

MAP NOTES AND COMMENTS.

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I.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

THE present work is the result of an attempt on the part of some of the residents of Hull-House to put into graphic form a few facts concerning the section of Chicago immediately east of the House.

The boundaries of the district are Halsted Street on the west and State on the east, Polk on the north and Twelfth Street on the south; and the inhabitants, as the maps show, are chiefly foreigners. From Halsted to State is one mile, from Polk to Twelfth, one third of a mile. This third of a square mile includes east of the river a criminal district which ranks as one of the most openly and flagrantly vicious in the civilized world, and west of the same stream the poorest, and probably the most crowded section of Chicago. At the extreme northwest of the whole, on Halsted, near Polk, is situated Hull-House, within easy walking distance of the densely populated network of streets and alleys on the west side, claiming our chief attention.

A string of small shops, the best sides of two or three factories, and a few rather pretentious brick store fronts

form an outer fringe on Halsted and Twelfth Streets, and give one the impression of a well-to-do neighborhood. The main thoroughfares running parallel with Halsted and the river between Polk and Twelfth are semi-business streets, and contain a rather cheap collection of tobacco-stands, saloons, old-iron establishments, and sordid looking fancy-shops, as well as several factories, and occasional small dwelling-houses tucked in like babies under the arms of industry. The cross streets running parallel with Polk between Halsted and the river are filled with dwelling-houses, built for one family, but generally tenanted by several, and occasionally serving as bakery, saloon, or restaurant as well as residence. The back doors of large establishments give glimpses of the inwardness of factory life, and bent figures stitching at the basement windows proclaim that the sweater is abroad in the land. Furnished rooms for rent are numerous; Italian rag and wine shops abound; dressmakers', calciminers', and cobblers' signs in Bohemian, German, and Russian are not infrequent; while the omnipresent midwife is announced in polyglot on every hand.

Enumeration shows eighty-one saloons west of the river, besides a number of "delicatessen," "restaurationen," and cigar-stands where some liquor is sold. The proportion of wooden buildings to brick is approximately two to one throughout this part of the section; but on the south side of Polk Street it is about four to one, and on Ewing more than five to one. These figures include only houses fronting on the street, and in the case of large brick blocks assume that each portion covering a city lot is a building. Structures of mixed brick

and wood are counted in with the brick buildings, and a few stone fronts form an exclusive, if inconsiderable, class, by themselves. The only one of interest is No. 137 DeKoven Street, the site of the outbreak of the great Chicago fire.

It is a striking fact that where the better houses prevail, as on DeKoven, Bunker, Taylor, and Forquer Streets, the street is almost solidly built up; while on Clinton, Jefferson, and Des Plaines the more scattered houses are veritable shells. One feels very clear, however, after long acquaintance with the neighborhood, and after visits to many of the homes, that the poorest of the tiny wooden houses, damp and unwholesome as they may be, offer nothing to compare with the hideousness shut up in the inside rooms of the larger, higher, and to the casual eye the better tenements of more pretentious aspect. The smart frontage is a mere screen, not only for the individual houses, but for the street as a whole. Rear tenements and alleys form the core of the district, and it is there that the densest crowds of the most wretched and destitute congregate. Little idea can be given of the filthy and rotten tenements, the dingy courts and tumble-down sheds, the foul stables and dilapidated outhouses, the broken sewer-pipes, the piles of garbage fairly alive with diseased odors, and of the numbers of children filling every nook, working and playing in every room, eating and sleeping in every window-sill, pouring in and out of every door, and seeming literally to pave every scrap of "yard." In one block the writer numbered over seventy-five children in the open street; but the effort proved futile when she tried to keep the count of little people surging in and

out of passage-ways, and up and down outside staircases, like a veritable stream of life.

One can but regard the unpaved and uncared for alleys as an especially threatening feature in all this unpleasing picture; and yet between Polk and Ewing Streets, and also between Ewing and Forquer, where there are no alleys, the condition of the rear tenements is the most serious.

