

SOCIAL CASE WORKERS
AND
BETTER INDUSTRIAL
CONDITIONS

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SOCIAL CASE WORKERS AND BETTER INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS

What I have to say rests on the premise that *the soundest kind of reform, whether industrial or any other, is that based upon informed public opinion*; that in a democracy, at least, where the people determine public policy and action, if advances are to be at all permanent, they must be grounded in popular understanding of their value.

In an earlier draft of this paper I included a few paragraphs in support of that premise, but, because of the shortness of the time, I omit them now, for I think we may safely assume agreement on this principle. If any need further argument, I invite you to read the papers of the Division on the Promotion of Social Programs presented at the last two sessions of the National Conference of Social Work, especially the convincing address by Mr. Allen T. Burns at the Indianapolis meeting.

If, then, we can assume this premise, it follows that one, if not the chief or only, *means to* sound reform is through the education of the public; and it follows further that one, at least, of the best ways in which the case worker can make his knowledge contribute to industrial reform is through its educational use.¹ In general, two broad avenues of opportunity for teaching are open to him. The first is teaching through the use of individual cases²; and the second, teaching through the use of massed cases or massed facts. Both seem to me to have great value, and to give the case worker chances to make rare contributions to social reform.

¹ The original and more explicit title assigned for this paper was: How Shall Case Workers Contribute Their Knowledge to Industrial Reform?

² The term "case" used throughout this paper refers to the designation given, not to the family living under abnormal conditions, but to the complex circumstances which bear in upon it and cause its abnormal life. The case is the problem; it does not refer to the family.

EDUCATIONAL USE OF INDIVIDUAL CASES

First, then, as to the opportunities to promote industrial reform through the educational use of individual cases. In every modern charity organization society, and in many other organizations doing case work, is a case committee. It is sometimes called a case conference; sometimes, a decisions committee; sometimes, a consultation committee. Whatever its name, it is composed of a group of public spirited citizens selected because of their varied experience, points of view, knowledge, and broad sympathies which can be brought to bear upon individuals and families who are living abnormally. In this committee, I believe, the case worker has his first rare opportunity to arouse popular interest for industrial reform, both because of the method he can employ and because, even among such a group of citizens having lively human sympathies, there is far too little appreciation of the relation often existing between broken families and the circumstances under which workers labor.

EMPLOYING THE CASE METHOD OF TEACHING

In this connection let me recall the principle underlying the so-called "case method" of teaching introduced into the Harvard Law School by Christopher C. Langdell in 1871, which not only reformed the method of teaching law there, but has been adopted in practically all the leading law schools of the United States. In Professor Langdell's own description of his method he states that a year and a half of teaching, "not theoretically but practically," a "business" which he entered upon "entirely without experience," confirmed his earlier opinion as a student and his later conviction when he first became a teacher "that law could only be taught or learned effectively by means of cases in some form." The science of law, he argued, "consists of certain principles or doctrines" and the ability to apply them with success to "the tangled skein of human affairs" is what makes "a true lawyer"; and "hence to acquire that mastery should be the business of every earnest student of law." He held that "the number of fundamental legal doctrines is much less than is commonly supposed," and he proceeded "to select, classify, and arrange all the cases [he was then speaking of the law of contracts] which had contributed in any important degree to the growth, development, or establishment, of any of its essential doctrines."

These he believed would be of service to all who desired to study law systematically.¹

In a report on this method of teaching law, made to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Professor Dr. Josef Redlich, of the University of Vienna, explains, further, that it was apparently Professor Langdell's purpose that "the intellectual labor of disentangling the facts and the leading train of thought from the report of each decided case is to be performed

¹ For those who are interested in the details of this method, the following quotations from the description by Professor Langdell in his *Cases on the Law of Contracts* are reproduced:

"I cannot better explain the design of this volume than by stating the circumstances which led me to undertake its preparation.

"I entered upon the duties of my present position a year and a half ago with a settled conviction that law could only be taught or learned effectively by means of cases in some form. I had entertained such an opinion ever since I knew anything of the nature of law or of legal study; but it was chiefly through my experience as a learner that it was first formed, as well as subsequently strengthened and confirmed. Of teaching indeed, as a business, I was entirely without experience; nor had I given much consideration to that subject, except so far as proper methods of teaching are involved in proper methods of study.

