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Sixth Annual Report

OF THE

Associated Charities of Cambridge

NOVEMBER, 1888.

ORGANIZED DECEMBER, 1881.

INCORPORATED JANUARY 16, 1883.

Wm. H. WHEELER, PRINTER.

Cambridge:

1889.

THE SOCIETY

OFFICERS, 1888-1889.

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On Finance.

The TREASURER (*ex officio.*) MR. C. H. WARNER. MR. CHAMBERLIN.
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The PRESIDENT (*ex officio.*) MR. PEABODY. DR. COGSWELL.
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The Board of Directors meets at the Central Office on the second Thursday of each month at 4.30 P. M.

The Old Cambridge Conference meets at the Vestry of First Parish Church, Church Street on the first and third Mondays of each month at 4 P. M.

The Cambridgeport Conference meets at the Central Office on alternate Wednesdays at 4 P. M.

The North Cambridge Conference meets at 158 North Avenue on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 3 P. M.

OLD CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE.

Executive Committee.

President.—C. H. WARNER. *Secretary.*—MRS. J. G. THORP, JR.
MRS. J. P. COOKE. S. A. ELIOT. W. T. PIPER.
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MISS A. R. WELLS.

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MRS. A. M. HOWE. MISS M. M. WYMAN. MRS. H. N. WHEELER.
DR. C. E. VAUGHAN.

Committee on Intemperates.

J. G. THORP, JR. E. M. PARKER. W. B. NOBLE.

CAMBRIDGEPORT CONFERENCE.

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Ways and Means Committee.

MRS. W. W. WELLINGTON, *Chairman.* MISS M. L. DREW, *Secretary.*
MRS. J. L. WRENN. MRS. M. J. HADLEY. MISS S. A. PEAR.
J. WATSON HARRIS.

Sewing School Committee.

MISS H. L. MACKINTOSH. MISS SARAH BENT. MISS DORA PAGE.
MISS MARTHA G. WATRISS. MISS M. L. CHAMBERLIN.

NORTH CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE.

Executive Committee.

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Vice-President.—MRS. G. N. CHASE. *Secretary.*—MRS. L. H. WHITNEY.
MRS. M. E. BROWN. MRS. H. C. RAND. MRS. H. T. FELLOWS.
MISS C. H. HAPGOOD.

Ways and Means Committee.

MISS C. H. HAPGOOD, *Chairman.* MRS. H. C. RAND.
MRS. W. H. WOODBRIDGE.

CENTRAL OFFICE, CENTRAL SQUARE, CAMBRIDGEPORT.

Registrar, MISS S. A. PEAR.—OFFICE HOURS, 9 A.M. TO 12 M.

Agent, J. WATSON HARRIS.—OFFICE HOURS, 2 TO 4 P.M.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

ASSOCIATED CHARITIES OF CAMBRIDGE.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS.

The Directors of the Associated Charities of Cambridge submit their Sixth Annual Report.

The work of organized charity has gone steadily forward during the year, as will be seen from the reports of the three Conferences, which are appended. The relief organizations of the different parts of the city are now in co-operation with us, so that the visitors of our Conferences feel that these societies can be called upon for the material assistance which is needed but which it is not our aim to furnish.

The Registrar's work in recording information and that of Mr. Harris in investigation and visiting have very much increased; this year the Agent has made over fifteen hundred calls.

The death of Mrs. Henry Thayer, one of our original Board of Directors, has deprived us of a valued and energetic member, whose place it will be difficult to fill.

The whole number of cases reported since 1 December, 1881, to 1 September, 1888,—the end of our year—is 1811. The statistics for this year compared with last year are as follows:—

	1886-87.	1887-88.
Cases registered	508	573
New cases "	190	214
Impostors, giving a false or no address, or not in Cambridge	34	36
Individuals reporting	90	102
Churches in Cambridge reporting	10	11
Families reported in Old Cambridge	73	104
" " in North "	37	35
" " in East "	80	90

	1886-87.	1887-88.
Families reported in Cambridgeport	268	308
“ regularly visited in Old Cambridge	37	39
“ “ “ in North Cambridge	28	20
“ “ “ in Cambridgeport		51
Visitors in Old Cambridge	28	28
“ in North “	18	18
“ in Cambridgeport	37	26

CAMBRIDGE, 20 November, 1888.

OLD CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The Conference of Ward I, Old Cambridge, has held fifteen meetings during the past year, with an average attendance of fourteen persons.

There are twenty-eight visitors on the active list, besides several others who can be called upon in cases of emergency, and thirty-nine families systematically visited and reported upon, as well as many others who require occasional and temporary attention.

Some of our most interesting and encouraging work is done in cases where sickness or accident has brought distress into families ordinarily well-to-do, or at least self-supporting, where a little sympathy and moral support from the visitor with more or less material aid from the proper sources, enables them to tide over a hard place and begin again for themselves with fresh energy and success.