It is customary for the lower floor of the rear houses to be used as a stable and outhouse, while the upper rooms serve entire families as a place for eating, sleeping, being born, and dying. Where there are alleys the refuse and manure are sometimes removed; where there are none, it would seem they accumulate undisturbed. In front of each house stand garbage-receivers, — wooden boxes repulsive to every sense, even when as clean as their office will permit, shocking to both mind and instinct when rotten, overfilled, and broken, as they often are. Fruit-stands help to fill up the sordid streets, and ice-cream carts drive a thriving trade. One hears little English spoken, and the faces and manners met with are very foreign. People are noticeably undersized and unhealthy, as well to the average observer as to the trained eye of the physician. Especially do the many workers in the tailoring-trades look dwarfed and ill-fed; they walk with a peculiar stooping gait, and their narrow chests and cramped hands are unmistakable evidence of their calling. Tuberculosis prevails, especially in diseases of the lungs and intestine, and deformity is not unusual. The mortality among children is great, and the many babies look starved and wan.

A Special Investigation of the Slums of Great Cities

was undertaken, the spring of 1893, by the United States Department of Labor, by order of Congress; and as Mrs. Florence Kelley, the Special Agent Expert in charge in Chicago, resided at Hull-House while conducting the investigation, the information collected by the government officials was brought within the very doors.

The entire time of four government schedule men from the 6th of April till the 15th of July, 1893, was devoted to examining each house, tenement, and room in the district, and filling out tenement and family schedules, copies of which are printed at the end of this chapter. These schedules were returned daily to Mrs. Kelley; and before they were forwarded to the Commissioner of Labor at Washington, a copy was made by one of the Hull-House residents, of the nationality of each individual, his wages when employed, and the number of weeks he was idle during the year beginning April 1, 1892.

In recording the nationality of each person, his age, and in the case of children under ten years of age the nationality of his parents and his attendance at school, were taken into account. All under ten years of age who were not pupils in the public school, and who were not of American extraction, were classified with their parents as foreigners.

In estimating the average weekly wage for the year, first the number of unemployed weeks in each individual case was subtracted from the number of weeks in the year, the difference multiplied by the weekly wage when employed, and the result divided by fifty-two; then the amounts received by the various members of each family, thus determined, were added together, giving the

average weekly income of the family throughout the year.

These records were immediately transferred in color to outline maps, made from the Greely and Carlsen survey, and generously prepared for the present purpose by Mr. Greely. These charts, with the street names and house numbers, enable the reader to find any address, the lots being colored to indicate, in one case the birthplace of each individual, in the other the wage of each family. Keys attached to the outlines explain the symbols, some of the same colors being used in the two cases with different meanings.

The mode of filling out the diagrams is slightly complex, owing to the fact that an effort is made to give the location of each family and individual, as nearly as may be. In the main, the basis of representation is geographical, each lot being entirely colored over, whether occupied by one person or one hundred. When people of different nationality or wage income, however, live in the same house, or in houses on the same lot, the space given to each on the charts is proportionate, not to the size of their houses or rooms, but (in the birthplace map) to the number of individuals, and (in the wage map) to the number of families. Thus the geographical relations are preserved, except within the lot, where each individual in the one case, and each representative of a family in the other, receives equal recognition, whether he shares with half a dozen others a room in the rear of the third story, or occupies in solitary state the entire ground floor.

No clew to the density of population is therefore given, except indirectly, in such a case as occurs on the

corner of Polk and Clark Streets, where one might reasonably infer large numbers from the presence of negroes, Italians, Chinamen, Russians, Poles, Germans, Swiss, French-Canadians, Irish, and Americans in one house. In general, however, the solid blue blocks of Italians on Ewing Street, and the black phalanx of negroes on Plymouth Place represent more people to the square inch than any other lots — a fact which is in no way indicated on the diagrams.