"Now, however, I was called upon to consider directly the subject of teaching, not theoretically but practically, in connection with a large school with its more or less complicated organization, its daily routine, and daily duties. I was expected to take a large class of pupils, meet them regularly from day to day, and give them systematic instruction. . . . How could this object be accomplished? Only one mode occurred to me which seemed to hold out any reasonable prospect of success; and that was, to make a series of cases, carefully selected from the books of reports, the subject alike of study and instruction. . . . *Law, considered as a science, consists of certain principles or doctrines. To have such a mastery of these as to be able to apply them with constant facility and certainty to the ever-tangled skein of human affairs, is what constitutes a true lawyer; and hence to acquire that mastery should be the business of every earnest student of law.* Each of these doctrines has arrived at its present state by slow degrees . . . and much the shortest and best, if not the only way of mastering the doctrine effectually is by studying the cases in which it is embodied. But the cases which are useful and necessary for this purpose at the present day bear an exceedingly small proportion to all that have been reported. . . . *Moreover, the number of fundamental legal doctrines is much less than is commonly supposed; the many different guises in which the same doctrine is constantly making its appearance, and the great extent to which legal treatises are a repetition of each other, being the cause of much misapprehension.* If these doctrines could be so classified and arranged that each should be found in its proper place, and nowhere else, they would cease to be formidable from their number. It seemed to me, therefore, to be possible to take such a branch of the law as Contracts, for example, and, without exceeding comparatively moderate limits, to select, classify, and arrange all the cases which had contributed in any important degree to the growth, development, or establishment of any of its essential doctrines, and that such a work could not fail to be of material service to all who desire to study that branch of law systematically and in its original sources."

Langdell, Christopher C.: *The Common Law and the Case Method in American Law Schools*, pp. 10, 11. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, bulletin number eight, 1914.

by the students, quite independently, even though carried on to a certain extent under the guidance of the teacher." The student's experience in such study would fit him best to deal with other cases as they come along, for law is not to be regarded as "firmly established and only to be grasped, understood, and memorized by the pupils as it is systematically laid before them," but, instead, recognizing everything as being "in a state of flux," law is a growing thing—an expression of the ever changing social order. Teacher and learner were to approach it in the same way, and to learn it by discovery.¹

So much for the case method of teaching in the law school. About 1898 Dr. Walter Cannon suggested that case teaching be introduced into the medical classroom. As is well known to this group of the National Conference, Dr. Richard C. Cabot carried out this suggestion at the Harvard Medical School; and its adoption in the teaching of medicine in other colleges has since followed.

In 1910 the case system of preparing for social work was introduced into one course at least of the New York School of Philanthropy; and its use still continues there. I have no doubt that the other schools of philanthropy and social work have been using

¹ The fuller statement of Professor Redlich is as follows:

"In the compilation of these case-books [Professor Langdell's] from the beginning, the text has regularly contained no table of contents of the separate cases, such as is contained in the Law Reports, nor any brief statement of the rules of law involved, such as is regularly inserted by the official reporter. In this Langdell has recognized an extremely important pedagogical principle; a principle peculiar to the case method, and one to which all later pupils and followers of Langdell's have adhered. The intellectual labor, namely, of disentangling the facts and the leading train of thought from the report of each decided case is to be performed by the students, quite independently, even although carried on to a certain extent under the guidance of the teacher. . . . Under Langdell's method these rules are derived, step by step, by the students themselves by a purely analytical process out of the original material of the common law, out of the cases; a process which forbids the *a priori* acceptance of any doctrine or system either by the teacher or by the hearer. In the former method all law seems firmly established and is only to be grasped, understood, and memorized by the pupils as it is systematically laid before them. In the latter, on the other hand, everything is regarded as in a state of flux; on principle, so to speak, everything is again to be brought into question. Or, in other words, in the method of legal instruction developed by Langdell law is conceived as the expression of social order in judicial form, which begins its separate existence all over again in every single case. Teacher and pupil approach it in the same way, the learner discovering it, under the guidance of the teacher, as a new and original joint creation."

Redlich, Josef: *The Common Law and the Case Method in American Law Schools*, pp. 12, 13. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, bulletin number eight, 1914.

it also. In an article briefly touching upon this use of the method, Mr. Porter R. Lee says:

"Training for social work has profited by the experience of law schools and medical schools and has begun to adopt the case system. . . . The use of family histories to illustrate lectures on principles we are all familiar with. The case system of instruction, however, is not the use of family histories as illustrations in abstract presentations of principle. It is bringing to class the precise situations which a worker faces in the treatment of families. It puts upon the members of the class the responsibility for deciding upon each step in the process from the first visit after the first interview to the final entry on the record which closes it—a success or a failure."

