

A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM PRESIDENT
ROOSEVELT.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

OYSTER BAY, N. Y., September 8, 1908.

MY DEAR MR. WELLER:

The National Capital should be a model city. It is so already in certain respects; and even in its less favored neighborhoods and among the "Neglected Neighbors" whom you describe, the problems, as you suggest, can be much more readily solved than in other great cities. The situation in Washington is such that it may readily be mastered if the people and the authorities will only set themselves at the task. I believe that your study will be helpful both in pointing out the evils which block the way and in suggesting remedial measures.

We of this country are just beginning to appreciate the social problems which have developed while our cities have been growing so marvelously and while our people have been over-absorbed in their industrial and commercial tasks. We are now becoming conscious of some of the unevenness which has naturally resulted from the rapidity of material growth, the over-absorption in material things: we are beginning to think of the neighbors and neighborhoods which have been neglected. In a democracy like ours, it is an ill thing for all of us, if any of us suffer from unwholesome surroundings or from lack of opportunity for good home life, good citizenship and useful industry.

It seems to me that your suggestions for the improvement of housing conditions in American cities are wise. Washington is not worse than other cities, but simply like them, in the fact that the living conditions

of its less resourceful citizens need to be studied and improved. In appointing the Homes Commission I sought to begin for the National Capital such work as was accomplished for New York City by the several tenement house committees organized there at various times. Doubtless the work which has been inaugurated in Washington by the Homes Commission will need to be continued and extended, as you suggest, by a special philanthropic organization or by subsequent commissions officially appointed.

I think that your stories of specific families and typical incidents will be more effective with general readers than the statistics and formal statements which usually characterize reports as to housing conditions. As Mr. James Bronson Reynolds has said, your book may well be considered "a study of a people". It will afford to any one who reads it a larger and more sympathetic understanding of the problems and difficulties which beset those who live in "the alleys, tenements, and shanties" of the National Capital.

I know that you desire for your work no other return than the consciousness that it has been of service in improving the home life and enlarging the opportunities of these "Neglected Neighbors". To that end, I hope the book will receive the careful consideration of those persons, both in Washington and elsewhere, who may be able to help in the improvement of living conditions among the less favored dwellers in our cities.

Very truly yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

MR. CHARLES F. WELLER, Executive Secretary,
The President's Homes Commission,
923 H Street, Northwest,
Washington, D. C.

Neglected Neighbors

STORIES OF LIFE IN THE
ALLEYS, TENEMENTS AND SHANTIES
OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

By

CHARLES FREDERICK WELLER

Executive Officer, Washington "Associated Charities" (1901-08), "Committee on Improvement of Housing Conditions" (1901-07), "Neighborhood House" (1901-07), "President's Homes Commission" (1908), Pittsburgh "Associated Charities" (1908-), Formerly Superintendent Englewood and West Side Districts, "Chicago Bureau of Charities" (1896-1901)

WITH ONE CHAPTER BY

EUGENIA WINSTON WELLER

Associate Founder and Head Resident of
"Neighborhood House" (1901-07)

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