The United States Department of Labor states the exact figures as part of the report on *The Slum Investigation*, and all the statistics relating to this subject are officially published. But the partial presentation here offered is in more graphic and minute form; and the view of each house and lot in the charts, suggesting just how members of various nationalities are grouped and disposed, and just what rates of wages are received in the different streets and sections, may have its real as well as its picturesque value. A comparison of the two sets of outlines may also be of interest, showing in a general way which immigrants receive the highest, and which the lowest rates, and furnishing points for and against the restriction of immigration.

The poor districts of Chicago present features of peculiar interest, not only because in so young a city history is easily traced, but also because their permanence seems less inevitable in a rapidly changing and growing municipality than in a more immovable and tradition-bound civilization. Many conditions have been allowed to persist in the crowded quarters west of the river because it was thought the neighborhood would soon be filled with factories and railroad terminals, and

any improvement on property would only be money thrown away. But it is seen that as factories are built people crowd more and more closely into the houses about them, and rear tenements fill up the few open spaces left. Although poor buildings bring in such high rents that there is no business profit in destroying them to build new ones, the character of many of the houses is such that they literally rot away and fall apart while occupied. New brick tenement houses constantly going up replace wooden ramshackle ones fallen into an uninhabitable state. The long, low house on the northeast corner of Taylor and Jefferson cannot last long. No. 305 Ewing is in a desperate condition, and No. 958 Polk is disintegrating day by day and has been abandoned. Other cases might be cited, and disappearances one after another of the old landmarks are not infrequent. As fast as they drop away their places are filled, and the precarious condition of many old dwellings renders a considerable change in the aspect of the neighborhood only a question of a decade or so.

Where temporary shanties of one or two stories are replaced by substantial blocks of three or four, the gain in solidity is too often accompanied by a loss in air and light which makes the very permanence of the houses an evil. The advantages of indifferent plumbing over none at all, and of the temporary cleanliness of new buildings over old, seem doubtful compensation for the increased crowding, the more stifling atmosphere, and the denser darkness in the later tenements. In such a transitional stage as the present, there is surely great reason to suppose that Chicago will take warning from the experience of older cities whose crowded quarters have become a

menace to the public health and security. The possibility of helping toward an improvement in the sanitation of the neighborhood, and toward an introduction of some degree of comfort, has given purpose and confidence to this undertaking. It is also hoped that the setting forth of some of the conditions shown in the maps and papers may be of value, not only to the people of Chicago who desire correct and accurate information concerning the foreign and populous parts of the town, but to the constantly increasing body of sociological students more widely scattered.

The great interest and significance attached to Mr. Charles Booth's maps of London have served as warm encouragement; and although the eyes of the world do not centre upon this third of a square mile in the heart of Chicago as upon East London when looking for the very essence of misery, and although the ground examined here is very circumscribed compared with the vast area covered by Mr. Booth's incomparable studies, the two works have much in common. It is thought the aim and spirit of the present publication will recommend it as similar to its predecessor in essential respects; while the greater minuteness of this survey will entitle it to a rank of its own, both as a photographic reproduction of Chicago's poorest quarters on the west, and her worst on the east of the river, and as an illustration of a method of research. The manner of investigation has been painstaking, and the facts set forth are as trustworthy as personal inquiry and intelligent effort could make them. Not only was each house, tenement, and room visited and inspected, but in many cases the reports obtained from one person were corroborated by many

others, and statements from different workers at the same trades and occupations, as to wages and unemployed seasons, served as mutual confirmation.

Although experience in similar investigation and long residence in the neighborhood enabled the expert in charge to get at all particulars with more accuracy than could have attended the most conscientious efforts of a novice, it is inevitable that errors should have crept in. Carelessness and indifference on the part of those questioned are undoubtedly frequent, and change of occupation as well as irregularity of employment entail some confusion and uncertainty. Then, too, the length of time covered by the investigation is so great — one year — that neither buildings nor tenants remain the same throughout.

