

of locally financed general relief. She and her two infants were temporarily housed in a shelter. After a good deal of hardship, and with a final plan not yet in sight, the woman said to the worker: "I don't know what I would have done without you. I would have been so much more frightened if I hadn't known you were there."

All of this is inherent in establishing eligibility for relief, and also in the job of the district worker who, unfortunately, tends at present to see her families only infrequently. She must therefore try to offset her lack of available time and funds by her greater case work skill and her own personal strength. The worker's personality must be steady and relaxed to allow her to meet the crises in her families without losing her own stability and her perspective.

ive. Her strength and steadiness can become a temporary staff to help the client to help himself.

The public worker might be said to be handling her cases symptomatically, treating only the more obvious problems—and not really all of them. If nothing more can be done for the present, we must do the best we can; but we must hold firmly to our perspective that a professional job can be done and will be done, when funds become available and when staffs are more fully trained. Meanwhile, there is a clear call for patience, training, and planning.

This is the second of two related articles by Miss Houwink. The first, "The Public Agency's Challenge," was published in the April issue of SURVEY MIDMONTHLY.

Camps on the March

By HEDLEY S. DIMOCK

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IN a few weeks the summer camp season will be under way, offering new evidence of the place that camping has come to have in American life. Because the organized camp operates "far from the madding crowd," the changes of the last decade have been less in the spotlight than changes in other social and recreational work. But, although relatively unobserved by the public, significant advances have been made, not the least of them in an enlarged conception of the social uses of camping, and in the relationships of camp leaders and their agencies to other educational and social agencies. As a result of these developments, the summer camp seems destined to assume a new and important role in the total community plan of education, recreation, and social work.

As an example of the contrast between the modern summer camp and its "fresh air" forebear, take the provisions for the health of campers. Formerly it was cheerfully assumed that camps practically spelled health. What could be healthier than a few weeks or a summer in the great out-of-doors, mid the smell of pine or balsam, with "an abundance of fresh vegetables" and "milk from contented cows"!

About ten years ago, these assumptions were rudely shattered by the findings of a study of health and safety in the organized summer camp, directed by Dr. J. E. Sanders. His data, covering several hundred camps, indicated that the longer a child stayed in camp, the more likely he was to become sick. The efforts of this study, though very disconcerting, were stimulating and salutary. Camps began to pay attention to such health essentials, hitherto ignored, as more and better balanced food, more sleep at night and more rest during the day, less fatiguing activities, a reduced tempo of camp life, and better facilities for detecting and handling contagious diseases. Third- or fourth-year medical students began to give way to trained nurses and full-fledged physicians. Cooks whose reputation for pie had exempted them from any concern about caloric quantity or vitamin content now came under the direction of qualified nutritionists. Agencies operating camps appointed new health committees or revitalized old ones to appraise their camps from the standpoint of health conditions.

Transformations in the program of modern camps have been numerous and far-reaching. A decade or two ago

most of the programs were highly regimented. All the campers were expected to participate in all the activities of a completely planned and "well balanced" schedule. Individual interest, choice, and freedom were at a minimum. To "motivate" full participation by each camper in every activity, there were elaborate systems of awards, points, and competitions. It took seven pages in the prospectus of one camp to list the winners of various awards for the preceding year. The tempo of camp life was swift; leisure was synonymous with idleness and loafing. The range of activities in many camps was definitely limited. In some boys' camps the program consisted chiefly of athletics—the city program of sports merely transferred to a lakeside in the woods.

From almost every point of view the program of the modern camp presents a radically changed picture. There is much greater richness and variety in activities and resources than formerly. Even the "athletic" camps have not escaped the influence of the growing "primitive camping" emphasis. The arts and crafts, the dance, and dramatics, still especially glorified with a halo of "creative activities," have spread swiftly through the progressive camps. Regimentation is giving ground to individualization, with the interests, needs, and purposes of individual campers increasingly recognized as consequential factors in learning and growth. "Choice," "planning," and "voluntary participation" are key words in the contemporary camp. The tempo of camp life has been reduced as the doctrine of relaxation has become appreciated and embodied in program management. The "crutches" of artificial incentives to participation, represented by systems of awards and intergroup competition, have been dispensed with as leaders have acquired skill in discovering, stimulating, and expanding the genuine interests and purposes of the boys and girls.

The newer insights about the group process as a major means of personality adjustment and character growth probably are no more fully exercised anywhere than in the best summer camps. The tent or cabin group lends itself admirably to the application of most of the criteria or principles of good group education. The group is small enough to permit intimate interaction among all of its members; to make it possible for each person to carry specific responsibilities and to possess a definite role and status in the group;

to permit the leader to understand each camper as an individual; to facilitate a sense of group unity. Objectives for each member of the group may readily be individualized on the basis of his particular needs, interests and capacities.

