

Walking the Second Mile

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EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

WALKING THE SECOND MILE

Coming from a primitive state into the dawn of civilization, Man brought with him three problems: communicable disease, the maintenance and stability of his social order, and the unequal distribution of wealth, with its attendant problem, poverty.

The first of these, civilized man is beginning to conquer. The second is apparently as far from permanent solution now as it was in the dawn of history. The third also has resisted solution, but it can be conquered, at least to the extent that men and women can be taught how to live lives full of happiness, even though poor.

Thoreau said "The sun sets as beautiful from the window of the poor house as from the rich man's palace." It is often necessary, however, for those who have had better opportunities and a better heritage, to go and live with the poor and the underprivileged, if these are to learn to look for the sun, if they are to share in the happiness possible for them.

The state of Iowa is blessed in having a number of remarkable men and women, who, with diversified training, yet with equally fine qualities of soul, have both seen the need and have visioned the possibilities of the less-privileged, and who have had the added grace to spend their lives in helping others to bettered conditions and to higher ideals of living.

Among this group are two outstanding women, Flora Dunlap of Des Moines and Mary Treglia of Sioux City.

Much of what Roadside Settlement has accomplished, and is today doing, stands as a tribute to the vision and the patient kindness of Flora Dunlap. It is true that others went before, but it was her courage and her perseverance that brought to a fruition so much of the vision of what Roadside could do in the city of Des Moines.

When Roadside Settlement was established in its present location, the sentiment on the part of the southeast Des Moines

people was, "We don't want anyone coming in here and patronizing us. We are not looking for charity." Through her friendly attitude and her kindly advice, this feeling of critical hostility was quickly changed by Miss Dunlap. Soon everyone was her friend.

Miss Dunlap thought to have retired from active connection with the social welfare field some years ago, but she has been called to service many times since. Prior to her "retirement" she had served on the Des Moines School Board as the first woman ever elected to such a position in Des Moines, she also had served as a past president of the Iowa Equal Suffrage Association. Since 1924, she has served as a past president of the Des Moines Community Chest, and after 1930 as the executive secretary of the Family Social Service, also she has been the head of the women's division in Polk County in the CWA program in Iowa, a member of the Polk County Emergency Relief Commission, and has occupied an administrative position with the PWA work in Iowa.

Miss Mary Treglia has done an equally remarkable piece of work in Sioux City. She faced conditions entirely different than those faced by Miss Dunlap. The spirit of nationality is perhaps the strongest spirit that mankind has. It is the last to surrender. The traditions, customs, even the speech, of the homeland may be changed and forgotten, but the particularistic cohesive spirit of nationality survives even longer.

Through Miss Treglia's fine understanding of the good things in each of the many nationalities that make up the community she serves, she has been able to make even the spirit of nationality contribute to the making of American citizens among those who come in touch with her and Community House of Sioux City. In doing this work, Miss Treglia not only has made good American citizens, but has taught them how to live fruitful lives under the conditions of poverty to which they may be subject.

The editor is proud indeed that the history of Roadside Settlement, largely the history of Flora Dunlap's life, and the history of Community House in Sioux City, so much the work of Miss Treglia, are published in this issue of *THE ANNALS*. These are two institutions, among others, which

have contributed notably towards the control, if not the solution, of the third of those complex and vexatious problems Man brought with him into our present era.

IMMIGRATION,—SIOUX CITY AND COMMUNITY HOUSE

As Miss Hoyt points out in her article on Community House of Sioux City appearing in this issue, the Holocaust of the World War, among other things that it did, shattered rudely the comfortable illusions of many of our people when it forced on our attention the existence of certain conditions within the nation. Mention need only be made of the revelations in the matter of literacy and physical health discovered at that time to remind one of some of the disturbing conclusions to which they pointed. The most disturbing feature of these disclosures, and of surveys similar to the one made in Sioux City in 1921 by the Y. W. C. A., was the clear and unmistakable evidence they presented that these conditions, in many instances, were not of a recent origin or of a sudden growth, but had had a past of steady development, a past whose existence had been untroubled by public attention.

This was the situation disclosed by surveys of the immigration problem in many of our smaller cities removed from the more publicized centers of immigrant concentration . . . both with respect to the illusion of their non-existence and their long past.

The gradual awakening of the state to the problem of assimilating its foreign born residents is suggestively indicated in the slow advance made by the census reports in providing even an adequate description of the nature and number of this population. The first state census that tabulated more than the total of population, that of 1851 (report of 1852), took a count of the number of alien residents in the separate counties as well as of the male and female population. In this report the immigrant has significance only in so far as he was naturalized, i. e. whether he had a right to vote. With the exception of the comprehensive report of 1856 which was

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