West of the river the great majority of the dwellings are wooden structures of temporary aspect and uncertain moorings; and almost any day in walking through a half-dozen blocks one will see a frame building, perhaps two or three, being carried away on rollers to make room for some factory to be erected on the old site. Suburban cottages of remote date, with neither foundations nor plumbing, travel from place to place, and even three-story tenements make voyages toward the setting sun. Like rank weeds in a fresh soil, these unsubstantial houses sprang up in Chicago's early days; and now they are being gradually supplanted by the more sturdy growth of brick blocks for industrial purposes. When thus thrown out, they find a precarious foothold in some rear yard that is not entirely filled up with stables and outhouses, or move into one of the rare vacant lots, generally farther out from the business centres. Fre-

quent house-movings of this sort alter the face of the district more or less within a year, and some neighborhoods put on a smarter look, while increased crowding continues in all.

Families also move about constantly, going from tenement to tenement, finding more comfortable apartments when they are able to pay for them, drifting into poorer quarters in times of illness, enforced idleness, or "bad luck." Tenants evicted for non-payment of rent form a floating population of some magnitude, and a kodak view of such a shifting scene must necessarily be blurred and imperfect here and there.

But special details vary while general conditions persist; and in spite of undetected mistakes and unavoidable inaccuracies, the charts paint faithfully the character of the region as it existed during the year recorded.

These notes and comments are designed rather to make the maps intelligible than to furnish independent data; and the aim of both maps and notes is to present conditions rather than to advance theories—to bring within reach of the public exact information concerning this quarter of Chicago rather than to advise methods by which it may be improved. While vitally interested in every question connected with this part of the city, and especially concerned to enlarge the life and vigor of the immediate neighborhood, Hull-House offers these facts more with the hope of stimulating inquiry and action, and evolving new thoughts and methods, than with the idea of recommending its own manner of effort.

Insistent probing into the lives of the poor would come with bad grace even from government officials, were the

statistics obtained so inconsiderable as to afford no working basis for further improvement. The determination to turn on the searchlight of inquiry must be steady and persistent to accomplish definite results, and all spasmodic and sensational throbs of curious interest are ineffectual as well as unjustifiable. The painful nature of minute investigation, and the personal impertinence of many of the questions asked, would be unendurable and unpardonable were it not for the conviction that the public conscience when roused must demand better surroundings for the most inert and long-suffering citizens of the commonwealth. Merely to state symptoms and go no farther would be idle; but to state symptoms in order to ascertain the nature of disease, and apply, it may be, its cure, is not only scientific, but in the highest sense humanitarian.

II.

COMMENTS ON MAP OF NATIONALITIES.

IN classifying the people from so many corners of the earth, an effort has been made to distinguish between the groups forming different elements in social and industrial life, without confusing the mind by a separate recognition of the people of every country.

The English-speaking class (white) embraces English, English-Canadians, Scotch, all Americans of native parentage, and such children born in this country of foreign parents as are over ten years of age, or, if younger, are in attendance upon any public school. It would be misleading to include children under ten years living in a foreign colony, not in attendance upon schools where English is sure to be used, speaking a foreign language, and, although born in this country, ignorant of American life, manners, people, and of the English tongue. *West* of the river the English-speaking element is composed of American-born children, rarely over twenty years of age, whose parents are foreigners, and who bear so plainly the impress of the Old World that they may more truly be designated as second-generation immigrants than first-generation Americans. *East* of the river the majority of the white lots are filled with genuine Americans, most of them men and girls under thirty, who have come to Chicago from towns and country districts of Illinois, and from

Wisconsin, Michigan, and other neighboring States, most of whom lead irregular lives, and very few of whom are found in families.

One English-speaking nation has been marked off from the class to which it would seem at first sight to belong, and allotted peculiar recognition and the color of the Emerald Isle. The Irish (green) form so distinct and important an element in our politics and civic life that a separate representation has been accorded them.

The negroes (black) are natives of the United States, a great number coming from Kentucky.

The Bohemians (yellow) are very numerous in the southwestern part of the district under consideration.

The Scandinavians (yellow stripe) include Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes.

The Russians (red) and Poles (red stripe) are closely related, and uniformly Jewish; a few Roumanians are found among the former.

