

(November 8th.)

What Does Associated Charities Mean and What is its Object?

BY REVEREND J. A. TURNBULL, D.D.

ADDRESSING the Canadian Club, on the subject: "What does Associated Charities Mean and What is its Object?" Rev. J. A. Turnbull, D.D., said:

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I look upon it as a great honor indeed that I am permitted to appear here to-day to address the Canadian Club. I have heard much of your Canadian Club and the meetings you hold, and twice I think I have sent in my application for membership. I don't quite know what became of these applications: it may be that they were rejected. (Laughter and cries of no, no.) Be that as it may, I take off my hat to the Canadian Club. I have read in the papers of the distinguished men who come here to speak to you, and I had come to regard the Canadian Club as an institution to which were invited people of note. And so I realized when I was asked to come here to-day and talk to you for a few moments on the topic which has been assigned to me, that it was a tribute to the organization of which I happen to be president, and that it was, moreover, a tribute to yourselves and the interest you take in the great work in which that organization is engaged.

Your President has quoted to you some figures relative to that work and its magnitude and growth. I cannot, then, do better than, without further introduction, proceed with the few words I am to speak to you.

Toronto has come to be known as a philanthropic city, and whilst we rejoice in this reputation we must guard ourselves against imposition, and take every care to make our giving a help, and not a hindrance to true nobility of character. He is the ideal man who in all his relations with his fellow man exhibits a hard head and a soft heart, it is disastrous when the reverse is true. There are in the city of Toronto 244 churches and fifty-five institutions and organizations of a charitable

Rev. Doctor Turnbull, of West Presbyterian Church, Toronto, is President of the Associated Charities, of Toronto, and is specially qualified to speak on the work of this organization in dealing with methods of philanthropy and relief.

character. There are, in addition, very many families and individuals who readily respond to any reasonable appeal for help.

During the year 1908, of these fifty-five organizations and institutions, thirty-five received grants, as follows:—City grants, seventy-one thousand dollars; Ontario Government grants, fifty-two thousand dollars. In addition, bequests fifty-eight thousand dollars and from inmates sixty-four thousand dollars. Receiving from all sources about three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars.

This does not take account of the givings of the remaining twenty organizations and institutions, nor those of congregations, families and individuals.

Having to do with so much money, how much it is impossible to tell, and with so many people, the time has fully come when all our giving should be systematized, and charity made scientific. This is the aim of the Association known as "Associated Charities." There is an Associated Charities Organization in two hundred and twenty-five of the American cities. In Canada we have an organization in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver.

We are living in an age which is intensely practical, an age in which the philanthropic spirit desires some reasonable measure of assurance that money given will not be worse than wasted.

1st, *Co-operation and Co-ordination.*—Associated Charities Organizations, seeks to secure the co-operation of the various charitable organizations (churches and homes included as far as possible and desirable), and the co-ordination of the work. This will prevent overlapping and duplicating, and will provide a council for the study of all the problems that are presented in connection with the work of helping the needy.

2nd, *Investigations.*—"Associated Charities" holds most firmly that every case should be thoroughly investigated before any help is given and plans and undertakes to do this work. This investigation work is like that of the skilled physician, when in response to a call for his help he enters the home. He will first of all make a thorough diagnosis of the case ascertaining the condition of his patient: he will then prescribe, which may mean calling in the druggist if medicine is required, calling in the grocer if nourishment is needed, calling in the nurse when nursing must be provided, etc.

This is what is meant when it is said that "Associated Charities" is not a relief-giving but a relief-getting organization. When investigation is made, it may be discovered that

the case is a very complicated one, and the needs of the family many and varied, the society will seek to secure the help of organizations, churches, employers, individuals, relations, friends, as is deemed best in each case. But the skilled physician will not rest having done these things, he will seek to ascertain the cause with a view to its removal if possible. The sickness may have come from drinking water from a disease breeding spring, insanitary conditions in the house, overwork, improper nourishment, etc., etc.

We also seek to discover the cause, the reason why the need is required, that remedial work may be done. The list of possible causes is a long one, idleness, intemperance, gambling, temporary lack of employment, ill-health, insanitary homes, improper housing, wife-desertion, economic conditions, etc.

Modern charity is not satisfied with giving the wounded man on the road a drink of cold water, not even with taking him to an inn and taking care of him until he is able to take care of himself. We cannot rest until we have persuaded and arrested the one who did the robbing and wounding, and put him behind prison bars, where he can no more do deeds of violence.

3rd, *Furnish a Friend to the Needy.*—But we seek to do more, we make a specialty of every case, not simply to give temporary relief, but with a view to help the needy to help themselves, preserve their independence and prevent pampering them, securing employment, as far as possible, for those out of work (and to this end we have a Free Employment Bureau, which has done excellent work during the time it has been in existence), restoration of health to the sick, encouragement to those who may in the battle for bread have become disheartened, and the restoration of the right spirit to those who have already come to depend on the charity of others; and when we remember it is not with crude material we are dealing, but living men and women who, perhaps once had their ambitions and hopes but in whom the lights have gone out and the fires been extinguished by adverse circumstances, we should do all we can to rekindle the fire, and light the lamp and save them from being mere wreckage on the shore of time. Thus, "Associated Charities" believes that the needy recognise a wise friend more than mere friends to help them along, and we seek to secure for each and every needy one a friend who will help them to make the most of themselves.

4th, *Protect the Community.*—The charitably disposed people must be protected against fraud and imposition, which,

when discovered, dampen the ardor of the most kindly-hearted person, and harden them against the appeals of those whom they should really help. This can be done by registering in a central office, names of those applying for help, addresses, conditions, causes, help rendered, and thus make it a clearing house for all this work.

Any organization or individual applied to for help can find out either by post card or telephone if the applicant is known, if he is already registered as having applied for help.

Thus, organizations, institutions, and benevolent persons will be put in touch with one another, overlapping prevented, imposition detected, and the temptation to live by begging greatly weakened, thus proving a great boon all round.