

Besides opening up a new method of treatment of a hitherto baffling species of delinquent, the work as a whole constitutes a potent argument for the study of *juvenile* offenders. As contrasted with study of adult offenders, the juveniles are more *naïve* and *accessible*, yielding better results; and they are more susceptible to training or re-education. A man like Dr. Healy can reclaim many from criminal careers. This work is an exhibition of *preventive mental medicine*.

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*Social Diagnosis*. By MARY E. RICHMOND. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1917. Pp. 511. \$2.00.

Kipling says: "If anything is worth having, it is worth going to some trouble to come at." Frankly, this is the fact regarding Miss Richmond's *Social Diagnosis*, published in May and now in its second edition.

It is the only comprehensive textbook on social work in relation to the individual or family ever written. The book dignifies all social work and marks its first steps on the road to becoming a profession.

The book is not only a textbook but an encyclopedia of information concerning the best practices in social work in all fields. Its theme is the supreme necessity of the social worker to be equipped to assemble and interpret facts. An apotheosis of facts by one who comprehends the cost in money, effort, and intelligence of gathering them, it sets a goal, the attainment of which will utilize the finest effort of workers for years.

The reader's attention is arrested by the freshness of the material and the originality of its presentation. Point after point stands out unique. First comes the assertion of the identity of all social casework: "It soon became apparent," states the author, "that in essentials the methods and aims of social casework were or should be the same in every type of service, whether the subject was a homeless paralytic, the neglected boy of drunken parents, or the widowed mother of small children."

This theory of hers, when accepted and acted upon, will revolutionize the methods and organization of public and private charitable and correctional agencies.

Then follows a discussion of the nature and use of evidence, with warnings concerning the fallibility of witnesses, their suggestibility, the possibility of their racial, national, or self-interest bias, and their possible unreliability because of inattention.

Five chapters are devoted to an exhaustive elaboration of this most original and valuable discussion. These chapters mark the only serious effort to place before the court officers and agents administering social legislation throughout the country a manual to guide them in their tasks. Miss Richmond recognizes that it is among the poor unfortunates that our social legislation programs are tried out. Right here lies her justification for the title which has been challenged by some as too broad for the scope of the book.

The third conspicuously original subject is the discussion of documentary sources of information.

The fourth subject, on which practically nothing has been written before, is what the author calls the interpretation of material. She says: "Obviously it is not enough to add statement to statement, as a phonograph would. The processes of inference, of comparison of material, begin with the first interview and continue through all the steps leading to diagnosis."

And as a climax to this succession of original material is a series of questionnaires concerning types of social disabilities. As the author states, "The purpose and limitations of those questionnaires are bound to be misunderstood by some who attempt to use them, no matter how clearly it is set forth that none are sets of questions to be asked of clients and that none are schedules, the answers to which are to be filled in by anyone. . . . It is in the suggestion of alternative situations and explanations that these questionnaires will, it is hoped, prove of some help."

The book is shot through with bits of sympathetic understanding of the trials, as well as wise recognition of the failures, of social workers. The book is one to be studied and lived with.

Its publication marks the social worker's opportunity to raise his standard of work almost immeasurably, and it also marks the opportunity of the public to become alive in social work "to the difference between going through the motions of doing things and actually doing things."

The book will be applauded by many in all vocations; it will be fully appreciated by the keen-minded, honest-purposed social workers who have eagerly awaited its advent, and whose highest hopes have been justified. It is a great book by a great teacher, and its usefulness is limited only by the mental grasp of those for whom it was written.

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