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**Care for the disabled and the ill in the activities  
of Łódzkie Chrześcijańskie Towarzystwo Dobroczyńności  
(Łódź Christian Charity Society) in 1885-1914**

After the failure of the uprising in 1863 and the complete loss of independence, tsarist authorities on the Polish lands under Russian rule restricted the activities of aid organizations significantly. The influence of the state on social welfare was limited to administrative and restrictive activities only; the provision of aid to those in need rested on the shoulders of charity societies and private citizens. Charity organizations conducted their activities pursuant to rules imposed by the partitioner state, in the field of welfare as well; they represented several trends, such as charitable, educational, independence, and economic trend.

In the late 1870s, a charity society was formed in Łódź; it was relatively late as compared to institutions of this type operating in the Kingdom of Poland in the field of social charity since the beginnings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>. At first, it conducted its activities with the name of *Komitet Wsparcia Biednych* (Committee of Support for the Poor, established in 1877); since 1885, it became *Łódzkie Chrześcijańskie Towarzystwo Dobroczyńności* (further: ŁChTD or the Society). This organization conducted multidirectional activities in the social, healthcare, welfare, and educational areas in Łódź at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Owing to the diversity of taken initiatives, the multitude of aspects thereof, and the num-

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<sup>1</sup> Charity societies organized earlier on the Polish lands included Vilnius (1807), Warsaw (1814), Lublin and Sandomierz (1815), Krakow (1816), Kalisz (1825), and Poznań (1845) societies. C. Kępski, *Towarzystwa dobroczynności w Królestwie Polskim (1815–1914)*, Lublin 1993, p. 63, 80, 87, 89.

ber of centres (20 before the World War I), it was the most dynamic charity organization in the city.

The first welfare institution formed by ŁChTD in 1886 was *Przytułek dla Starców i Kalek* (House for Old People and the Disabled) located, at first, in a privately-owned establishment at Cegielniana 44 (today it is Jaracza street)<sup>2</sup>. Bearing in mind that ŁChTD started its activities in 1885, the House was organized quite quickly. It provided shelter for 30 people.

One of significant directions in the activities of the Society was the provision of organised care to old, ill, disabled, and poor people. Due to being unable to work and, frequently, due to no care of the members of families, people from this social group often were left with nothing to live on and with no roofs over their heads. In the light of opinions of the time on the causes of human poverty, people from this group qualified to the category of *unjust poverty*<sup>3</sup>. Its causes included the whole of social-economic relationships, such as hard physical labour, starvation-level wages, poverty, accidents, suffered illnesses, and consequences of participation in wars and uprisings<sup>4</sup>. Frequently, old, poor, and disabled people became beggars and were counted as underclass. The number of such people in Łódź, which was developing industrially and demographically, was constantly increasing; their financial situation was becoming more and more difficult and it required appropriate solutions.

Although social conditions required shelters and poorhouses, there was no institution of this profile in Łódź until the mid-1880s. Jan Fijałek thought that it is difficult to determine a precise cause of the lack of poorhouses not only in Łódź but also in the vicinity of the city. In his opinion, the causes included no financial means and aversion of rich people and local authorities to support an institution of this kind. Undoubtedly, what played a role here was a certain attitude to human fate. In those times, people who were unable

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<sup>2</sup> *Zarys działalności Łódzkiego Chrześcijańskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczynności za czas od roku 1877 do końca 1901 roku z powodu 25-cio letniego jubileuszu*, Łódź 1902, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> F. Skarbek, *Pisma pomniejszych*, t. II, *Pisma społeczne*, Warszawa 1937, p. 88, 96.

<sup>4</sup> A. Okolski, *Dobroczynność publiczna w Polsce*, „Niwa” 1878, p. 680.

to secure themselves a peaceful old age as a result of *no caution or immorality at their young age* were looked at with hostility<sup>5</sup>.

The Management Board of ŁChTD decided that only the poor over 50 who had lived in Łódź for at least five years and received no help from their family could be admitted to the House for Old People and the Disabled<sup>6</sup>.