Not long ago I picked up the monthly journal of a Western state normal school, and was interested to find an article upon the problem method of teaching geography, in which were these suggestions:

"The first thing to do after the problem is stated is to collect facts relative to it. . . . When the facts have been collected the teacher should avoid asking fact questions. . . . Thought questions are better ones, where the children will have to consider many facts in order to answer them. This trains in the judging of values in organization."

CASE COMMITTEES AS EDUCATIONAL CENTERS

Now I maintain that in all essentials as to methods employed everything that goes on in the university law class, in the class in medicine, in the social workers' training class, can be or is a part of the regular routine of the average case committee.¹ The committee, indeed, has the real thing. It has before it actual cases to be dealt with, in the handling of which very vital interests of living people are concerned—the kind of cases which all of these schools in their own particular lines are trying to reproduce as realistically as possible. If this method, as would seem by its wide adoption, has the stamp of approval as the best, or one of the best, methods toward educational discovery and understanding of the broad principles which underlie law, medicine, social work, and other sciences, should it not be seized upon by the case worker to develop the fundamental principles of industrial reform, when he has so favorable an opportunity as that afforded by the case committee? Before him lies the chance

¹ I realize that the professional case worker does not assume the attitude of teacher or leader toward his committee; he prefers to be a fellow-worker. That however was precisely the attitude, as I understand it, of Professor Langdell toward his class; they were all fellow-learners.

to instill sound industrial principles into the minds and make them a part of the experience of a group of intelligent and often influential people through whom these principles may quickly radiate to still larger groups.

HOW INFORMATION SPREADS

It may be answered that this is too slow a process; that, even assuming that the whole case committee were soon convinced, at most it would mean only ten or a dozen people. I do not agree that it would touch so few. It would rarely happen that persons sitting weekly, fortnightly, or even monthly where such telling instruction (though they may not know they are being instructed) is being given will be so little impressed by the vital principles taught as never to mention them to others—not even to members of their own households. In my own limited knowledge of such committees I have found that when people feel they are really getting down to bed rock in dealing with cases they become very enthusiastic indeed, and that they talk a great deal.

Partly as a matter of amusement, on the train coming here I tried to calculate the number of people that would be reached in a year if a single case committeeman were to tell of his committee experiences to just one person each month, and if each of the persons he told them to should also pass the word along to just one other person in the course of a month, and so on for a year. The total number of persons thus informed in a year is so large that I suspect a flaw somewhere in my arithmetic. According to my figuring in 12 months the number would be 4,096! And this through only one member of the committee! I suppose the real flaw is in the assumption that the persons spoken to would pass the word on even monthly to many others. Of course this would depend somewhat upon the amount of interest that the message would have for them. If Mr. A., who has not been getting a living wage, is put into a new job in which he can support his family, or, if the old employer is made to see that Mr. A. should be paid more, the committee who effected this will take some pride in the accomplishment; and the news, I dare say, will travel rapidly enough. Or if Colonel B., a cotton-mill owner and member of the case committee, becomes so convinced of the evils of child labor as to turn advocate

of a law prohibiting the employment of children (a not unknown or unprecedented occurrence), I dare say the report will reach 4,000 people in much less than a year; and will at the same time make for expressions of similar sentiment from quarters heretofore silent.

But this calculation aside, it would seem reasonable that where committees are doing worthwhile work at all, each committee member would mention it to a single other person on the average of once a month. Then, since committees will average 12 to 20 members, the number of persons reached by a single committee in a year would run well above 150—a not inconsiderable nucleus for any kind of reform. And, of course, in many cities there are more than one such committees.

Indeed, a speaker at the Baltimore Conference pointed out that such contacts as these, gained through dealing with living cases themselves, give “a certain distinctive point of view, and the people who have shared such contacts tend to make that point of view known and felt in those early stages in which a new social reform has been conceived but is not yet born. Sometimes our share is a very small one, and all the prenatal care comes from some other quarter, but often it is a very important factor, especially in its influence upon those citizens still to be converted, whose minds move habitually and with caution from the concrete to the general.”

Mr. A. J. McKelway has testified to the great value of just such help from case workers in the South in his fight in times past for child labor reform.

The importance of daily conversations, of just plain talk around dinner tables, on street cars, at amusement places, over back fences, if you please, at loafing places, in social calls, is not so fully appreciated by the social worker as by the politician.

