannonading. Consequently many communities are making systematic investigations of the conditions on their streets, in the dance halls and the other amusement resorts for the sake of getting *evidence* which can be objectively and graphically displayed.

The study upon which Milwaukee based its appeal for a social-center tax levy was conducted by Mr. Rowland Haynes, field secretary of the Playground and Recreation Association of America (1 Madison Avenue, New York City); rendering advice and assistance for such undertakings forms a regular part of the work of this association. Suggestions may also be obtained from the Department of Surveys and Exhibits of the Russell Sage Foundation (31 Union Square, New York City), which endeavors to cover the whole field of local social investigations. In cities where boards of public welfare exist the gathering of useful facts may sometimes be brought about through this agency, while in sections touched by the Men and Religion Forward Movement an interest in this kind of social endeavor has been aroused in many of the church organizations. Often the results of such investigations are not adequately "played up" in the newspapers, and in such a case the committee would find it useful to give special thought to ways

Printed matter

Getting ammunition through a study of the facts

Sources of information about surveys

of making the significance of the findings reach the minds and hearts of the people of the community.

After the legal obstacles to the use of the schoolhouses are out of the way, it is often necessary for the promoting organization to finance a *demonstration* of the social center activities before public funds will be appropriated for their maintenance. People will not tax themselves to support a new community service until they can personally appreciate its benefits. This, when it is so novel as social-center work, they cannot do from descriptions: they have to see it, and for many people "seeing is believing." The demonstration is an effective, and usually the final, step in the task of arousing public sentiment. If it is undertaken with that object in mind, its value as publicity material will be more fully realized and it will accomplish its end more quickly. While in theme it is a part of the present section its importance warrants giving it a separate treatment.

THE DEMONSTRATION

In the spring of 1912 the School Extension Committee of the Bloomfield (New Jersey) Town Improvement Association obtained the use of a large public school on three **A typical demonstration** consecutive Saturday evenings for a social center experiment. A man trained in recreation-center and playground administration was engaged to come over from New York to direct the demonstration. On the first evening the public was not admitted. Only the members of the four groups of volunteer workers who had been secured by the local committee were present, and they had come to receive instruction.

The available accommodations were an assembly hall with fixed desks and seats, a room in the basement used ordinarily as a gymnasium, and a large empty room in the old part of the building which had formerly been the school auditorium. The last room was chosen as the place for the open games, free play, and folk dancing. The assembly hall, it was decided, should be equipped as a place for reading and quiet games, while in the gymnasium room in the basement it was arranged to hold a series of basket-ball games. The expert in charge assigned a volunteer group to each of these three rooms, while to the fourth was delegated the task of maintaining order in the halls, stairways, and class-rooms which were not to be used for play purposes.

After showing the assembly-hall committee how to arrange

small tables around the sides of the room for dominoes, checkers, chess, parchesi, and similar games, how to distribute the donated magazines upon the desks and instructing them in the degree of order which it was feasible to maintain, the director took the largest group, composed of ten men and women,—teachers, physicians, business men and women, and housewives,—to the old auditorium where the most active part of the social-center work was to go on. In accordance with his previous instructions, the committee had obtained several dozen bean bags and a number of basket balls. In the course of an hour he taught those staid adults games (see list below) of whose existence they had never dreamed, and in the process they all became young and filled with a new enthusiasm for real play. The basket-ball games downstairs were in the hands of people who were familiar with the game and accordingly needed no instruction. After some final advice regarding the maintenance of order in general the conference closed.

Full accounts of this and a previous meeting when the social-center plans had first been formulated appeared in the local newspapers, so that on the following Saturday evening when the school was opened to the public the throngs which came taxed all of the available accommodations. The reading room and the gymnasium each had their devotees, but the larger number were to be found in the big room where the games were going on. A couple of shrill blasts from the director's whistle brought all to a standstill. After the directions had been given for the next game or dance, a signal from the whistle set them going again. The boys were allowed to play for ten minutes while the girls stood near and watched, and then they were brought on and the boys became spectators. In some of the games boys and girls played together.

On the first evening the following games were played in this room: Dodge ball, arch bag ball, straddle ball, center stride ball, box hustle ball, hounds and rabbits, and the folk dances, Danish Greeting and Kinder polka. On the second evening these games were played in the big room: Swedish fox and geese, duck on the rock (using bean bags), black and white, bombardment, shoe race, touch ball relay, and the following dances: Shoemakers' dance, Nixie polka, Chimes of Dunkirk, Mountain march, and Swedish Klappdans.

The members of the board of education were thoroughly con-

verted and when school opened in the fall they gave permission for a permanent social center in that building.

The following is a memorandum of the steps which may be taken in organizing a demonstration of this character. A statement in black and white of just what is involved in such a project always facilitates its discussion and helps to prevent misunderstandings.

The steps in getting up a demonstration

ment in black and white of just what is involved in such a project always facilitates its discussion and helps to prevent misunderstandings.

A DEMONSTRATION OF THE VALUE OF SOCIAL CENTERS

Duration—Three evenings:—one for preparation, public not present, and two with public present.