Our usual public meeting was given up this year on account of the illness of the gentleman who had charge of the arrangements, but the attendance at our regular meetings has shown no falling off in interest, and the work of visiting has proved as useful and satisfactory as heretofore.

Owing to an arrangement of the coal dealers among themselves the Committee on Coal Savings find that nothing can be saved for the contributors by the purchase of coal in large quantities over the price each person would pay in buying for himself, and the Committee has therefore decided to discontinue its work this year, and has been obliged to refuse applications from families who have hitherto subscribed for coal through it.

Although, for the causes mentioned, the work of the past year has been even more unobtrusive than heretofore, your Committee feel more than ever satisfied with the system of association in charitable work, and the very fact of the quietness and regularity with which the visiting is carried on, shows that a great deal of friction, unnecessary labor, and misunderstanding, is gradually being removed, and that cases of distress or of imposition, coming into one ward from another, can be relieved or exposed, as the necessity may require, in much shorter time, and with less danger of mistake, than before the system of association had been introduced among us.

Respectfully submitted,

Nov. 5, 1888.

ANNA H. VAUGHAN.

CAMBRIDGEPORT CONFERENCE.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The work of the Conference has gone on as usual during the past year. There have been held sixteen meetings with an average attendance of twelve. There have been twenty-four visitors more or less actively engaged in the work of the Conference, beside the Agent and the Registrar.

More than seventy-five cases have been brought to the notice of the Conference and investigated, and continued under our care, or dropped, or otherwise disposed of, as seemed best under the circumstances; some of these were beyond the province of the Conference, others entirely unworthy, and others cases for the city authorities.

Fifty-one families have been under the care of the visitors. Intemperance has been reported in a large number of the families and is the cause of a great deal of the suffering and want. Sixteen deaths have been reported in the families under the care of the Conference (nine adults and seven children), thus ending some of the cases, some of which have been under our care a number of years; in other of these families the surviving members are in need of the aid and assistance which we can procure, and the case is continued under our care.

The conference has given clothing from the rooms in many

needy and worthy cases. We have received aid from the Howard Benevolent Society in several instances, where coal was needed.

The Executive Committee reports that five regular and two special meetings have been held during the year. Eleven cases have been brought before it, of which two were considered without any definite action being taken, one was temporarily retired, one was left in charge of the city and one with the police, one was brought before the Conference and five were left in charge of the regular visitors.

The Ways and Means Committee reports that during the year ending 1 September, 1888, it has had seventy-six applications for employment, twenty-four of which have been supplied, and nine of these situations are permanent: forty-six employers have applied to it for help. The Agent has found homes for three destitute children and seen that clothing has been provided for two needy invalids.

The Sewing School Committee reports; three years ago the school was first opened in a room already filled with trunks and boxes containing the refuse of many Cambridge wardrobes, lighted with but one window, furnished with two settees and some disabled chairs, with no outfit of sewing materials and no money provided. Here ten or twelve women gathered every week. The next year the school increased and additional assistance was secured, and as a result of the year's hard work, great gain was shown in the growing interest of the women and the dawning of new possibilities. During the past year additional accommodations became necessary and were secured from the city, and with a corps of good helpers the leaders proceeded to systematize and develop the class as it had been impossible to do before.

There have been held twenty-three sessions from November 1887 to April 1888, with an average attendance of about forty. Five entertainments, musical and elocutionary, were given to the class during the sewing hours, also one practical talk on home matters, and one emergency lecture. Church sewing-circles and individuals have kindly supplied cloth, flannel and sewing materials. Some extra gift from the store-room was made to each one at Christmas. The closing meeting was marked by a slight collation provided by friends, which drew from the women the warmest expressions of gratitude for all the pleasure they had received through the school. Between forty and fifty visits have been

paid. 1375 articles have been received, 666 articles have been given out through the class and 308 articles outside the class. Cash receipts have been \$10.65 from various sources and expenditures \$8.71 for materials.

These are only some of the things which we can record about our work, but who can record the good done through the words of sympathy, counsel and cheer spoken by the visitors as they go about among those under our care, which are oftentimes productive of more real good than gifts of something more substantial.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN H. BALL.

Secretary.

NORTH CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

During the year we have held fourteen meetings for the transaction of business, with an average attendance of nine members.

Two public meetings have been held, under the auspices of this Conference, and a goodly number of the charitable people of Ward V have listened to the story of "The Old Charity and the New," and the method of work in uplifting the poor and the wretched in the cities of London, Boston and Cambridge. One of the problems which interest charitable people at the present time, namely, "The Housing of the working classes" was presented to us by one who has made reformatory work a study, and has been an eyewitness of the misery and degradation of people living in the crowded courts and alleys in London, and their gradual improvement, both moral and physical, when removed to the model tenement house.