The Germans (mauve) are re-enforced by a not inconsiderable number of Hungarians and Austrians; but neither they nor the Dutch (mauve stripe) are found in large numbers.

The remaining divisions of the classification according to birthplace are: —


ITALIAN	(blue).
SWISS	(blue stripe).
FRENCH	(brown).
FRENCH CANADIAN	(brown stripe).
GREEK	(olive).
SYRIAN	(olive stripe).
CHINESE	(orange).
ARABIAN	(orange stripe).
TURK	(white crescent on red).

COMMENTS ON MAP OF NATIONALITIES. 17

Eighteen nations are thus represented in this small section of Chicago. They are more or less intermingled, but a decided tendency to drift into little colonies is apparent. The Italians are almost solidly packed into the front and rear tenements on Ewing and Polk Streets, especially between Halsted and Jefferson, and outnumber any single class in the district. The Russian and Polish Jews cluster about Polk and Twelfth Streets, on the edge of the "Ghetto," extending south beyond Twelfth. The Bohemians form the third great group, and occupy the better streets toward the corner of Twelfth and Halsted, extending south and west beyond the limits of the map.

The Irish, although pretty well sprinkled, are most numerous on Forquer Street, which is a shade better than Ewing or Polk. A few French pepper the western edge of the section, the poorer members of a large and well-to-do French colony, of which the nucleus is the French church near Vernon Park. Only two colored people are found west of the river, while large numbers are wedged in Plymouth Place and Clark Street.

The Italians, the Russian and Polish Jews, and the Bohemians lead in numbers and importance. The Irish control the polls; while the Germans, although they make up more than a third of Chicago's population, are not very numerous in this neighborhood; and the Scandinavians, who fill north-west Chicago, are a mere handful. Several Chinese in basement laundries, a dozen Arabians, about as many Greeks, a few Syrians and seven Turks engaged in various occupations at the World's Fair, give a cosmopolitan flavor to the region, but are comparatively inconsiderable in interest.



Americans of *native parents* are almost entirely confined to the part of the district east of the river; and it should be borne in mind that the white patches on the west side represent children who are as foreign, in appearance at least, as their Neapolitan or Muscovite parents.

The white portions representing the aggregate numbers of English speaking-people found in the house or houses on each city lot, including American-born children (often belonging to a dozen different families), are uniformly placed next the street-front, so that the eye readily determines the proportion in any street or block, as well as in the space covered by one lot. The green (Irish) come next behind; the yellow (Bohemian) follow; and the blue (Italian), red (Russian), and red stripe (Polish) occupy the rear of the lot in the order named; while the other colors there maybe hover between the two extremes. Since it is impossible in so small a map of two dimensions to represent accurately the position of the tenements occupied by members of various nationalities when the houses are two, three, and four stories high, the arrangement of colors is designed to suggest the mass, rather than the location, of the various peoples indicated by them.

In some respects, however, there is a certain correspondence between this disposition of colors and the location of tenants thereby represented, when many born in different countries occupy rooms and houses on the same lot. Italians, if present, are invariably found in the rear tenements, and the same is true of Russian and Polish Jews; however, in most cases where one apartment contains Italians or Jews, the whole tenement house is given

over to them ; for the arrival of either one is followed by the prompt departure of all tenants of other nationality who can manage to get quarters elsewhere, in much the same way that the appearance of a cheap money is the signal for a scarcity of dearer coins. It is rare that one will find Italians and Jews in the same house, moreover ; for the lofty disdain with which the *Dago* regards the *Sheeny* cannot be measured except by the scornful contempt with which the *Sheeny* scans the *Dago*. Further discussion of these two important factions, and of the Bohemians, is found in separate chapters devoted entirely to their consideration.

III.

COMMENTS ON THE WAGE-MAP.