Bodies Co-operating—Board of Education and School Extension Committee.

For Benefit of—All persons fourteen years or over, and younger boys and girls only when accompanied by parents or guardians.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

From School Extension Committee—

- a. Services of an expert in organized play for three evenings.
- b. Two committees of ten members each to assist expert in the conduct of play activities.
- c. One committee of three members to attend to advertising outside of school (through churches, newspapers, etc.).
- d. One committee of three members to arrange for the maintenance of order in halls and entrances and for protection of property in unused parts of schoolhouse.
- e. Supplies, such as bean bags, basket ball, etc., as expert may indicate.

From Board of Education—

- a. Permission to use schoolhouse three evenings.
- b. Expense of light, heat, and janitor service.
- c. Approval of the co-operation of such ones of the teaching staff as may desire to participate.
- d. Authorization of principal and teachers to make announcements of the program in classes.

STEPS IN PUTTING THE PLAN INTO OPERATION

1. Adoption of the plan by the School Extension Committee and appointment of the committees mentioned.
2. Presentation of plan to Board of Education and the securing of its adoption.
3. Securing the expert. (Get an experienced social center worker, calling one from another city if necessary.)
4. Fixing of the three evenings after consulting with the expert and the school officials.
5. Arrangements for giving plan proper publicity.
6. Drilling of committee for the demonstration.
7. The demonstration.

The director of the experiment should be qualified by experience to plan activities that will meet with ready acceptance.

The workers For assistants, volunteers may often be obtained from the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., social settlements, musical clubs, the teaching staff of the school, or the student body of the local college. (See the warning at end of pamphlet.)

A project of this sort requiring funds of a definite amount and coming to a definite end with possibilities of permanent benefits very frequently appeals to philanthropists who wish to do good with their means but do not see clear and unobjectionable ways of doing so. Before making a general canvass for funds some effort might be made to find an individual who would be attracted by the opportunity for doing a distinctive service for society. If no one person cares to donate the required sum, then the matter might be presented to several people.

In Trenton, New Jersey, one of the local newspapers recently promoted the raising of a fund for social center work by printing from day to day the names of the contributors and other incidents concerning the progress of the campaign. Another method of raising the money is that of appealing to the various business firms, mills, and industrial concerns of the locality, a way which was successfully followed by the Playground Association of Youngstown, Ohio. In Louisville, Kentucky, the commercial houses contributed generously to the support of the social centers, though other methods were also used, such as a "candy pulling," held in one of the schools, through which \$85 was raised to help equip the reading and game rooms.

The duration of the demonstration will vary with the local conditions. If its purpose is simply to obtain *permission* to use certain rooms in a school building, two or three nights will generally be sufficient, but if it is a question of getting an appropriation it is usually necessary for the voluntary organization to carry on the center work for an entire season and sometimes for a longer period before the board of education will be able to secure adequate funds for its maintenance.

Duration of the demonstration

ACTIVITIES POSSIBLE IN THE ORDINARY SCHOOL BUILDING

The classroom, in spite of its fixed seats and desks, can be used for a large number of enjoyable activities. By obtaining

In the classroom donations of popular magazines, illustrated weeklies and other periodicals, and spreading them out

upon the desks, it may be converted into a convenient reading room. The public librarian might be willing to send an assistant with a box of books for issuance to card-holders, thus converting the room into a branch library. Large numbers of quiet games, such as dominoes, checkers, parchesi, chess and backgammon, can be played on ordinary school desks.

When a piano is available the singing of popular songs or the more advanced choral work is feasible and any one with a musical training can start a class which, judging from the experience had in many centers, would be well attended. In Philadelphia the desk-tops are protected by boards and used for sloyd work, pierced-brass work, basketry, stenciling, and similar activities. Embroidery clubs and classes in other refined handicrafts are also practicable in the average classroom, while its adaptability for story-telling and the usual kinds of club work is obvious. Even dramatic clubs can carry on their activities in a small way in a classroom. Where there is considerable free space in front of the seats it is possible to have small tables and the other equipment required for ping pong, table pool, and similar games.

In the kindergarten, with its bare floor and piano, many forms of recreation, such as social and folk dancing, calisthenics, Boy Scout and Camp Fire Girl activities, and indoor **Kindergarten and basement** games of all kinds, can be carried on. If the basement affords any free space, wire screens can be put around the lights and the place made to serve for a variety of ring and relay games, while with the addition of some benches and a table boys' clubwork becomes possible. When large enough for basket ball it is one of the most valuable parts of a social center.

If an assembly room exists, the adaptability of the building for all kinds of meetings, lectures, debates, musical entertain-
Assembly hall and gymnasium ments and amateur theatricals needs no amplification and, if the seats are movable, its usefulness is still more enhanced because then dancing, basket ball, and many games requiring considerable space can be included in the program. The further enrichment of its recreational resources through the presence of a gymnasium with baths needs no detailed comment. (Descriptions of indoor games can be found in the handbooks of the Public Schools Athletic League, which are issued by the American Sports Publishing Company, 21 Warren Street, New York City.)

