

# Settlement Bulletin

ISSUED NINE TIMES A YEAR IN THE INTEREST OF THE SOCIAL SETTLEMENT

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ROCHESTER, N. Y., OCTOBER, 1906.

ONE CENT.

## THE FABLE OF OPPORTUNITY.

As we look back into the past through the medium of literature and transmitted story, it is surprising to note how frequently Opportunity is made the theme of writers and orators, and how the lives of individuals have been molded, the fate of nations decided, through its development. From the oldest times of which we have record everybody seems to have watched for the golden Opportunity, envied his more fortunate neighbor who had found it, or grieved over the loss of it. It was the watch-word of his thoughts and dreams, and there were always "Castles in Spain,"

We moderns are made of similar clay and cast in a practically similar mold to that which went to the making of our ancestors, but the evolution of society has been from the development of individuals to the forming of groups, and with this gradual change the subject of Opportunity has also acquired a new aspect. We have read the fable of Opportunity, which presents her in the guise of a beautiful woman who knocks at the door of the Youth on the threshold of life and stands there before him with her long hair veiling her face. The youth gazes at her enraptured, but hesitates, and she turns to depart. He would fain detain her and springs forward with arms outstretched, but, with a mocking laugh, she flees from him. He reaches to grasp her hair, strange to behold, she has no hair at the back of her head, and he grasps nothing. So she is gone, and the youth is left bemoaning his hesitation to grasp her by the forelocks. Such is the old fable, told in various versions, in every tongue and clime. The Spanish say, "He who has lost his oxen is always hearing bells," while a more modern English version has it, "Of all sad words of tongue or pen, The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

While, as I have suggested, the social evolution has tended to make our conception of Opportunity a less selfish one, yet are we brought to realize in every turn of our daily lives that the great majority of people retain the old idea, that of personal advancement. Apart from these, however, we find an ever increasing group who have come to realize that the old idea of Opportunity is fallacious because Opportunity is ever recurring; that the old idea is cowardly and petty because it weeps and despairs over an individual instance. Even were the old idea right in its selfishness it has the brand of cowardice. We all admire the brave fighter, be he on the right or wrong side, who hews out an Opportunity instead of despairing for one out of reach. The aspect of a Demosthenes, filling his mouth with pebbles and declaiming next to the roar of the surf so that he might overcome his lisp, give his voice carrying power and become the greatest orator, is one that inspires us, whether his ambition was selfish or altruistic. There are hosts of such as he, who have made a personal conquest of Opportunity, who have found the cloud's silver lining and made Opportunity out of adverse conditions. Our admiration goes out to them and our imaginations are fired by the recital of their achievements, but unless they so used or made Opportunities as to benefit their fellow men, we withhold from them our affection and, in many cases, our respect. The lesson is clearly revealed in the annals of history. The mighty warriors, the great financiers, all those of might and strength who sought only personal power and supremacy, we admire their talents, we fear their power, but they pass away to sleep, as they lived, alone. Their ambition has burned out and their power and influence has ended, but they have left in our hearts nothing which we may cherish. We save our affection for those to whom Opportunity comes as an unselfish desire, to whom the development and benefit of the mass of their fellows is a paramount idea. Such as these laugh at the idea that we must grasp Opportunity by the forelocks, for they find it at all times and places. Theirs is not the mawkish idea of charitable altruism, but they go according to a

modern ethical code called, "The Square Deal." The Opportunity that comes to us in the day's work, in the small, simple things about us, the Opportunity to teach as we learn, to help others along with ourselves, to sweeten the path of life by the exercise of a little kindness and tact, a little courtesy and good humor, this, by your leave, is the constant and most noble of Opportunities, the gospel of Here and Now.

I intended to speak of the Opportunity of the Social Settlement, but perhaps that which I have said may apply thereto. To those of us to whom formal presentation is necessary the Settlement is an admirable means of presenting the social Opportunity. Let us use the Settlement as a training school wherein we are all teachers and pupils, and let us imagine there is engraved over the portal, "Here abides unselfish Opportunity."

It is a common habit with mankind to seek for Opportunities at a distance before they have exhausted those near at hand. The blasé world seeks for new experiences and sensations, but the wise man has said, "There is nothing new under the sun." The progressive person is he who finds and develops the possibilities of familiar things, who discovers new uses for old material and does the best that he can, according to his lights, with the tools that are given him or that he finds by the wayside. Lowell tells us, in the quaint words of Hosea Bigelow:

"We're crum critters. Now aint' jest  
The minnit  
Thet ever fits us easy while we're in it.  
Long ez 'twas furtur 'twould be perfect bliss;  
Soon ez it's past thet time's wuth ten o' this;  
An' yet ther ain't a man thet need be told  
Thet now's the only bird lays eggs o' gold."