The institution was managed by the Committee; Reinhold Mellini was the President of the Committee and E. Lünge became the Secretary. Other members included W. Drozdowski, L. Strauch, K. Kaliwoda, and J. Albrecht. Fridrich Michael was appointed the Host of the centre<sup>7</sup>.

In May 1886, a separate division for ill people was organized at the House<sup>8</sup>; in October, 10 beds were added to the institution by resolution of the Management Board of ŁChTD. According to the nature of the activities of the Society, only Christians could seek shelter in the centre, i.e. Catholics, Evangelicals, and members of the Orthodox Church. During the first ten years of the operation of the House, the number of the poor, disabled, and ill living in the centre was steadily rising, as presented in table no. 1.

In 1886, 54 residents, 15 men and 39 women, were admitted to the House for Old People and the Disabled. After a few years, the number of people admitted during one year nearly doubled; in 1893 it was 79. The highest attendance rate, i.e. 83 residents, was recorded in 1895.

At first, a significant share in the number of residents was formed by Catholics, men as well as women. In 1892–1896, there were more ill and disabled Evangelicals at the House. Within the space of ten years, it can be seen that there were more women of

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<sup>5</sup> J. Fijałek, *Instytucje pomocy materialno-zdrowotnej w Łodzi i okręgu łódzkim (wiek XIX do roku 1870)*, Łódź 1962, p. 114; F. Skarbek, *O ubóstwie ubogich*, [in:] *Pisma społeczne*, Warszawa 1937, p. 101-127.

<sup>6</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi – National Archive in Łódź (further: APL), Łódzkie Chrześcijańskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynności (further: ŁChTD), archive reference (further: s.a.) no. 27: *Oczet o diejatielnosti Łodzinskiego Christianskiego Błagotworitielnogo Obszczestwa za 1892 god*, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 199: *Kniga Komiteta Doma Starcow 1886–1896*. APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 27: *Oczet Łodzinskiego Christianskiego Błagotworitielnogo Obszczestwa za otczetyj god z 1 janwaria po 31 diekabria 1889 goda*, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> When it started admitting ill residents, the institution stopped to be a House only for the poor, hence its name – House for Old People and the Disabled.

both religions. In 1887-1889, male Catholics predominated among the people admitted to the centre; in the following years, women were the majority. In individual years, men and women, Catholics and Evangelicals, left the centre for various reasons. It should be ob-

Table 1  
Residents of the House for Old People and the Disabled of ŁChTD in 1886-1896

Year	M/F	Residents														
		as at 1 January			admitted			residents during the year			left during the year			died during the year		
		C	E	T	C	E	T	C	E	T	C	E	T	C	E	T
1886	M	-	-	-	7	8	15	7	8	15	-	1	1	-	2	2
	F	-	-	-	22	17	39	22	17	39	5	4	9	2	3	5
1887	M	7	5	12	11	3	14	18	8	26	8	1	9	1	-	1
	F	15	10	25	2	7	9	17	17	34	-	2	2	-	2	2
1888	M	9	7	16	8	6	14	17	13	30	8	4	12	-	-	-
	F	17	13	30	5	6	11	22	19	41	5	2	7	2	1	3
1889	M	9	9	18	10	5	15	19	14	33	4	5	9	1	2	3
	F	15	16	31	2	9	11	17	25	42	1	6	7	1	1	2
1890	M	14	7	21	7	8	16	21	16	37	7	2	9	4	3	7
	F	15	18	33	9	8	17	24	26	50	1	2	3	3	4	7
1891	M	10	11	21	8	11	17	18	22	40	-	3	3	5	3	8
	F	20	20	40	8	13	21	28	33	61	4	-	4	5	3	8
1892	M	13	16	29	5	10	15	18	26	42	-	4	4	4	4	8
	F	19	30	49	9	6	15	28	36	64	3	1	4	7	6	13
1893	M	14	18	32	5	5	10	19	23	42	1	3	4	2	4	8
	F	18	29	47	11	3	14	29	32	61	1	1	2	3	6	9
1894	M	15	16	31	2	5	7	17	21	38	1	1	2	4	3	7
	F	24	27	51	10	5	15	34	32	66	3	-	3	5	4	9
1895	M	12	17	29	4	1	5	16	18	34	2	-	2	4	2	6
	F	26	28	54	8	5	13	34	33	67	5	-	5	8	7	15
1896	M	10	16	26	16	17	33	26	33	59	-	2	2	2	1	3
	F	21	26	47	35	22	57	56	48	104	2	-	2	4	5	9