The weekly program varies according to the number and
Programs abilities of the workers, the amount of their time

available, the accommodations afforded by the building, the social conditions of the neighborhood, and the amount of the funds devoted to the undertaking. A very simple, easily arranged one-night entertainment is described by the following copy of an actual handbill:

Community Social

Irvington Public School Auditorium, Friday Evening, Jan. 24

Under Direction of the Irvington Parent-Teachers' Association
Social Hour, 7:30 Program 8:30

ROUMANIAN FOLK DANCES

By a Group of Roumanians in Their Native Costumes

SOUTHERN PLANTATION SONGS

By a Male Quartet

Short Address by Dr. Harry Granison Hill

The school patrons and citizens of Irvington are cordially invited to be present. There will be no admission fee charged and no collection taken.

Other activities found in one-night-a-week centers are social dancing, basket-ball games, athletic exhibitions, amateur theatricals, club work and entertainments of all sorts. In two-nights-a-week centers various combinations of the above events are offered along with the supplementary features of quiet games and reading rooms. People will not form the habit of patronizing the latter unless they are available several nights a week. A common three-nights-a-week schedule provides activities especially for boys and men on Mondays, those particularly for girls and women on Wednesdays, and on Fridays a general program enjoyable by both sexes, adolescent and mature.

In Detroit the boys have the use of the building on Monday and Wednesday evenings and the girls on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, while on Saturday nights the two groups attend alternately. The New York centers, in all but a few, keep all their facilities—games and reading rooms, gymnasiums and play-rooms, club and dancing rooms—open six nights a week, but there is a variation from week to week in the supplementary entertain-

ments and special occasions. (For a suggestive illustration of a miscellaneous program see the Evanston bulletin, Appendix C.)

In arranging a schedule of activities workers will find it helpful to write to the directors of social centers in other cities, asking them for copies of programs, reports and other suggestive printed matter. With this information in hand the task of arranging a feasible program will be greatly facilitated.

**Information
about indoor
games**

BEGINNINGS OF PERMANENT SOCIAL CENTERS

When the school authorities are not able to maintain centers but are willing to permit them, many forms of co-operation between the board and local associations are possible.

A suggestion which will fit your local situation may be found among the following instances:

**Actual work-
ing arrange-
ments between
boards and
associations** Amherst, Nova Scotia.—Mr. John Bradford, who is in charge of the non-equipment work of the local Y. M. C. A., has been instrumental in organizing a flourishing social center in one of the public schools, as well as similar organizations in the churches, and in setting in motion a large number of other community activities.

Baltimore, Md.—The Children's Playground Association hires the workers and pays for the extra janitor service in one building, for which the school board furnishes the heat and light.

Bloomfield, N. J.—The School Extension Committee hires the director, who is assisted by volunteer workers. Board provides heat, light, and janitor service.

Boston, Mass.—Women's Municipal League raised sufficient funds for the entire support of a social center in the East Boston High School for one year.

Buffalo, N. Y.—Playground Commission staff organized evening gymnastic classes in the public schools.

Burlington, Ia.—West End Improvement Club conducted physical training classes in a school gymnasium.

Canton, O.—Social center work has been carried on by the Y. M. C. A. in two schools.

Chicago, Ill.—Philanthropic individuals, the Juvenile Protective Association, Parent-Teacher Associations, Chicago Woman's Aid, Englewood Woman's Club, and the Alumni Associations of the public schools have co-operated with the Board of Education in the conduct of school centers by furnishing funds and volunteer workers.

Cincinnati, O.—The University Settlement and the Woman's Club have co-operated in the establishment of social center work.

Cleveland, O.—Social center development is being promoted by a committee of the Board of Education with the aid of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Fortnightly Club, Mothers' Clubs, Manila Auxiliary, No. 12 U. S. W. V., Tucker School of Expression, Harroff School of Expression, Independence Day Association, City Forestry Department, and many public-school principals and teachers, and prominent citizens.

Denver, Colo.—Girls' Clubs have been formed by an energetic worker of the Colorado Congress of Mothers.

Elizabeth, N. J.—The Civic Recreation League, an organization formed for this specific purpose, raised over \$3,000 and employed a social director. By holding their activities on the same nights as the evening schools the League was able to avoid the expense of heat and light.

Englewood, N. J.—The Civic Association pays the salary of the head worker and furnishes janitor service. The Board contributes heat and light.

Evanston, Ill.—The activities are conducted with the help of nearby social-settlement workers and volunteers, and the expense of heat, light, and janitor service as well as the salaries of some of the workers is met by contributions. (See Appendix C.)

Grand Rapids, Mich.—Mr. Charles H. Mills, who is developing the social center work, is the city supervisor of playgrounds. The Board co-operates by giving the use of the buildings and encouraging school principals to assist in the development of the centers. The Public Library maintains branches open to the public afternoons and evenings in five of the public schools.

Jersey City, N. J.—In the beginning, the School Extension Committee furnished the music and the supervision for the dances, and the Board gave heat, light, and janitor service. At present the Board also provides the supervisor and the music, while the Committee assists in the chaperonage of the classes and in the development of the club work.

