

The Portland Community Service—Its Purposes and Accomplishments

By J. C. Henderson Executive Secretary

THE PURPOSE of the Community Service movement is to help the people of American communities to employ their spare time to the best advantage for recreation and good citizenship. The keynote of the problem which Community Service is trying to solve was sounded by Theodore Roosevelt when he said "This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in."

Community Service is by no means confined to Portland; there is a National Headquarters at 315 Fourth Avenue, New York City which maintains a staff of specialists on various phases of commu-



J. C. Henderson, Executive Secretary

nity work and issues many helpful bulletins, handbooks and other material on every phase of community movement. There are also a number of District Offices throughout the country.

The Portland Community Service link, is a part of the Northwest district of the Nation-wide community Service Organization. The headquarters for this district is in Seattle. There are 144 cities at

present in the United States which have paid community service secretaries and a budget for carrying on the work. These local organizations draw their finances from the community in which they are located. In Portland, the Community Service is supported by the Community Chest which in 1922 contributed \$8,800.

The work of the local community service office consists in the sponsoring of community music, drama and recreation and cooperating with community clubs, Parent Teacher Associations, lodges, civic bodies, women's clubs, etc., in the planning and carrying out of community activities. Under the head of community music it trains volunteer song leaders, furnishes song leaders without charge for gatherings, loans song sheets and music for community sings, sponsors Christmas and Easter Caroling and the use of special music for holidays, festivals, etc., and sponsors Portland's Annual Music Week. In 1922 the secretary of Portland Community Service led 221 sings in person with a total attendance of 79310 besides a great many more sings which were led by volunteer song leaders. Portland's second music week which was held in November, 1922 was said by the National Bureau for the Advancement of music to have been one of the finest yet held in this country. There was a grand total of 8990 programs presented during the week with a total attendance of approximately 150,000. The total number of people reached by the musical activities of Portland Community Service last year was 241,810.

Under the head of Community Recreation, Community Service maintains recreation center in public school buildings, encourages and sponsors the work of boy's and girls athletic clubs and fosters recreation in a number of industries of the city. At the present time public school gymnasiums are used 16 times per week for junior recreation and 11 nights per week

for industrial recreation besides a considerable amount of recreation work which Community Service helped to start but which is now entirely independent. Last year a total of 13,205 young people were reached by the junior recreation program and 40,441 by the industrial recreation program which was carried out in 22 industries. The feature of the industrial work for the year was the formation of two eight team baseball leagues which played a fourteen game season, the winner in each league playing for the city championship, which was won by the Portland Gas & Coke Co. Community Service also assisted the Vacation Bible Schools of the city during the summer months by providing recreation leaders and loaning equipment. An interesting phase of recreation work, is the Hiker's Club which has a membership of about 100 employed men and women. When the weather permits, hikes are held weekly and when bad weather comes the club enjoys an indoor program including social evenings, dramatics, dancing, athletics and other kinds of wholesome fun. Strangers in Portland are especially welcome in this club which provides unusual opportunities for newcomers to get acquainted with the right kind of people.

The total number of people served by our recreation program last year was 60,151.

In the field of community drama the community service office sug-

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