It is true, of course, that the case worker is dealing with cases first of all to help the folks concerned and not as teaching material. He or she, therefore, cannot pick them first and only to illustrate the whole field of industry, although some selection already is made of those going to district committees. Cases must be taken for the most part as they come. On the other hand, it is also true in dealing with industrial questions, as Professor Langdell pointed out in regard to law, that the number of basic principles after all is relatively small. A very large pro-

portion of them would come up for consideration during the period of service of most committee workers.

TO EDUCATE, CASES MUST BE WELL HANDLED

But in order that the cases that come before case committees should develop fundamental industrial principles, they must be handled in ways that call for the *application* of broad fundamental principles, handled in ways that take into account the largest possible industrial considerations for all concerned. This, of course, should be done anyway. The restoration of a sorely beset family to normal living is clearly the first duty of the social agency in touch with it. But adequate care of the disabled person or family and the education of the committee can go hand in hand. The requirements for both are the same.

For example, I was recently told of the case of a bricklayer who had come to one of the charitable societies in New York for aid. He was a foreigner, and at the time was not working at his trade, but was employed as a porter in one of the large downtown buildings. He had a large family, and, since his pay was only \$12 a week, the children were not getting enough to eat. The question before the committee was what to do. Four alternatives emerged from the discussion: first, the society could supplement the man's wages by a regular weekly allowance to the family and let him continue at work where he was; second, the society might try to get his employer to pay him more wages and let him still stay where he was; third, it might try to get him back into his trade of bricklaying where he could earn a larger wage, the society underwriting the family's needs until he should become re-established; fourth, it might find him better paying work outside his trade.

It will be seen that any one of the other courses would be better than the first, the straight charitable supplementing of his wages. To quote the words of a leading case worker, "the old attitude toward relief in aid of wages that regarded it as an abominable interference with the interests of the independent laborer and a probable handicap to the future of the recipient, is still justified whenever relief is the only or the main item in our plan of treatment." Thus, instead of taking the simple and easy course involved in supplementing the man's wages, the only course that some of the committee would have thought of, it was far more

serviceable to the family, and impressed an important principle upon that part of the committee, when the rule was followed which declared in effect that "industrial conditions and personal capacities are far from being as inelastic" as most of us suppose.

The careful consideration of this case brought out other lessons also. It showed that social case workers must be interested in the general mobility of labor; in getting workers into jobs where they can do their best, into places where wages for them are highest relatively or the cost of living lowest. The case worker must think of cases in terms of the whole state or the whole country and consequently must be interested in the many agencies established for the efficient exchange of labor. There may have been still other lessons, but this case will illustrate some of the reasons for urging that the treatment must be on a broad scale and for believing that in so treating them fundamental industrial principles will be taught.

Such treatment of cases, however, demands certain prerequisites, among them the following:

THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF INDUSTRIAL FACTS

First, *thorough investigation of the industrial facts is imperative.* A case worker who has had the opportunity to read case records made up in many parts of the country told me that he was constantly struck by the inadequacy of the investigations into the industrial factors involved in families which had become dependent. Case workers appreciate the importance of learning the essential facts as to sickness and disease when these are factors in dependency; but not so when the disability has its roots in industrial conditions. To cite one of many illustrations of this neglect, the case record often is not sufficiently explicit as to the man's or woman's occupation; the investigator too often fails to get at what is involved in the occupation. It is not enough to class a plumber's helper roughly as a plumber; for there is too great difference as to wages, nature of work done, etc., for such a classification to mean anything. Nor is it sufficient to put a painter of carriages in a carriage factory as a carriage maker. At least two facts, as Miss Van Kleeck in a paper discussing this subject has already suggested, are needed regarding occupation. The kind of industry should be ascertained, and the worker's precise position in it, including the

nature of the materials handled and the health hazard involved.

Again, data as to wages are often inadequate. Workmen's earnings must be measured with at least two things in mind: not alone wage rates, but the regularity of employment. Knowledge as to annual earnings or as to the irregularity of work will give a more accurate index of the family's problem than the daily, weekly, or monthly rate could possibly do. Similarly the number of hours worked weekly and the amount of overtime work are more essential than the nominal schedule of hours per day.

Again, a man's industrial relations are important. A good illustration of this came to my knowledge recently. It was the case of a family which for some time had been going down hill. The man was a machinist and when he came to the society's notice was a strike-breaker, having turned against his fellow-workers. The case workers to whom he was referred decided that for his soul's salvation he should be reinstated in his union. They found out how it could be done; that it would cost some \$50. They raised the \$50 and finally got him back. But in the course of six months everything was as bad as ever. He maintained that the union had discriminated against him and that he was unfairly treated. About that time two brothers of the machinist were found and they told his life story, which made it clear that there were physical and mental factors that needed to be taken into account.