M – male  
F – female

Source: The author's own study based on *Zarys działalności Łódzkiego..., Przytułek dla Starców i Kalek*; APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 204; *Armenasyl. Jahres Berichte 1892–1896*; s.a. 27; *Otczet Łodzinskiego... 1889 g.*, p. 7; *Otczet o diejatielnosti Łodzinskiego... za 1892 god.*, p. 6. No ill members of the Orthodox church were recognized for 1886-1896 because the first two men being members of the Orthodox church were admitted in 1898.

served that the number of people leaving the House increased in 1888 (19 residents) and 1889 (16) and decreased in the following years. Deaths of residents were related mainly to their age and illnesses as well as epidemics. The highest mortality rate was in 1890-1895, when Łódź was in the grip of infectious diseases, i.e. tuberculosis, smallpox, cholera, scarlet fever, typhoid etc.<sup>9</sup> The highest number of deaths was recorded in 1892 – 21 residents.

As has already been mentioned, the number of the ill and disabled who sought care and financial aid at the House for Old People and the Disabled increased steadily. Since 1891, it invariably exceeded 100 residents; five years later, it reached the level of 161. With great overcrowding, the rented rooms did not meet health and hygienic conditions. This situation forced ŁChTD authorities to take more energetic actions in order to build a separate building for the House.

However, before the constructions work started (they were withheld by tsarist administrative authorities in Łódź), in November 1889, a decision was made to move the House to a new establishment at Cegielniana 317a leased for the monthly rent of 1,350 roubles (further: rb)<sup>10</sup>.

It was not until December 1890 that the President of ŁChTD and the factory owner, Juliusz Heinzl, announced at the meeting of the Management Board that *the requests submitted many times by the Society to higher authorities via the agency of the city council concerning the donation of one of city squares free of charge for the construction of a poorhouse have finally succeeded and that the square at Targowa street was allotted for this purpose*<sup>11</sup>. The notarial deed between the city of Łódź council and the Society was concluded in August 1891<sup>12</sup>. Piotrków Provincial Government approved the construction design for the building in March 1894.

When it had turned out that the collected funds will not be sufficient to pay for the costs of the construction, the decision was made to obtain money by collections among the rich part of Łódź society<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka zdrowotna w Łodzi do roku 1945. Studium organizacyjno-historyczne*, Łódź 1990, p. 218-253.

<sup>10</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 27: *Otczet Łodzinskiego... za otczetyj god 1889*, p. 2, 4.

<sup>11</sup> The square was located between Dzielna street (at present: Narutowicza str.), Targowa street (Sterlinga str.), and Cegielniana street (Jaracza str.).

<sup>12</sup> *Zarys działalności Łódzkiego...*, p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 23.

To this purpose, the city was divided into small districts; delegates were selected and they started collecting money. A month later, it was recorded that *the donations from factory owners have reached a great amount of 96,000 roubles*<sup>14</sup>. The construction was completed in December 1895 owing to the funds donated by factory owners and other residents of Łódź. The total costs of the construction and the equipment exceeded rb 178,000.

The monumental building was not commissioned until 11 March 1897<sup>15</sup>. Above the portal, a national emblem and the inscription *Res sacra miser* (*Supporting the poor is a sacred thing*) could be seen. Owing to social generosity, Łódź gained an important and necessary institution for several hundred of Christian residents<sup>16</sup>. The House for Old People and the Disabled located at Dzielna 52 (at present, it is the building occupied by the Medical University at Narutowicza street) also became the office of general authorities of *Łódzkie Chrześcijańskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynności*.