Let us seek happiness by making the most of such opportunities as we find about us, by developing ourselves as we seek to develop others, and, in conclusion, let our use of Opportunity be in realization of Whittier's idea that, "Heaven's gate is shut to him who comes alone; Save thou a soul, and it shall save thy own."

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## Editorial



The Boys' Club opened for the season on the evening of Thursday, October, 18. About twenty members were on hand, full of enthusiasm for the year's work and play. No new classes have as yet been formed, but it is hoped that several will in the course of a few weeks be well under way. The first meeting was devoted to the ordinary routine—games, stories, athletic sports and bathing.

Frequent attention has been called in the columns of The Bulletin to the work and aspirations of The Boys' Club. Now, to make a success of an organization such as this, very active co-operation is imperative on the part of a considerable number of persons. So far this generous assistance has not been forthcoming and consequently the work of managing the Club has devolved on a very small number, from seven to ten at the very most. Even with so small a number it has been possible to keep the Club in existence and to accomplish a by no means small amount of good. Moreover, the boys are pleased with the results and look forward with a large degree of anticipation to the weekly club meetings.

But those who were instrumental in founding the Club and in keeping it in existence are not entirely satisfied with

the results thus far obtained. Being in a position to see the very great possibilities lying in this work they are a bit disappointed that more has not come of it. The reason ascribed is briefly this—a lack of co-operation. To make a success of such an undertaking as a Boys' Club one of the main requisites is variety—variety of work, variety of play, new ideas, new forms of entertainment. To obtain this much-desired variety is at best a matter of difficulty. To obtain it by the aid of just as many helpers as are absolutely necessary for the actual running of the Club is next to impossible. It can only result when there shall be a sufficient number of persons actively interested to allow each helper time and energy to use other than in "keeping things going." Besides the actual help of more persons at the meetings on Thursday nights their mental and moral assistance is greatly desired—their ideas for improvement, their encouragement. And so an appeal is here made for Workers ("Players" they might rather be called, for this work is so pleasant as to be play). If you think you can help, come down next Thursday evening at eight and lend a hand. If you think you are not able to help but would like to, come anyway; and you will be convinced before the end of the evening that there is a great gap that you can fill. And having filled that gap even once you will feel the necessity of continuing to do so; for without some such work you will find a gap in your week's work.

**GIVE IT A TRIAL!**

Contributions for the The Bulletin, as usual, are in great demand, and as usual, they are not forthcoming.

The Y. M. C. A. of the University of Rochester is about to take over the management of the Exchange Street Boys' Club. From all indications the new managers ought to make a great success of the work, having all the requisites—plenty of helpers, plenty of enthusiasm and a large number of boys already members of the Club. The Bulletin wishes the Club a continuation of its past success.

Members of the Boys' Club have formed a Walking Club. The first walk takes place on Sunday, November 11. All the boys are invited to come.

Read the "Settlement Needs". Some article that is useless to you may be invaluable to another.

Visitors are as welcome at the Settlement as ever. Come in the afternoon.

The Boys' Evening Home has opened for the season under the leadership of Professor Kendrick P. Shedd.

## PARTIES AND OUTINGS

Two afternoon parties at the Settlement.

## Five picnics to the Parks.

One picnic to Windsor Beach.

Miss Van Bergh's class, picnic at South Park.

Monday evening, October 8th, Miss Maude Adams invited twenty-five little people to see Peter Pan and his Friends at the Lyceum Theater.

Mrs. Max Binswanger entertained one hundred twenty-five children at the Settlement, October 17th. They had music, singing, dancing, ice-cream, cake and candy.

## EVENING CLUBS

Shirtwaist, Garment, German, Shakespeare, Sunshine, Dancing and Boys' Clubs.

## SETTLEMENT NEEDS

Piano, Rug, Bookcase, Clothing for  
Monday Evening Sales.

To love playthings well as a child, to lead an adventurous and honorable youth, and to settle when the time arrives, into a green and smiling age, is to be a good artist in life and deserve well of yourself and your neighbor.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

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 Miss Benjamin—Flowers, Vase, Clothing, Chicken  
 Mrs. Isaac Stern—Large Trunk, Magazines  
 Mrs. J. L. Garson—Magazines  
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 Mr. Joseph Simon—Framed Picture  
 Mrs. J. M. Wile—Large Picture, "The Lion of Luzern," one half dozen American Beauty Roses  
 Mrs. Max Binswanger—Large Basket of Fruit

**SCHEDULE OF WORK**

Neighborhood work—Every day  
 Neighborhood Baths—Every day except Sunday  
 Kindergarten—Every morning except Sunday  
 Free Dispensary—Every Thursday from 11 to 12 A. M.  
 Library open—Thursday afternoon and Thursday evening  
 Penny Provident Bank—Open all day Thursday  
 Clothing Sale—Every Monday evening  
 Dancing—Tuesday evening and Saturday afternoon  
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