While in this instance the failure in the information had to do with mental and physical factors, it must be obvious that no thorough treatment of the case would have been possible had the mental and physical factors been known but the industrial ones entirely neglected.

Very often as much is at stake in getting the facts upon which to plan a family's rehabilitation as in the preparation for a court-of-law case; yet when these facts have to do with the wage earner's industrial troubles the case worker is not nearly so thorough as even the inexperienced young lawyer. The analogies have enough in common to argue for social workers' giving more attention to the family circumstances that may be due to wrong labor conditions—for their carrying over into the field of family rehabilitation something of the technique of the professions of medicine and law.

ADEQUATE PLAN OF TREATMENT

This leads to a second prerequisite of such adequate handling of industrial cases as shall make them useful as educational material and in addition a contribution toward industrial reform; namely, *more adequate treatment of industrial cases*. The first step in handling cases, as I understand it, is investigation and diagnosis; the second, treatment—decision as to a plan of treatment and the carrying of it out. The decision as to plan is made by the case committee. Since many cases involve health and legal questions, the committee usually includes at least one doctor and a lawyer. Other types of training or experience are represented; but I wonder how often the committee includes a person who is a specialist in labor questions. I do not mean a partisan of either side, but someone who understands the broad implications of the questions coming up and who can bring informed and impersonal judgment to bear on the plans to be worked out. Such persons, of course, are rare; but I fancy not quite so rare as we may think. When looked for, they are often discovered in very unexpected places. But if none such is available, it would seem only advisable that along with the employer's point of view usually found represented on the committee there should be someone who sees things from the point of view of the worker in the ranks, even if he be a partisan.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT OF THE CASE WORKER

Indeed, I am inclined to think something more than either of these things suggested is needed. The professional case worker himself or herself needs to possess considerable knowledge of industrial issues. I realize, of course, that professional case workers cannot be specialists in physiology and hygiene, in psychoanalysis, law, industry, and every other branch of human knowledge; but it seems to me that they should nevertheless have a certain introductory acquaintance, at least, with all of these fields in order to make their work succeed at all. And I wonder whether industry is not one of the fields that needs a *good deal* of their thought and attention. If the case worker is to get what is involved in a particular occupation he must have a general comprehension of what *can* be involved in the occupation. He not only ought to have some real grasp of industrial questions, but he should appreciate the importance of industrial questions.

Miss Richmond, in her book on Social Diagnosis, indicates two kinds of equipment needed by the social case worker for his daily task. "To be a good case worker," she says, "he must have a generous conception, and one filled with concrete details, of the possibilities of social service, and this conception must be a growing one. It must grow with his growing experience and also with each year's freight of social discovery."

APPRECIATION OF RELATION BETWEEN WAGES AND HEALTH

If I interpret this correctly, when applied to the industrial field, it means that the case worker should not only be acquainted with the results of research and discovery in the industrial field, but that the way in which industrial issues are insinuated into most of our social relations should be recognized by him. It is part of his working equipment, for example, to appreciate, as Surgeon General W. C. Gorgas pointed out at the Fifteenth Annual Conference of Health Officers of New York State, that wages and health are directly related. To use General Gorgas' words:

"It is the health officer's duty to urge forward these measures in his community which will control individual diseases; but my long experience has taught me that it is still more his duty to take that broader view of life which goes to the root of bad hygiene, and do what he can to elevate the general social conditions of his community. This, my experience has taught me, *can best be accomplished by increasing wages*. [The Italics are mine.] Such measures tend at the same time to alleviate the poverty, misery and suffering which are occurring among the poorest classes everywhere in modern communities."

Thus, also, would General Gorgas have the health officer, who in much of his work is a case worker, see that at least part of his responsibilities lie in the industrial field.