Louisville, Ky.—At the outset the Woman's Club, which organized the work, had the help of social-settlement workers, and from the Men's Federation it received both financial aid and personal service. Some of the early meetings were held in the auditorium of a neighboring parish house while the school auditorium was being repaired.

Philadelphia, Pa.—The Home and School League and affil-

iated organizations furnish workers and supplies. (For a suggestive list of activities and forms of co-operation obtain the annual report of the League; address Mrs. Edith W. Pierce, Executive Secretary, 1522 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, Pa.)

Pittsburgh, Pa.—Centers are maintained by the Pittsburgh Playground Association with funds, in a large part, appropriated by the Common Council.

St. Louis, Mo.—Work is under the auspices of the Neighborhood House, employing a director whose services are loaned by the Playground Commission.

South Bend, Ind.—Initiated by Social Welfare Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, which assisted in the formation of neighborhood civic associations meeting in the public schools. The Chamber of Commerce Committee helps the local associations in getting up interesting programs for their meetings and the Board of Education loans its motion-picture machine.

Syracuse, N. Y.—Workers and janitor service are furnished by the Solvay Guild.

Youngstown, O.—The Playground Association is in entire charge of the work, furnishing supervisor, local directors, assistants and compensation for extra janitor service. Board gives only use of buildings heated and lighted.

ADAPTING THE SCHOOL BUILDING

In the newly-erected Valentine addition is a room 68 feet long by 28 feet wide in which the state authorities grant permission to seat an audience of 315; this is made possible by a rolling partition and movable desks and chairs—a delightful place for an assembly. The floor can be entirely cleared. Provision is made too for use of the stereopticon in lectures or entertainments. In the front basement is a room 25 by 30, finely lighted, with separate heating apparatus that can quickly be brought into use and with its own outside entrance. This room should be available for many meeting purposes; it can be darkened for use of the stereopticon in the day time, if desired.—From Report of the School Committee, 1912, Chicopee, Mass.

The above quotation illustrates not only some of the ways, but the spirit, which makes it possible to convert the ordinary schoolhouse into a practicable place for holding a majority of the desirable social-center activities.

The basement can be prepared for indoor games ordinarily by simply removing the dust from the floor and safeguarding the **Fixing the basement** lights with wire screens. Stretching a waxed canvas over the concrete makes it available for social dancing, while in its normal state it is suitable for folk

dancing. In some places a number of small, cheap gas stoves have been installed on ordinary wooden kitchen tables, and with the addition of some culinary utensils a very adequate equipment has been provided for cooking classes.

It is preferable to have baths near the gymnasium, but in case that is not practicable, inexpensive showers can be installed in the basement by simply attaching faucets and nozzles at regular intervals to water pipes, taking care that there are underground pipes to take away the drainage. **Baths** Wooden lattice work under the showers will add to the comfort of the bathers, as will also wooden compartments.

When the basement is dry it makes a convenient place for a library room, particularly so if fairly direct access can be had to it from the street. In a number of cities the basements are regularly used for voting purposes, and railings, booths, and balloting paraphernalia are stored away during the periods when not in use.

Before attempting to use a classroom, lockers should be provided for the storage of the day-pupils' books and supplies.

The classroom These lockers may be set up in the corridors or in any other convenient place. By placing drawing boards upon the desk-tops it is possible, as has already been said, to use them for sloyd and pierced-brass work, basketry, stenciling, and similar handwork activities. By spreading periodicals and magazines about on the desks, the ordinary classroom serves very well as a reading-room. If scrupulous care is taken to remove all litter from the classroom after its use for social-center purposes, the friction with the day-school teacher and principal will be very materially minimized.

What will increase the usefulness of the classroom for social and recreational occasions more than any other device is its equipment with movable chairs and desks. **Movable desks** A school furniture firm in Rochester has developed a movable combination chair and desk having rubber tips on the front legs and metal slides on the rear ones, with a drawer for books beneath the seat and an adjustable desk attachment; this chair has already been installed in some of the classrooms of over a hundred cities and towns. The movable desk not only increases the usefulness of the classroom for social-center work but allows a more elastic and vital administration of the day class-work. The new Washington Irving High School in New York City is furnished with movable chairs and flat-topped desks in practically all of its classrooms.

In buildings where no assembly room exists one may frequently be provided by taking out the partitions between two **Getting an assembly hall** or more classrooms. Sometimes the permanent wall is replaced by a movable partition. Schools already having auditoriums may be further adapted for amateur theatricals by enlarging the platform, putting dressing-rooms at either side, arranging the electric lighting so that it can be controlled from the stage, marking exits with red bulbs, and installing service wires with the proper fuse plugs for the use of stereopticons and motion-picture machines. A fireproof booth conforming to the local fire regulations will facilitate the installation of motion-picture apparatus.