The new centre operated based on the *Instruction* approved in 1898 by tsarist provincial authorities. After the opening, a new Committee was selected and it was composed of a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer, who were selected by voting<sup>17</sup>. The first President of the new House was Edward Stephanus<sup>18</sup> and the Vice-President was W. Drozdowski. The function of the Secretary was entrusted to A. Raubal and the Treasurer was J. Kam-

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<sup>14</sup> The following factory owners contributed to the construction of the building: the Scheiblers (50,000 roubles), J. Heinzl (rb 20,000), J. Kunitzer (rb 10,000), the Grohmans and Tow. Akc. Geyera (rb 5,000 each), and the Biedermans and G. Lorentz (rb 3,000 each).

<sup>15</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 263: *Księga wizytowa Przytulku dla Starców i Kalek*.

<sup>16</sup> An analogical initiative was taken by Konstadt when, in 1890, he donated a property on Średnia street (today it is Pomorska str.) to the Jewish community. Since 1892, a Jewish House for old people and the disabled was located there, which accommodated 14-45 residents. B. Filipowicz, *Dobroczynność w Łodzi*, [in:] *Dzień ubogich w Łodzi. Jednodniówka*, Łódź 1911, p. 17; S. Pytlas, *Łódzka burżuazja przemysłowa w latach 1864-1914*, Łódź 1994, p. 189-190.

<sup>17</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 200: *Kniga protokołow zasedanij komiteta Doma Prizrenia Starcow 1895-1906*.

<sup>18</sup> E. Peyser was the next one. In 1904, M. Sprzączkowski was nominated the President; he performed the function for 14 years. APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 202: *Książka protokołow Domu Starców i Kalek 1916-1923*.

merer<sup>19</sup>. The Audit Committee composed of M. Sprzączkowski and G. Peyser was supposed to check the management of the institution regularly and to verify the books kept by an inspector<sup>20</sup>. The Committee and the Audit Committee were directly responsible to the Management Board of the Society.

The main executor of the decisions made by the Committee was the inspector<sup>21</sup>. He had the authority to employ and dismiss the so-called *lower servants*, i.e. cooks, washerwomen, caretakers, and doorkeepers. Issues related to the employment of the remaining administrative and medical staff as well as service staff (housekeeper, wardrobe mistresses) were included in the responsibilities of the Committee itself.

During the meetings of the Committee of the House for Old People and the Disabled, decisions were also made concerning monthly salaries of the staff; however, they were always subject to an approval of the Management Board of ŁChTD. In 1899–1914, the salaries of administrative employees were as follows: the inspector – 110 roubles, a clerk – rb 50, and a secretary – rb 20<sup>22</sup>. Medical care for the disabled, old, and ill was provided by a physician with the average salary of rb 50, a medic – rb 30, and a nurse – rb 10. A person helping with the ill earned app. rb 13, the housekeeper – rb 22, and the cook – rb 18<sup>23</sup>.

As has already been mentioned, only Christians were admitted to the House for Old People and the Disabled<sup>24</sup>. The *Instruction* from 1898 indicated that care at the House was provided for people over 50 who were left with nothing to live on and who were permanent

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<sup>19</sup> The members of the Committee in 1904 included: dr J. Wisłocki, M. Sprzączkowski, W. Jonscher, O. Bernhardt, T. Friedrich, K. Jende, E. Tischer, K. Wutke, A. Wehr, and E. Eisert. See: *Zarys działalności Łódzkiego...; Sprawozdanie z działalności Łódzkiego Chrześcijańskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczynności za 1904 r.*, p. 39; S. Pytlas, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>20</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 256: *Dom Starców i Kalek, korespondencja 1919-1920, Instrukcja Przytułku dla Starców i Kalek w Łodzi*, §15.

<sup>21</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 256: *Dom Starców i Kalek..., Instrukcja Przytułku...*, §11.

<sup>22</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 200: *Kniga protokołow*; s.a. 201: *Kniga protokołow zasedanij Komiteta Doma Starcow 1906-1915*.