HEALTH AND THE HOURS OF LABOR

Similarly, the case worker should understand something of what industrial physiology is discovering as to the hours a man or woman may properly work and how the human factor can and cannot be used in industrial processes. Dr. Frederic S. Lee, consulting physiologist of the United States Public Health Service and professor of physiology in Columbia University, for example, in a review of recent work as to the bearing of physio-

logical science upon industrial efficiency, sums up his opinions as follows:

"Industrial physiology tells us, in the interest of a large output, not only to keep the hours of labor down to what experience has shown to be a reasonable limit, but to choose this limit in accordance with the fatiguing effects of the different specific occupations. It tells us to introduce recess periods into long spells, to omit Sunday labor, and to impose overtime on already fatigued workers only in rare emergencies and when compensation can be given by free hours later. It tells us not to keep the same workers continually on the night shift, but to alternate night with day work. It tells us that each worker and each task possesses a specific standard of strength, and it indicates in what task each worker will probably prove most efficient. It tells us that each worker has a rhythm that is best adapted to his own neuromuscular mechanism and that it is advantageous to place in a squad of workers doing a specific task only those possessing similar rhythms, eliminating the faster and the slower individuals, and then to adjust the speed of operation to the common rate. Such instances as these few reveal the scope of industrial physiology and show how it is indicating some of the ways in which the most intricate of all industrial machines, the body of the worker, must be used in order to bring out its greatest usefulness."

INCOME, MORALS, AND ETHICS

Again, the case worker's equipment should include a working appreciation of the relation of income to ethics and morals. Those who heard Professor James H. Tufts, head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Chicago, deliver his address on *The Ethics of the Family* at the Baltimore Conference will recall how his remarks on income and ethics, from the point of view of the student of philosophy, coincided with earlier conclusions of Professor Simon N. Patten, arrived at from the point of view of the sociologist and political scientist. Among other things, Professor Tufts said:

"The great point on which more positive ethics for the working-class family should center, I repeat, is a higher standard of living, a higher wage and a better house, better opportunities for play, and longer and better education for children. . . . The lack of privacy, decency, comfort, and resources in which great multitudes of our city children are now brought up is a far stronger menace to family life than any ethical—or unethical—theory or any frequency of divorce, and when we have remedied some of these conditions, we can speak more confidently as to the next thing."

At another, earlier place in the same address, he said, "If, therefore, one is to help the morals of the working-class family, the raising of the standard of living is evidently the most hope-

ful line of attack, whether this takes the individual form of better training and education of both boys and girls, or the form of public control of housing and sanitation, or public insurance for unemployment, accident, and illness, and ultimately of a juster distribution of gains."

These conclusions suggest that reached by Mr. John Nolan, of the National Housing Association, and stated at the Providence session of that organization. He emphatically declared that the housing problem of most of our communities would never be solved until the wage question of our communities comes nearer being settled. I do not understand this to mean that housing conditions depend wholly upon wages; improvement in the wage scale must be accompanied by other reforms and improvements also. But it *does* mean that wages are a very important and vital factor in the housing question; and that its ultimate solution will not be reached until the wage situation is much improved, to say the least.

THE INDUSTRIAL REFORMER'S HELP NEEDED

And so on; the testimony of seasoned students and observers could be quoted at length. In so doing, we should very often be merely expressing in new phrases conclusions which many social workers have put into the public print long ago. And yet, in spite of it all, it is my conviction (I may be wrong, and I hope I am) that most of us who have known these things have not acted sufficiently on the knowledge, have not made it function in our own communities. Possibly this is because we have not seen the opportunity for its functioning; because the technique for putting these theories and broad principles into concrete acts has not been sufficiently worked out. Indeed it has been worked out hardly at all. And here, clearly, the responsibility lies upon the *industrial reformer* to put his material in such shape as the case worker can use. His help along industrial lines should be similar to that of Dr. Cabot in medicine; he should put industrial knowledge and principles in a form which the social case worker can use. Household economists are helping the social worker in like ways in their field. But until the industrial reformer acts, I think the case worker can hardly excuse himself from doing all in his power to see that the diagnosis of industrial cases which come before his committee have brought to bear

upon them the largest possible grasp of sound industrial knowledge and principles.

Fortunately there is much that the case worker can do for himself toward this kind of equipment—important, among other things, being the familiarizing of himself, as he has opportunity, with the industries of his own city. In order to deal with industrial cases most intelligently, he should have as large a background as possible of information regarding hours of work, wages, the physical surroundings of workers, and so on in the localities where the families brought to his attention live and work.

FAITHFULNESS TO INDUSTRIAL FACTS

Finally, in order to arrive at the wisest decisions in planning for industrially disabled families, and to lay down principles of procedure in treating cases, which will be the seed of future industrial improvement, case workers need to be faithful to the industrial facts as they find them, no matter who or what the interests that are hit. If the truth is to be acted upon, if case work is to have its basis on something solid, then the facts must be looked at impersonally and interpreted disinterestedly. This, I believe, however, is a suggestion which social workers need less than any other single group. The vast majority of social case work agencies have shown great courage in the past, and are showing more and more of it as time goes on.