In camp, activities may be subordinated to, and employed as a means for, the development of the person, instead of the person being used as a means of perpetuating activities or of maintaining certain arbitrary standards of skill. The camp may observe to the fullest degree the revamped adage, "What is worth doing at all is worth doing even badly." The interaction and relationships of the campers in the various groups may be so directed that the fullest growth of each person, with his distinctive needs, may be facilitated. The major interactions in the camp group are not, or need not be, between camper and leader, but between the members of the group. It is the members who have the chief responsibility in formulating their purposes, planning and carrying out activities and enterprises, dealing with issues and problems that emerge from their experiences together, making decisions, and facing the consequences of their conduct. Furthermore, the basis of the relationship of leader with group is not one of authority, but one of cooperative or democratic leadership.

PERHAPS nowhere is contrast sharper between the earlier and the modern camp than in the new attitude toward the camper in need of "adjustment" or "socialization." It always has been assumed that the camp setting was highly conducive to the development of wholesome social attitudes and habits. Reliance was placed largely on the nature and demands of camp life to transform irresponsibility into responsibility, uncooperativeness into cooperation, selfishness into thoughtful concern for others, timidity into self-confidence and at-homeness in group relationships, aggressiveness or superiority into the proper degree of restraint or humility. But these social adjustments were supposed to take place automatically, and the treatment accorded the camper who did not quickly fit in and adjust frequently was misguided and sometimes cruel.

Many of our modern camps substantially embody the insights gained from mental hygiene and employ the techniques of an effective guidance program. Guidance is conceived as a point of view, a process that pervades all the camp life rather than as something separate, designed for the relatively few. Objectives for each camper are formulated in the light of all that can be learned about him. Behavior patterns are seen as symptoms of underlying difficulties or expressions of basic drives and personality needs. The strains of competition and comparison and of arbitrary standards are reduced to a minimum. Commendation, approval, and recognition are given to persons on the basis of their needs rather than on the basis of their achievement as measured by fixed standards. Because the camper is removed from conditions in the home or community that are largely responsible for his behavior difficulties, the camp is frequently at an advantage in facilitating his adjustment. The services of psychiatrist, consulting psychologist, or psychiatric social worker are being used increasingly by camps, both before and during the camp season. Record-keeping, formerly spurned as red tape or as too time consuming, is slowly being accepted as an essential phase of an adequate guidance program.

In keeping with the march of contemporary social and political events, camp leaders have reexamined the role of the camp in education for democratic living in the com-

munity. This fresh examination is leading to the conception of the camp as a cooperative or democratic community that provides an unexcelled laboratory for practice in democratic living. The entire camp, in its objectives, its organization, its method, and its program, is being re-studied and modified by the criteria of a social democracy. Points at which the democratic ideal is being denied or violated—whether in attitudes toward persons, or in the way decisions and plans are made and administered, or in the way camp resources are used—are being identified in the effort to make camp life the fullest possible experience in democracy, for campers and staff alike.

The most casual reflection on the history of the summer camp reveals to what a marked extent camps grew up independent of one another, and how limited and fragmentary was their interchange of experience and collective effort. But in recent years evidences of cooperative activities among camp leaders that cut across agency lines have multiplied. A score of local and regional camping associations, their members representing all types of camps, have emerged, which function on an international basis in Canada and the United States through the American Camping Association. Of central significance in these cooperative activities are current efforts to develop standards that may be applicable to camps generally. Tentative formulations have been made in such areas as health and safety; program; staff selection, supervision, and organization; and administration. This collective effort is a recognition that although camps are many—approximately ten thousand in the United States—camping as an educational enterprise possesses a unity that is grounded in a common body of knowledge and technique. This growing concern about standards of desirable practice is also a sign that camping is outgrowing its swaddling clothes and gaining a wider sense of social responsibility; that it is beginning to grow up as a social agency.

CAMP and community leaders now are giving thought to larger aspects of community planning in the area of camping. Since 1935 several conferences have been held in which leaders in community welfare, education, and camping, have explored such matters as the total camping resources of the community; the camping needs of persons of various ages, economic levels, racial groups; the means for making the camp experience available to more of those who want and need it; the community organization best suited to assume primary responsibility in the field of organized camping.

Outstanding among the recommendations of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy were the "recognition of the constructive use of leisure time as a public responsibility on a par with responsibility for education and health" and the appointment of a national commission to "study our leisure needs and resources and to make recommendations concerning the development of programs of recreation and informal education."

In the light of these new developments within the summer camp itself, the increasing cooperation among camp directors and leaders through camping associations, the rising interest of social work and education in the camp as an integral phase of their function and program, and the new status of leisure activities as a human and national asset on a par with education and health, one need not be a crystal gazer to predict that the organized camp has a potentially significant role in American life.

