Foreign Department

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TRAINING FOR JEWISH SOCIAL WORK IN GERMANY

When they speak of training for Jewish social work in Germany they have in mind not only the needs of future and practising social workers but of rabbis and teachers as well. This is probably because there exists in Germany a rather close relationship between teaching and the rabbinate on the one hand and social work on the other. Consequently, when in the spring of 1930 a series of courses in Jewish social work was announced it was to be under the joint auspices of the Central Welfare Bureau of the German Jews and the Institute of the Science of Judaism. The aim of the courses was a twofold one. Primarily, they were designed to afford some instruction in the Jewish aspects of social work to the considerable number of Jewish workers who had received their professional training in the general schools of social work. It was recognized that if their work with Jewish groups and individuals were to be most effective they would have to acquire some special knowledge of conditions and concepts which were found in Jewish communities. Then, the training was to provide for the needs of rabbis and teachers. The aim here was to present some of the fundamental objectives and problems of Jewish social work to those who were constantly brought in close contact with social agencies. And finally, some form of training for volunteers was suggested as a possibility.

The plan as originally announced included the following elements: Two institutes were to be held in Berlin during the year. The Winter session was to extend from November to February; the Summer session from May to July. Instruction was to be in the form of formal lectures and seminars. Field work arrangements were to be made with agencies affiliated with the Central Welfare Bureau of German Jews. The general curriculum was divided into two parts: one primarily for social workers who had already and tachers. The two differ but slightly. A list of the who joined the faith. courses offered to both groups follows.

- erature, structure, fields of work.)
- II. Sociological and Social Psychological Foundations of Jewish Social Work.
- III. Jewish Social Work and Jewish Teachings.

- IV. Jewish Social Problems with Special Reference to General Social Problems. (Organization, structure, fields of work).
- V. Jewish Education Problems.
- VI. Jewish Health Care Problems.
- VII. Iewish Population Problems.
- VIII. Introduction to General Social Work. (Organization, history, legal foundations, structure, fields of work, methods.)

Three series of courses have already been given. The fourth began in November, 1931. In addition to the courses listed in the general curriculum, some of the subjects offered in past sessions have been: (1) The Family in Jewish Literature; (2) Jewish Child Welfare Problems; (3) Selected Topics in the Health Care of Jewish Youth. The program as announced for the Winter session of 1931-1932 includes the following courses: (1) The Development of Social Thought in Jewish Literature; (2) Present-day Jewish Social Problems; (3) Welfare Methods in the Economic Crisis; (4) Background Studies in Jewish Social Work. The opening lecture is to have for its subject: "The New Psychology and its Importance for Work with Young People." (Judische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik. March, 1930; May, Oct.-Nov. 1931.)

Loss of Members in the Berlin Jewish Community

During the period 1921-30, 102 men and 953 women embraced Judaism in Berlin. At the same time, 1,283 men and 1,099 women left it. The Statistical Bureau of the Berlin Jewish Community, which has just made these figures public states that in a majority of cases the reason given for conversion to Judaism was marriage to a Jew. The conreceived, or were at the time of their attendance receiving verts were mostly between the ages of 20 to 30. Striking their general training, and the other especially for rabbis of course is the difference in the number of men and women

We are not told what religion, if any, the 2,382 individu-I. Introduction to Jewish Social Work. Organiza- als who left Judaism joined. Neither are the reasons given tion, relation to general social work, history, lit- for more than 71 persons. Of this number, 39 gave marriage to a Gentile as the cause, and 14 objected to the Community Tax, which is compulsory as long as one remains a professing Jew. All in all, the Community gained 1,055 members while losing 2,382, a net loss of 1,327 for the ten

May, 1931.)