These, then, are some of the ways in which case workers can apparently make their experience and knowledge count toward industrial improvement through contact with their case committees or case conferences. Their endeavors need not stop there, however. Several other avenues for teaching, still through the case method, which in the limited time available can be only touched upon, are open to them.

OPPORTUNITY THROUGH SOCIAL-STUDY CLASSES

The first is the opportunity afforded through industrial and social-study classes. I know of at least one such class made up of enthusiastic young college women who induced the secretary of their associated charities to lead them in studying current social questions. It is hard to conceive of any better material for such an educational adventure than the active cases that come to the charitable agencies every day. Here was a chance,

which was grasped, to set up an additional center in which live labor issues could be discussed and through which the principles of industrial justice could be made to radiate to the families and friends of the young women of the class. If such a class is profitable in one city, it should be in others.

IN REPORTING TO CONTRIBUTORS

A second opportunity is to be had through the regular practice which some case workers pursue of reporting to contributors regarding families in which the contributors are interested. There is more and more tendency, as I understand it, when writing such reports (or better, when making them in person) to be specific—not to say merely that Mr. Smith, or Mr. Brown and family are “doing nicely”; but to indicate specifically the treatment being given and the progress made. What a capital chance to go into fundamentals in presenting industrial cases and interpreting them in ways that will educate!

IN REPORTING TO THOSE REFERRING FAMILIES AND GENERAL REPORTING

A third avenue is much like the second. It is to be found in the practice of many societies of reporting on the progress of case treatment to the person who referred a certain family to the agency.

A fourth chance for such educational work is through the *general* reporting of the society or agency. Most agencies issue annual reports which go not only to contributors but to many other interested persons and to the press. Each year some one phase of the society's work, the industrial side among others, could be interpreted through the case method in ways that would set people thinking beyond the actual cases in hand.

IN NEWSPAPER AND PLATFORM INTERPRETATION OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

Fifth, the case worker may make use of the newspapers all the year round. Most social agencies are feeling an increasing need of interpreting their constructive work to the public. Too often they are thought of popularly as strictly relief-giving agencies. I dare say that few endeavors could do more to correct this misconception than occasional interpretations of the agency's

work by bringing before the public cases in which the treatment given was dictated by broad industrial considerations.

A sixth way of teaching is that afforded in the occasional requests coming to case workers to make public addresses. Wherever and whenever it appears at all timely, industrial lessons drawn out of concrete daily experiences might be set forth to advantage.

IN SECURING COÖPERATION IN TREATMENT

A seventh method of reform may be found in the occasional calls upon employers whose coöperation is needed in carrying out the plan of treatment decided upon. Not all employers, not all even of those responsible for bad industrial conditions, are cruel or selfish; many are merely ignorant and are willing to learn. The case worker is in a particularly favorable position to approach the employer and to teach him, since he comes on an unselfish errand, speaks on behalf of one in whom the employer presumably is interested, and has a definite plan into which the coöperation of the employer will fit. Through the presentation of well analyzed cases, it is often possible to show employers that the wages of women, for example, are a matter of public concern.

AMONG WORKERS OF OTHER AGENCIES AND IN THE FAMILIES THEMSELVES

An eighth avenue may sometimes be found in other case work agencies whose representatives from time to time sit upon our particular case committee. When this is taken advantage of, a new center of educational influence may often be established.

And, finally, a ninth avenue is that found in the families restored to normal living themselves. This is well illustrated in the success of many societies in securing the coöperation of parents in observing child-labor laws, a kind of industrial reform which is especially likely to fail unless parents believe in it. It means a great deal, moreover, in laying the foundations for labor advance, to show workers in concrete ways that lead poisoning and other occupational diseases, for example, are not inevitable visitations upon people grown accustomed to misfortune; that they are preventable, that there are precautions which workers can take, and that right-thinking citizens will rally behind a

demand for the preventive measures which the employer should install. These restored families should form another group who can help the work along.

This, doubtless, seems like a long catalogue. I think it will be realized, however, that the suggestions made add no new items to the usual routine of case work. They merely have to do with ways in which that routine can be made to contribute to industrial reform. And, incidentally, those workers interested in getting down to fundamentals, a purpose which I have heard voiced so often and with which I heartily sympathize, will find enough in such a routine, if used to the full, to claim a great deal of their energy and at times to call into play about all the moral courage they can summon.