<sup>23</sup> In November 1915, there were 22 servants at the House.

<sup>24</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 206: *Spisok lic nachodjaszczichsja w domie Prizrenija Starcew LChBO 1887-1903*; s.a. 207 *Kniga dwizenija prizrewajemych 1894-1899*.

residents of Łódź or had been living in Łódź for 10 years<sup>25</sup>. They had the right to remain in the institution until the end of their lives. People admitted to the House were registered. In special books, the following data was entered: first name and surname of a resident, admission date, date of birth, age, profession, religion, marital status, number of children, first names and surnames of parents, relations, or guardians, place of their residence, reason of poverty, and the name of the person who issued the decision concerning the admittance to the House.

Residents of the House for Old People and the Disabled included women and men who, before the admittance, worked in various professions, e.g. weavers, bricklayers, carpenters, shoemakers, locksmiths, bakers, teachers, servants, labourers, or accountants<sup>26</sup>. They were from Prussia, Saxony, Frankfurt, Łódź, Piotrków, Częstochowa, Ozorków, and Warsaw<sup>27</sup>. Reasons of poverty included mainly old age, being unable to work, and illnesses.

The final decision concerning admittance to the House for Old People and the Disabled was made in agreement with the Committee of the institution at meetings of the Management Board of ŁChTD. However, before that, it were the so-called guardians of the poor who requested for admittance to the House, having checked the material status of people who wanted to be admitted. The guardians also filled in special forms (which contained the following data: first name and surname of the applicant, year and place of birth, age, marital status, religion, profession to date, reason of poverty, data concerning family or guardians, their place of residence, marital status, number of children, age of children, and possessions)<sup>28</sup>.

According to the *Instruction*, each person admitted to the House was required to subject himself or herself to an initial visual inspection performed by the physician at the House<sup>29</sup>. If the admitted person did not have their own clothes, he or she received them. Each

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<sup>25</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 256, *Instrukcja Przytulku...*, §1. Exceptions included the disabled, who could be admitted to Przytułek before 50.

<sup>26</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 206 *Spisok lic...*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>28</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 256; s.a. 27: *Otczet o diejatielnosti Łodzinskogo... za 1892 god*, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 256, *Instrukcja Przytulku...*, §2, §4; APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 30: *Kniga protokolow LChBO 1908-1913*.



new person was provided with an iron bed with a pallet, a pillow, a woollen duvet, and a cabinet for personal belongings.

The staff tried to place ill residents in separate rooms – they occupied the third floor of the building. Separate quarters were also provided to women; for them, the second floor was allotted. The remaining poor and old people were placed on the ground floor and the first floor<sup>30</sup>.

Table 2  
Residents of the House for Old People and the Disabled  
of ŁChTD according to their religion in 1897-1914

Years	Residents of the House for Old People and the Disabled according to their religion:						Total
	Catholics		Evangelicals		members of the Orthodox church		
	men	women	men	women	men	women	
1897	24	50	30	43	-	-	147
1898	34	69	33	53	-	-	189
1899	43	73	49	65	1	-	231
1900	52	79	45	59	2	-	237
1901	57	82	41	53	3	-	236
1902	55	83	42	56	3	-	239
1903	55	90	44	54	4	-	247
1904	59	89	47	64	5	-	264
1905	64	90	43	64	5	-	266
1906	56	87	43	66	3	-	255
1907	54	89	45	65	2	-	255
1908	54	85	49	69	2	-	259
1909	49	98	55	84	2	1	289
1910	47	107	56	82	1	1	294
1911	44	120	48	84	1	1	298
1912	54	110	46	89	1	1	301
1913	62	111	41	86	1	-	301
1914	59	124	39	85	2	-	309

Source: the author's owned study based on: *Zarys działalności Łódzkiego...*; Reports concerning the activities of ŁChTD for the years 1904, 1906–1912; APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 205: *Armenasył. Rechenschafts-Berichte von 1897 bis 1915*.

<sup>30</sup> APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 10: *Ogólne Zebranie 1918*.