Attics, in buildings where the floor beams are sufficiently strong, may frequently be utilized as gymnasiums or assembly **Utilizing the attic** rooms by strengthening or improving the material of the floor. An auditorium should be as near the ground as possible, but one in the top of the building is better than none at all. In certain cities the same room, by having movable seats and movable gymnastic apparatus, is used both as an auditorium and as a gymnasium. In some halls regular places for packing the folding seats are provided under the platform.

The corridors of a school building when sufficiently wide can often be used for dancing and games. Sometimes the adjoining **The corridor** rooms have moving partitions which can be slid back, thus making a considerable area for use on social occasions. For dancing parties the floors should of course be waxed, but they should not be thus treated when games only are to be played. Sometimes it is thought desirable to set up some kind of railing or fence for the purpose of shutting off the portions of the building which are not to be used for social-center purposes. In Rochester iron gates were originally installed, but after a time these were abandoned because the order of the young people was so excellent that they were not required. Whether or not there are gates, some measures should be taken, especially at the beginning of social center work, to prevent the raiding of classrooms by thoughtless young people.

Supplies of chairs and small wooden tables increase the availability of different parts of the schoolhouse, while social occasions **Additional furniture** in general will be made much more practicable if there are also a set of dishes and an adequate supply of table ware. A stereopticon and, if possible, a motion-

picture machine should be installed. In the quiet-games room there should be a traveling box of books from the public library, as well as periodicals suited to the tastes of the prospective patrons of the center.

WHAT A SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS CAN DO TO DEVELOP SOCIAL CENTERS WITHOUT AN APPROPRIATION

The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be,—but, finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means: a very different thing!

—*Browning.*

A schoolhouse grows into a social center at the same rate as the neighborhood activities, occurring in it, increase in range and frequency. For the superintendent lacking means **A guiding principle** for school extension but desiring to promote it the most effective line of action is that of showing a hospitable—even inviting—attitude toward the life just outside.

The first step in carrying out the "open door" policy is to secure from the school board the most liberal and workable set of regulations possible regarding the use of buildings by other bodies. If the appropriations admit it, heat, light, and janitor service may well be afforded without charge for all occasions coming within the range permitted by the regulations. While many boards still require the applicant to meet this expense, there is an increasing tendency to furnish these privileges gratuitously. Having decided that certain occasions of a recreational, social or civic character advance social welfare, even though they are not educational in the formal sense, these school authorities consider it legitimate to use public funds and public property for these purposes and to encourage such use by not subjecting the applicants to trying ordeals of red tape.

The work of many organizations whose activities are supplementary to those of the schools would be greatly advanced if free meeting-places were afforded in public-school buildings. Among bodies of this character may be mentioned social settlements (see Appendix C), the Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, boys' and girls' clubs of all sorts, playground associations, women's clubs, ward improvement associations, neighborhood civic clubs, local art and historical societies, cooking clubs and the parent-teacher associations which have already been mentioned.

In P. S. 63, New York City, the Cloak-Makers' Union recently held a series of educational discussions. Their program included addresses by college professors, representatives of national government bureaus, economists connected with the Manufacturers' Association, social workers and representatives of various other labor unions. Similar opportunities are now desired by many labor organizations. Often the only halls available to them are attached to saloons or buildings even more devoid of an atmosphere of cleanliness and order. Deliberations tend to take on the character of the environment in which they are made. The problems which workmen have to face bear a fundamental relation to the welfare of the public, and it can well afford to facilitate the sound solution of them by furnishing dignified and convenient meeting-places. The exchange of views which takes place under free and open discussions tends to modify extreme opinions and to favor balanced action.

Public hearings upon current vital questions should be encouraged wherever school buildings have auditoriums with sufficient accommodations. Ministers' associations are often glad to organize meetings to discuss such questions as the problem of how and by whom sex education should be provided. The school board which facilitates the discussion of such community matters is performing a real educational service. Sometimes it is possible to get the local associated charities or some other body to establish in the high school, a people's forum, a platform, that is, which is intentionally and systematically used for the consideration of vital, local questions. The conduct of such a forum requires a leader of the greatest tact and intelligence, but when it is successfully established the solution of social problems is greatly furthered. In some cities committees of the chamber of commerce and board of trade have undertaken the organization of public meetings and discussions in school buildings.

In a number of cities during the fall of 1912 school buildings were opened for political rallies under partisan auspices without serious criticism on the part of the public. When it becomes apparent that each party has equal privileges respecting such meetings, public sentiment usually offers no objection to holding them on the school premises.

The musical resources of a neighborhood are sometimes considerably increased by affording a meeting-place for a struggling choral society, orchestra, or man-

Labor unions

**Discussion of
community
problems**

**Political
meetings**

**Stimulating
artistic culture**

dolin club. Loan art exhibits held in the schoolhouse enrich the æsthetic enjoyments of the community and they can frequently be arranged through a systematic canvass among the families who have interesting pictures, bric-a-brac and other *objets d'art*. Many times public library boards will establish branches in schoolhouses if there is sufficient encouragement on the part of the school authorities.