EDUCATIONAL USE OF MASSED CASES

As stated at the beginning, two broad forms of educational work for industrial reform are open to the case worker. In addition to teaching and coöperative learning through the use of individual cases, he can in a second broad way contribute something, perhaps much, toward the more *wholesale* study and spread of facts. In other words, the case worker can make his data of use in getting at causes and in broad-scale attempts to remove them.

DISCOVERING AND FOLLOWING UP CLUES

He can do this, first, as case after case comes to his attention, by being on the lookout for clues as to causes. When the same form of disability or distress recurs more or less frequently in a particular locality, it is time for him to begin to suspect something wrong with community conditions there, and to stimulate public interest that might lead to their being dealt with on a community basis. That is to say, the case work agencies, because of their relation to neglected families, are in a position to discover new needs and to lead toward the initiation of movements looking toward the improvement of conditions; and they should consider public service of this kind a part of their regular activities. The practicability of such activities is shown by the fact that many agencies are already including, and long since have included them, in their work programs, the anti-tuberculosis movement in New York, for example, and the movement for tenement

house reform both having had their origin in and a great deal of support from one of the local case work agencies.

MAKING CASE DATA ACCESSIBLE TO INQUIRERS

A second way in which case workers can make their information useful in accumulated form is through the intelligent indexing of case records and the material in them; and the placing of this material at the disposal of all who can use it intelligently and fairly. A number of charity organization societies do this now. A certain agency, for example, had for a number of years a long list of topics upon which it was likely that case material would throw light; and the workers in the agency indexed their data once a month. An instance came to my notice where this kind of work proved to be of great use. The agency was called upon by a government investigator who was commissioned to make a study of the alleged hardships caused by a certain state child labor law. He called in the morning, and, through the use of the indexes, at three o'clock in the afternoon was given an instalment of the file material on the subject, which, with subsequent instalments, kept him busy for some weeks. Incidentally, he found but a single case which he could actually describe as one of hardship due to the law and not met in some satisfactory way.

The danger in such indexing is that one may fall back upon standard classifications. The index lists should be flexible, and revised from time to time, as subjects of interest and the emphasis on particular subjects are constantly changing. For example, in 1914, if not listed before, unemployment and the effect of financial depressions upon family welfare might have been added to the indexed subjects; while in 1917, migration of negro families, and in 1918, dilution of labor and emergency housing should have found a place in the lists. The clues already mentioned will suggest topics also.

One important idea in the indexing would be to anticipate future needs rather more than to cover issues already past and no longer timely.

Along this same line the current working-data on family budgets of one case work agency were recently put to good use. In the Government's inquiry into the meat-packing industry in Chicago a few months ago, both sides in the controversy independently requested the United Charities of that city to present

a statement of the minimum family budget used by them in connection with families receiving allowances. I am told that the figures submitted by the United Charities were almost identical with those presented by the unions; that the only differences were in particular items, not in the totals. The two sets of data appeared to check each other. By having its budget data kept accurately up to date in a time of rapidly changing living costs, this case work agency rendered valuable service not alone to the individual families under its care but in the determination of a labor policy which affected the welfare of thousands of families.

STUDIES OF THEIR DATA BY CASE WORK AGENCIES

Third, and a final "finally," case workers' records *can* and *should* not only be indexed for ready reference and study by the outside inquirer, but they should be studied by the society or agency itself or some coöperating agency, and made to yield timely information on needed industrial reforms. Here again the suggestion has the backing of at least one successful instance of such use. A study was recently made of the industrial factors involved in a large number of families applying for relief to one of the large charitable societies and to one of the large hospital dispensaries in New York City. The resulting data were used at a public hearing in Albany upon the recently proposed health insurance law.

Similarly, in a number of instances the information gathered by workers in charity organization societies has disclosed the need of labor reforms which would affect large groups of working people and the societies have initiated movements to meet these needs. For example, in some cities they have been successful in influencing employers, housewives, and others, to increase the pay of women doing work by the day—washing and ironing, for instance, and office cleaning. An industrial service of this kind is a particularly useful one since it touches the interests of workers who have little or no opportunity for united action. Case workers come in contact with large numbers of people engaged in the unorganized trades, and it is highly desirable that the feeling of responsibility to render this type of service, a feeling very strong among some of the societies, should be extended.

Thus along two broad lines of activity, either in the use of individual cases or in the facilitating of studies designed to guide in movements for community improvement and to give a basis of tested fact for public policies, the opportunities open to the case worker to render aid are by no means few.