IN turning from the nationality-map to the wage-map, the difference between the bases of representation in the two may again be called to mind. While in the former case the individual is the unit, in the latter it is the family,—head, wife, children, and such parents brothers, cousins, and other relatives as live in the same dwelling, and are scheduled as one household. It is not easy to say just what constitutes “family life” in this connection. It is not a common table—often enough there is, properly speaking, no table at all. It is not even a common cooking-stove, for several families frequently use the same. The only constant factor in the lives of the members of such a circle, beyond the tie of kinship, is the more or less irregular occupancy of the same tenement, at least at night. Every boarder, and each member of the family who pays board, ranks as a self-supporting individual, and is therefore classed as a separate wage-earner. East of the river almost everybody boards, and a large proportion of the families on the west side keep boarders and lodgers; while there are also frequent boarding and lodging houses containing large numbers of people. At the time of scheduling, sixty men sleep every night in one basement room at No. 133 Ewing Street; and similar instances of less serious crowding are found.

It may seem at first sight misleading to call each single man of over twenty-one a "family," and accord him the same representation as is given his father with six, eight, or ten children or other dependants whom he must support. But in this neighborhood, generally a wife and children are sources of income as well as avenues of expense; and the women wash, do "home finishing" on ready-made clothing, or pick and sell rags; the boys run errands and "shine;" the girls work in factories, get places as cash-girls, or sell papers on the streets; and the very babies sew buttons on knee-pants and shirt-waists, each bringing in a trifle to fill out the scanty income. The theory that "every man supports his own family" is as idle in a district like this as the fiction that "every one can get work if he wants it."

A glance at the black lots on the map, representing an average weekly family income of \$5.00 or less, will show roughly the proportion of families unable to get together \$260 dollars a year. The Italian, who is said to derive his nickname, "Dago," from his characteristic occupation of digging on the *ferra via*, is, as a rule, employed on the railroads from twenty to thirty weeks in the year at \$1.25 a day; that is, he receives \$150.00 to \$225.00 a year on the average. The fact that this is not an income of \$4.32 a week, or even \$2.88 a week, throughout the year, but of \$7.50 a week half the year, and nothing the other half, makes it more difficult for the laborer to expend wisely the little he has than if the wages were smaller and steady. This irregularity of employment, whether caused by the season, weather, fashion, or the caprices of the law of supply and demand, affects not

only the unskilled, but to a considerable degree the employee of the manufactories, and the artisan. The poorest suffer from intermittent work, of course, the most. Many paupers, and old people living "with their friends," are found among these black spots in darkest Chicago.

The next class is colored blue, and embraces families earning from \$5.00 to \$10.00 a week, including \$10.00. This is probably the largest class in the district.

Red indicates \$10.00 to \$15.00, including \$15.00; green, \$15.00 to \$20.00, including \$20.00; and yellow, anything over \$20.00. Mauve signifies unknown.

The wage-earners proper are confined largely to the first four classes. The fifth (yellow) is largely composed of land and property owners, saloon and shop keepers, and those in business for themselves. All such propertied people are included in the fifth class, even if they declined to make a statement as to their income, it being reasonable to suppose them well-to-do. Members of the sixth class are chiefly pedlers, occasionally musicians and street-players, and almost invariably live from hand to mouth, keeping up a precarious existence by irregular and varied occupations. Most of this class are very poor indeed, and in point of income would probably come under one of the first two classes; that is, they generally receive less than \$10.00 a week, many less than \$5.00.

The white lots that are so numerous east of the river indicate brothels. These houses are separately classed, both because their numbers and whereabouts are of importance, and because it would be unfortunate to confuse them with laboring-people by estimating their incomes

in the same way. Usually the schedules contain no information as to the amount of money taken in; but, according to the few entries made, the gains vary widely, from \$5.00 to \$50.00 a week. The most interesting fact brought out by the investigation in this connection is that the brothels in this section are almost invariably occupied by American girls. A comparison of the nationality-map with the one under consideration will make this plain. Few of the girls are entered on the schedules as Chicago-born, and the great majority come from the central-eastern States. There are many colored women among them, and in some houses the whites and blacks are mixed. Only such places as report themselves brothels are so entered in the maps, the many doubtful "dressmakers" in the same region being classified as wage-earners, according to their own statements. There are no declared brothels in the region west of the river.