The regular arrangement of addresses, concerts and other entertainments, making use of town talent as well as that of the

Organizing public lectures and entertainments teaching and student body, can sometimes be placed upon a committee of the board of education. In Cleveland a social-center development of this character has been carried on by such a committee for a number of years. Extensive courses of interesting entertainments and meetings have been held with no other expense than that of the heat, light, and janitor service, and the printing of programs. In every community there is a large amount of latent intellectual and artistic talent which can be called upon for gratuitous public service.

Progressive school work in itself overflows in a number of ways which bring the families and friends of the pupils into the building after school hours. Such events as bas-

Expanding the regular school activities ket-ball contests, folk-dancing classes, amateur theatricals organized by the English and history teachers, inter-scholastic debates, spelling contests, and athletic exhibitions of various kinds are worthy of thoughtful attention. By giving publicity to these affairs, making comfortable provision for spectators, and encouraging the teachers to organize them, such occasions can be increased without detriment to scholarship and in a way that will strengthen the hold of the school upon the community life. Careful and systematic thought regarding the stimulation and organization of mothers' clubs and parent-teacher associations on the part of principals and teachers will also tend to bring to the school system valuable support and cooperation on the part of the general public. A well-organized league of home and school associations makes an excellent foundation for future social-center work, as well as for reforms of a purely educational nature.

The Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. have in some cases provided leaders for recreational activities not in their own buildings.

Getting recreation leaders Especially where these organizations are carrying on a non-equipment work it is possible to get this

kind of assistance. Sometimes social-settlement workers will give their services for social-center work in the schools. In cities where there is a federation of men's church clubs it might be persuaded to support a recreational expert during a demonstration or experimental period. (See warning on inside of back cover.)

The time of many superintendents is taken up with the performance of routine clerical work which could be just as well done

Getting the time and energy

by an assistant. If the lack of economy in allowing a high-salaried man to spend most of his time doing the work of an ordinary clerk is clearly

demonstrated to the school board, it will often provide the necessary assistance. If in addition he can get a supervisor of evening schools, of the physical training work, or of the public lectures, then he will be able to find time for the work of increasing the social usefulness of the school plant. Sometimes in the appointment of one of these assistants a man can be selected with regard to his qualifications, not only for his nominal task, but also for developing recreational features, and such an appointee would be able to help the superintendent greatly in carrying out his ideas.

If no local organization has attempted to organize a movement in favor of social centers, the superintendent himself may well undertake this task, and in promoting it he may find helpful suggestions in some of the pages preceding this section.

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- DEWEY, JOHN: *The School as a Social Center*. *Elementary School Teacher*, 3 : 73.
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- KING, IRVING: *Social Aspects of Education*. Pages 425. The Macmillan Company, New York. Price, \$1.60.
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- PERRY, CLARENCE ARTHUR: *Wider Use of the School Plant*. Pages 423. Survey Associates, Inc., New York. Price, \$1.25.
- WARD, EDWARD J.: *The Social Center*. Pages 359. D. Appleton & Company, New York. Price, \$1.50.

See also the reports and publications of the Philadelphia Home and School League (1522 Cherry Street), the Department of Public Recreation, Columbus, Ohio, and of the school authorities in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and New York.

APPENDIX A

A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN FOR A MODEL SCHOOL BUILDING

The Civic League, an association of public-spirited men and women, of Lexington, Kentucky, set out to secure the funds for a \$45,000 public school which was greatly needed in a certain district of the city. The School Board voted \$10,000 towards the project, but that brought it to the limit of its debt capacity. The League canvassed the local persons of means, sent out a skillfully worded appeal to prominent former Kentuckians and gathered in another \$10,000. To raise the remaining \$25,000 it held a "whirlwind" campaign of nine days' duration in which some unusually effective publicity and organization plans were successfully carried out.

THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE CAMPAIGN

Two weeks before its opening, a ten-page pamphlet on the "Wider Use of the School Plant" was reprinted in two of the leading newspapers. The same papers also announced a prize essay competition open to all elementary and high school pupils. The subject set was the "Wider Use of the School Plant" and for information pupils were referred to the above article and others on the same topic which would appear in the daily press.

At the same time a committee of the League began to send out at intervals of three or four days a series of six post cards. Each card contained a picture of the present or proposed school, a concise statement of advantages to be gained, and a conspicuous request to read a certain article, e. g., "The Proposed Model Public School," which would appear on such a date.

During the week before starting the campaign there were daily stories in the newspapers, announcing the date for turning in the essays, the School Board's resolution endorsing the project, and full details of the program for next week.

On the Sunday before, several clergymen preached about the campaign, while the newspapers printed the plans and a description of the proposed school which filled two pages.

Monday, the day before the canvassers were to start out, was a school holiday. A procession of 2500 pupils marched to the auditorium where the winning essay prizes were awarded, songs sung, gymnastic exhibitions given, and addresses made upon the purpose of the campaign. In the evening the League gave a public banquet, at which the president of Cincinnati University

spoke upon "The School and the Community," and addresses were made by other prominent people.

The first day of the campaign, one hundred well-known men, formed in companies of seven under the direction of a captain, began to canvass the city. Luncheon was served to these solicitors by prominent women and a 25-foot thermometer to indicate the growth of the fund was erected in front of the Courthouse.