MISS BAILEY GOES VISITING Right Here — and Now

By GERTRUDE SPRINGER

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"IF I could hear a little less talk about principles for the well-being of children in a democracy and could see a little more everyday application of those principles right here in Carey County, I could bear it better." Miss Grant's voice had a sharp edge, and Miss Bailey knew exactly how she felt. She herself, in going about the country, had seen things that were pretty hard to reconcile with pronouncements on children as "a first interest of the nation."

"You mean that democracy should begin at home?" she asked.

"I suppose so. But isn't that just another fine sounding generality, just more talk about what *should be*, instead of facing what *is*? Now wait a minute, I know what you're going to say: that we must blaze trails and envision goals and go forward step by step, and in another ten years. . . . But these children right here in Carey County, in April 1940, can't wait ten years. If they don't get their rightful heritage as children in a democracy mighty quick, they're never going to get it. A lot of good it will do Sallie Hughes to have the right to finish highschool when she's twenty-five; a lot of good the right to understanding and guidance will do Charlie Upham after he's done a stretch in the reform school.

"Don't misunderstand me, Miss Bailey. I'm all for the principles, every last one of them. But in Carey County in the year 1940, those principles haven't any reality. All we good people are for them, just as we're against the man-eating shark, but they haven't much to do with the lives of the children or with my job."

Miss Bailey was silent. No one knew better than she the length and breadth of the gap between principle and practice, between what we know and what we do. Principles, said one school of thought, grow out of practice. True enough, if you looked at it one way, but if you looked at it another and pinned it down to the facts of welfare life in Carey and a good many other counties, she wasn't so sure. Practice in Carey County, she suspected, had not developed principles in any progressive sense, but only a sort of hardening of the social arteries. In no way had it prepared Carey County to absorb into its bloodstream a transfusion of progressive principles on the inherent rights of children. And meantime, as Miss Grant had said, if today's children are to profit by those rights they must have them now, while they are children, not a dozen years hence.

"Tell me about Sallie Hughes and Charlie Upham."

"What, only Sallie and Charlie?" exclaimed Miss Grant. "Why not my whole case load? You'll find mighty few children there who are getting the chance we say they all are entitled to. The trouble is that Carey County does not really believe that all children in a democracy have basic rights, that there are certain things that society owes them regardless of the walk of life in which they were born. Oh, we grant 'em life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but we balk when we have to translate those noble words into services for children whose parents haven't money enough to pay the freight. It's all right for children to finish high-school if their parents can clothe and feed 'em, but not

for Sallie Hughes, whose mother is on ADC, it's just 'kid stuff' when a boy on the right side of the tracks writes dirty words on the sidewalk. But when Charlie Upham, who never had a lawful father or a home of his own, takes chalk in hand, then he'd better go to reform school 'before it's too late'—as a worthy citizen said to me last night."

Miss Grant stopped making vicious little squiggles on a scratch pad and looked up with an apologetic smile.

"I'm sorry, Miss Bailey. It really isn't as bad as that, and I'm not always as sour as I am today. I'm upset about those two kids. If you'll come back some other day, I'll promise to be all sweetness and light."

MISS BAILEY didn't want sweetness and light; she wanted to hear about Sallie and Charlie. "Sallie," said Miss Grant, "is gay and honest; nothing gets her down. At sixteen she's carrying the family. The mother is pretty 'do-less,' leaning heavily on her aches and pains and her 'bad luck.' The two little boys are just normal lively kids. On an ADC allowance that we ought to be ashamed of, Sallie keeps that family's head up. And along with the housework, the mending, the contriving, she's managed to make an outstanding record in her two years at highschool. Her teachers say she has a gift for education and predict all sorts of things for her."

"And she must drop out?" put in Miss Bailey.

"Yes, she must drop out. The welfare board decided it last night." Miss Grant's voice hardened again. "She must go to work so that the ADC allowance may be reduced and perhaps cut off entirely. If she's as good as I've made out, says the board, she soon can earn enough to support the family."

"But does your board—how did it know—" began Miss Bailey.

"My error," said Miss Grant with a wry smile. "You see I had held up this family and especially Sallie as a glittering example of what ADC can accomplish. I used the case for interpretation, Heaven help me. So when a board member's wife needed a dependable young girl to mind the children and help with the housework, Mr. Boardmember thought at once of Sallie and my song about her. From his point of view it's perfect; his wife gets a good bright girl and the welfare budget is relieved of a slice, if not all, of the ADC allowance. He's very pleased about it. By paying Sallie wages, he personally is saving the taxpayers' money. He lives in another town, so Sallie won't be getting home very often. He thinks that a girl on her first job should be single-minded, not bothered with personal affairs."

"And Sallie, what does she say?"

"She doesn't know yet. I have to tell her. Yesterday when I saw her she was bubbling over with plans for the summer: to make a garden, to scour the house, to do a lot of sewing, to tutor one of the boys so maybe he can skip a grade, and always looking forward to school in September. Do you wonder that I'm edgy today? And you see it isn't just Sallie. It's the whole family. Without her the mother will slump and the boys run wild."