The number of visitors has been eighteen, and all by personal visitation or otherwise have cheered the poor in their lonely homes, and by a kind word, and helpful suggestion, or perhaps a word of reproof kindly given, changed their home life which was idleness and waste into industry and economy.

Seventy visits have been made on the families under the care of this Conference. Twenty families have been visited from time to time as their necessities seemed to require. Ten cases of

begging have been reported, and most of them investigated with the usual result.

We have continued to work on the same general plan as in preceding years. In most of the families under our care, there is only the mother to provide food and clothing, shelter and fuel, for a family of children all too young to work. In several cases ill-health is added to their already heavy burden. Even in these extreme cases we have encouraged them to be self-supporting if possible, and to remember any assistance from the city, even medical attendance, makes them a family of paupers.

A most interesting and in every way worthy case is that of a poor widow with four children, who have been under the care of this Conference ever since its organization. During the long sickness and death of a fifth child, and a long illness of the mother, including a number of weeks at the Hospital, this Conference has cared for and been the helpful adviser of this family, bridging over many a dark spot, procuring food and clothing for the children, giving them due attention during the absence of the mother in the hospital, and bringing comfort to what would otherwise have been a most cheerless home. During all this time no aid has been received from the city, and a most commendable peculiarity of the case has been that never has this poor woman asked for assistance; in every instance the visitor has been compelled to anticipate their needs in some way, a case so rare in the annals of our work, that it is worthy of record.

Another equally worthy case is that of an aged widow and daughter. For several years the daughter has been a faithful servant in families in this vicinity and has used her wages to provide for her mother, who from old age and sickness has been unable to work. Last winter the daughter's health failed and these women, without money and friends able to help them, were obliged to appeal to the city for help. A member of St. Peter's Church, who was also a member of our Conference, assumed the entire charge of the case, providing nourishing food and assistance in payment of rent. After a few months' rest, the daughter's health improved, she was able to work and again they were self-supporting.

Sickness and need were reported to the Conference, in a family consisting of two old people, Protestants, but not members of any Church or Parish. The man is a gardener and day laborer, tem-

perate and industrious, but his peculiarities are so marked that many decline to give him employment. Last winter he was sick nearly three months; rent, food, fuel and medicines soon exhausted his small amount of money; unable to work, unwilling to beg, too proud to ask assistance of benevolent people, or city help, they were found by a member of our Conference in a destitute condition. They were supplied with food by interested people, wood and coal were given by the Charitable Relief Society. In the spring he regained his health and was able to do his work as usual.

Since the organization of this Conference begging from door to door, enlisting the sympathy of reluctant donors by stories of terrible suffering, has decreased; we have convinced a few, at least, of the residents of this ward that most of the stories are false in every particular.

The following is the most persistent case of begging we have encountered among the residents of Ward V.

Last winter, a German woman accompanied by three children clothed in rags, went from house to house in this and the adjacent part of Somerville, begging money, food and clothing, and stealing any small article within easy reach. They told the usual story of destitution. In answer to the question how many in your family, one of the younger and less experienced children said, "Seven of us and two boarders." The visitor found them in a comfortable home, and by cautiously worded questions learned that the father and oldest child had steady employment, and that the rent and other household bills were promptly paid. We warned this woman against begging, notified the police twice, and also the truant officer, without any effect. As a last resort a short sketch of the family was printed in the weekly papers. For several months after they were not seen on the streets. Within a few weeks they have appeared again selling herbs and barberries and begging when opportunity is offered.

This is the record of the year's work—some success and many failures.

A beloved co-worker, Mrs. Henry Thayer, entered into rest, December, 1888. It was largely through her instrumentality that this Conference was organized. She worked faithfully with us, an able adviser, a helper and friend; the record of her life-work is written in our memories. May the example of her Christian

character, her conscientiousness and high principles, encourage us to carry on the work which she has laid down.

In closing our report we would like to express our grateful acknowledgment to the General Secretary, and the Registrar of the Associated Charities of Cambridge, to the Clergymen for their kind words of encouragement, to the Universalist Society for the free use of their Vestry for our public meetings, to a member of our Conference for the full and interesting report of our meeting printed in the Cambridge papers, and to all others who have in any way assisted us in our work of carrying forward the principle of the New Charity. Respectfully submitted,

MRS. L. H. WHITNEY,

Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

NOVEMBER 15, 1887, TO NOVEMBER 18, 1888.

Receipts.

Balance on hand November 15, 1887	\$583.14	
Subscriptions	885.58	
		————— \$1468.72

Expenditures.

Salaries (Registrar and Agent)	\$1000.00	
Conference Expenses	37.50	
Sundry Expenses (including Printing, Stationery, Postage and Office Expenses and Car-fares)	140.30	
		————— \$1177.80
Balance on hand November 18, 1888		————— \$290.92

HENRY N. TILTON,

Treasurer.