Total subscriptions and lists of contributors were published on the third day.

The fourth day, Mrs. Desha Breckinridge, the leading spirit in the campaign, addressed the monthly teachers' meeting.

The fifth day, the Chi Omega sorority served the midday luncheon to the solicitors.

A \$1,000 and a \$2,000 contribution were announced and the women held a rally in the Y. M. C. A. on the seventh day.

On the eighth day, the sum of \$10,000 was still to be raised. One hundred women pledged themselves to secure \$20 each during the day. Schools and colleges were canvassed and substantial contributions obtained.

Last day, balance of fund was secured, the workers themselves guaranteeing the \$3,500 unpledged.

During the progress of the campaign over 100 feet of space was given to it by the Lexington Herald, and generous treatment was also accorded by The Leader.

The new Lincoln School was dedicated in November, 1912.

APPENDIX B

ESSENTIAL PROVISIONS OF THE NEW YORK STATE SOCIAL CENTER LAW

Enacted April 7, 1913

AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION LAW, RELATIVE TO THE POWERS OF VOTERS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND EXTENDING THE USE OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

310. *Powers and duties of boards of education.* The said board of education of every union free school district shall have power, and it shall be their duty:

6. To purchase sites, or additions thereto, for recreation grounds, for agricultural purposes, and for schoolhouses for the district, when designated by a meeting of the district; and to construct such schoolhouses and additions thereto as may be so designated; to purchase furniture and apparatus for such schoolhouses; and to keep the furniture and apparatus therein in repair; and, when authorized by such meeting, to purchase implements, supplies, and apparatus for agricultural, athletic, playground, and social center purposes.

15. To contract with and employ such persons as by the provisions of this chapter are qualified teachers, to determine the number of teachers to be employed in the several departments of instruction in said school, and at the time of such employment, to make and deliver to each teacher a written contract as required by section five hundred and sixty-one of this chapter; and employ such persons as may be necessary to supervise, organize, conduct and maintain athletic, playground and social center activities, or for any one or more of such purposes. The regular teachers of the school may be employed at an increased compensation or otherwise, and by separate agreement, written or oral, for one or more of such purposes.

§4. Section four hundred and fifty-five of said chapter, as so amended by chapter one hundred and forty of the laws of nineteen hundred and ten, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

§455. Use of schoolhouse and grounds out of school hours. Schoolhouses and the grounds connected therewith and all property belonging to the district shall be in the custody, and under the control and supervision of the trustees or board of education of the district. The trustees or board of education may adopt reasonable regulations for the use of such schoolhouses,

grounds or other property, when not in use for school purposes. Such regulations shall not conflict with the provisions of this chapter, and shall conform to the purposes and intent of this section and shall be subject to review on appeal to the commissioner of education as provided by law. The trustees or board of education of each district may, subject to regulations adopted as above provided, permit the use of the schoolhouse and rooms therein, and the grounds and other property of the district, when not in use for school purposes, for any of the following purposes:

1. By persons assembling therein for the purpose of giving and receiving instruction in any branch of education, learning or the arts.

2. For public library purposes, subject to the provisions of this chapter, or as stations of public libraries.

3. For holding social, civic and recreational meetings and entertainments, and other uses pertaining to the welfare of the community; but such meetings, entertainment and uses shall be non-exclusive and shall be open to the general public.

4. For meetings, entertainments and occasions where admission fees are charged, when the proceeds thereof are to be expended for an educational or charitable purpose; but such use shall not be permitted if such meetings, entertainments and occasions are under the exclusive control, and the said proceeds are to be applied for the benefit of, a society, association or organization of a religious sect or denomination, or of a fraternal, secret or other exclusive society or organization.

5. For polling places for holding primaries and elections, and for the registration of voters, and for holding political meetings. But no such use shall be permitted unless authorized by a vote of a district meeting, held as provided by law. It shall be the duty of the trustees or board of education to call a special meeting for such purpose upon the petition of at least ten per centum of the qualified electors of the district. If such authority be granted by a district meeting it shall be the duty of such trustees or board of education to permit such use, under reasonable regulations to be adopted by such trustees or board, until another meeting held in like manner shall have revoked such authority.

APPENDIX C

Bulletin of Neighborhood Activities

IN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 76

EVANSTON, ILL.