Jewish Mental Patients in Poland

An attempt has been made in Poland to collect statistical data on the religious affiliation of mental patients based on the reports of various psychiatric institutions. The 1928 reports of 48 institutions revealed the following figures for that year: Roman Catholic, 6109 patients, 57.92%; Greek Catholic, 239 patients, 2.26%; Evangelical, 309 patients, 12.93%, and Jewish, 2058 patients, 19.41%. The results of this survey have led to the assertion that the Jews, who only make up about 8% of the entire Polish population, furnish a much higher quota of persons suffering from some mental disease than would normally be expected of them. It is, of course, very difficult to say what truth there rests in this conclusion without first examining in detail the methods and criteria employed in the study. Unfortunately, the report of the investigation which we saw did not permit such a scrutiny. The facts, however, are striking enough and are probably not without some foundation in fact.

One more aspect of the study is worth mentioning. The material furnished by 18 of the largest institutions indicates very clearly that the Jews are particularly liable to Schizophrenia and manic-depressive psychoses. As regards all other groups of psychoses they tend to be represented by fewer patients than their numbers permit. (Judische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik, Oct.-Nov. 1931.)

The Work of the London Jewish Board of Guardians

In this country, where voluntary local relief measures are depended upon to care in a very large measure for those in need, there are few who seriously question the necessity for maintaining private philanthropic agencies. This apparently is not the case in some of the European countries, where the government shoulders most of the responsibility in the care of the dependent, unemployed and homeless. The following statement from the annual appeal for funds issued by the London Jewish Board of Guardians* is significant. "Some may wonder why," writes Miss Hannah F. Cohen, President of the Board, "in these days of State insurance and pensions, the need still persists to the same extent for private charity. The answer is not far to seek. In the first place, even in the industrial class, there is a large population among the Jews who are not covered by insurance, because their

year period. (Judische Wohlfahrtspflege und Sozialpolitik, talents, as well as possibly their failings, have inclined them to be traders and shopkeepers rather than wage-earners and artisans. In bad times these small independent men are first to suffer. Their very independence is now their undoing, and they are driven to seek relief from the Board. But these are not the only ones; few can have knowledge of the changing character of the applicants at our doors; not only the industrial class are seeking help today, but persons far higher in the social scale, persons whose former position and resources would have been thought such as to secure them and their families from the possibility of want. Help in these cases, to be effective, must be prompt and generous. Our invariable rule of secrecy is in some measure a handicap, for the publication of these sorrowful tales would be our best advertisement."

> The report of the Board ending September 30, 1931 states that during the preceding nine months a total of £20,130 was spent on relief as compared with £20,612 in 1930. In addition, Temporary Allowances amounted to £1,727, as against £2,461 in the previous year; and Fixed Allowances £9,763, as against £10,578 in 1930. (Jewish Chronicle, Oct. 23, 1931.)

> It has just been revealed that the late Waldemar Haffkine, internationally known bacteriologist and discoverer of a successful method of inoculation against cholera and the Indian Plague, has left his entire fortune, consisting of some \$300,000, for the Yeshivahs of Europe. The will specifies that in order for a Yeshivah to benefit from the legacy it must include the teaching of some trade in its curriculum. The Relief Association of German Tews, which is acting as executor, has already appointed a committee which is to acquaint itself with the needs of the European Yeshivahs.

> The bill to restrict the opening of shops and trading in England on Sunday, which was recently presented to the House of Commons, provides special exemption for Jews. "Nothing in the bill, or in any order or under it . . . is to prevent anybody of the Jewish religion, carrying on the business of a shop on Sunday, provided he complies with the following provisions: (a) he shall not carry on the business of a shop on Saturday; and (b) he shall previously give notice to the local authority of his intention to carry on such business on Sunday; and (c) he shall cause to be kept conspicuously posted in the shop a notice stating that it is open on Sunday for the serving of customers, but is not open on Saturday." (Jewish Guardian, April 17, 1931).

^{*}The Jewish Board of Guardians is London's principal Jewish relief agency. For a statement on its place in the community see the Quarterly, for June, 1931.