FOR WEEK OF JANUARY 9 TO 16, 1913

	At Central School The Parents, Teachers and Alumni Association	At Lincoln School The Parents and Teachers Association	Washington School The Neighborhood Club
Friday	<p>1:30-3:30 P. M. Instruction in Folk Dancing and Games, Lower Grades.</p> <p>3:40 P. M. First Team Practice.</p> <p>7:30 P. M. Young Men's Athletic Club.</p>	<p>1:30-3:30 P. M. Instruction in Folk Dancing and Games, Lower Grades.</p> <p>3:40 P. M. Girls' Basket Ball.</p>	<p>1:30-3:30 P. M. Instruction in Folk Dancing and Games.</p>
Saturday		<p>1-3 P. M. At Central Gym. Try-out for all teams.</p>	<p>Electric Repairs are finished and activities will go on the coming week.</p>
Sunday			<p>Baths open all forenoon. Bring towel. Women invited to come with their children.</p>
Monday	<p>3:30 P. M. Meeting of Social Committee in Room 12.</p> <p>3:40 P. M. Basket Ball between Room Teams.</p> <p>3:45 P. M. Dancing for children over 13 years old. Miss Knapp. 10 cents.</p>	<p>3:40 P. M. Basket Ball Teams.</p> <p>3:45 P. M. Dancing for children over 10 years old. Miss Tracy. 10 cents.</p> <p>4:45 P. M. Adult Dancing Class.</p>	<p>7:30 P. M. Civics Class.</p> <p>8 P. M. Young People's Club, in charge of Miss Knapp. 10 cents.</p>

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>3:40 P. M. Basket Ball between Room Teams. 8 P. M. (sharp). Illustrated Lecture "The Yankee Schoolmaster in the American Revolution." MR. J. F. WARD. Refreshments served upstairs.</p>	<p>3:40 P. M. Basket Ball Teams. 5:00 P. M. Children's Bring any Orchestra. 7:30 P. M. Men's Athletic Club. 4-9 P. M. Branch of Public Library. 7:30 P. M. Meeting of French class.</p>	<p>7:30 P. M. Girls' (15-18) Athletic Club at Stow-House. 8 P. M. Washington Choral Society. 8 P. M. Men's Whist Club at Stow-House. (For men over 20.)</p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>3:40 P. M. Girls' Basket Ball. 3:45 P. M. Children's Class in Gymnastic Dancing. Miss Burtette. 10 cents. 5:00 P. M. Children's Orchestra.</p>	<p>1:30-3:30 P. M. Instruction in Gymnastics, Upper Grades. 3:40 P. M. First Team Practice.</p>	<p>7:30 P. M. Evening School. To Learn English. 8 P. M. Washington Dramatic Club. Meeting at Stow-House.</p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>1:30-3:30 P. M. Gymnastic Dancing. Upper Grades. 3:40 P. M. Basket Ball.</p>	<p>3:40 P. M. Basket Ball. 3:45 P. M. Children's Class in Gymnastic Dancing. Miss Burtette. 10 cents.</p>	<p>4-9 P. M. Branch of Public Library. 4:15 P. M. Story hour. 7:00 P. M. German Study Club. 7:00 P. M. Clover Club. 7:00 P. M. Girls' N. C. N. C. Club. 7:00 P. M. Grizzly Bears at Stow-House. 7:30 P. M. Millinery Class. Miss Burt.</p>

Mr. Ray and Mr. Wheaton live at Stow-House. Call on them for advice in organizing athletics. Children under fifteen years old should attend no meeting after 8 P. M., unless accompanied by their parents. The painting—"The Alhambra"—by J. F. Stacy, was purchased for the Jennie Adair memorial. Central School Teams won both the A and B Class Championships in the Grammar School League.

Did you receive this bulletin? If you have you will hear Mr. Ward's new and entertaining story of the great struggle for Liberty. Have you read this bulletin?

Social Center Pamphlets

By Clarence Arthur Perry

R 123. A Survey of School Social Centers.—Season of 1911-12.

Contains statistics of the centers in existence last winter, a tentative definition of a social center, a list of cities having public library work in the schools, notes on recent civic happenings in school buildings and excerpts from several new state laws concerning social centers and the use of the schoolhouse as a public meeting place. 20 pp. 5 cents.

R 120. Social Center Features in New Elementary School Architecture.

An illustrated pamphlet showing the plans of the more advanced types of school buildings now being erected in the United States, with a description of those special features which will enable them to render extra-ordinary services to their communities. 48 pp. 25 cents.

R 119. Sources of Speakers and Topics for Public Lectures in School Buildings.

A directory of organizations which use the lecture platform to promote social amelioration. Also a list of topics suitable for discussion in public meetings and suggestions of local sources of speakers. 36 pp. 5 cents.

R 104. The Unused Recreational Resources of the Average Community.

Suggests many ways in which communities may have organized recreation at small cost. 14 pp. 5 cents.

R 87. Recreation the Basis of Association between Parents and Teachers.

The value of using the school building as a recreation center after school hours, and suggestions for bringing parents and teachers together. 13 pp. 5 cents.

R 85. Evening Recreation Centers.

A description of various recreation centers in this country and a brief survey of the movement in England. Bibliography. 32 pp. 5 cents.

R 83. The Community-Used School.

Use of the schoolhouse to promote public health, civic efficiency, and social solidarity in the community. 9 pp. 5 cents.

Published by the

**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION OF THE
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400 Metropolitan Tower, New York City

Above all else be sure to get the right person to supervise your social centers. They will be a community asset or a community calamity according as they are wisely or unwisely administered. In this work, limiting the expenditure for supervision instead of curtailing on equipment, is the worst kind of economy. Indeed, if a competent supervisor cannot be secured from the outset, it is preferable to delay the undertaking until such time as one can be had.—LEE F. HANMER.

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