During the first year of the operation of the House in the new building, 147 Catholic and Evangelical women and men lived there. In the following years, as is presented in table no. 2, the number of residents continued to increase; before the World War I, it exceeded 300 residents. The data indicate that in the examined period the House was still dominated by women; since 1910, there were twice as many women as men in the institution. The significant majority was formed by Catholic women and men. There were few male members of the Orthodox church, who lived at the House since 1899. The highest ever number of residents (309) and Catholic women (124) was registered in 1914.<sup>31</sup>

The residents got up at 6.00 a.m. and went to bed at 9 p.m. The staff made sure each of them was washed and clothed before breakfast and that they had made their beds and tidied up the rooms.

Each resident observing the rules in effect at the House had the right to a leave granted upon a request by the inspector. Upon his consent, it was allowed to visit the residents twice a week, on Thursdays and Sundays (from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. in summer and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in winter)<sup>32</sup>.

The staff made efforts to provide appropriate social, medical, and spiritual care to the residents of the House for Old People and the Disabled. Pursuant to the rules provided for in the *Instruction*, in his relationships with the residents, the inspector *should be firm but not strict*, while the attitude of the rest of the staff should be *human*.

Depending on their health, strength, and possibilities, some residents performed works essential for the operation of the home, e.g. peeling potatoes, plucking feathers, repairing underclothes, or sewing slippers<sup>33</sup>. Healthy residents performed simple field works in the garden neighbouring the House, in particular in spring and autumn.

The House had two chapels, a Catholic and an Evangelical one, where a priest and a pastor offered masses. They were attended by large numbers of people, not only the residents of the House and members of the Society but also other people living nearby.

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<sup>31</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 32: *Protokoły ŁChTD 1913-1917*.

<sup>32</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 256, *Instrukcja Przytułku...*, §10.

<sup>33</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 27: *Otczet o diejatielnosti... za 1892 god*, s. 7; s.a. 10: *Ogólne Zebranie...*

During masses, chapels were often so overcrowded that people complained about crowd and crush<sup>34</sup>.

In order to inspect the conditions in which the residents lived (the inspection included mainly food, clothes, underclothes, and bed linen) and the residents' health, the Management Board of the Society appointed a special committee from time to time. In 1908, after one of such inspections, it was decided to organize separate rooms for the seriously ill and very old residents. An appeal was also made for hospital aids to be more caring<sup>35</sup>.

The House for Old People and the Disabled was very popular and often there were no vacancies there. It may be surprising because the building where the House was located was rather large. The reasons included an increasing number of poor and disabled people who required permanent social and medical care and the fact that, during a certain period, the building also housed an obstetric House, a House for mentally ill, and a clinic<sup>36</sup>. Private flats of the Society's clerks were also located here.

In order to be granted a place at the House, a person had to complete many formalities. In some cases, however, this procedure was passed over when granting a place. In November 1904, the Management Board decided to allot 2 rooms with an appropriate number of beds *for temporary admission of people found in the streets by the police*<sup>37</sup>, at the request of Rudolf Ziegler, who was the Vice-President then.

The documentation of the Society indicates that not only the poorest people were admitted to the House. This is proved by a note in documents of the institution concerning payments made

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<sup>34</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 29: *Kniga protokółow sobytia LChBO 1902-1908*.

<sup>35</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 201 *Kniga protokółow...*

<sup>36</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 200; s.a. 201. On the ground floor of the front building, there were 5 rooms for residents, 2 bathing rooms, 2 eating rooms, a kitchen, a pantry, a boiler room, and a flat for the caretaker. The first floor consisted of 2 rooms for residents, flats of the inspector and the housekeeper, flats of servants, a dressing room, the office of the Management Board of ŁChTD, the office of the House, the conference room, and the Catholic chapel. On the second floor, there were 15 rooms for residents, a flat for nurses, and the Evangelical chapel. The third floor consisted of 16 rooms for residents, a bathing room, a medicine room of the House, a flat of the wardrobe mistress, and the Evangelical chapel choir. The data comes from 1918 r. APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 10.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*.

by wealthier people. For example, the list of residents admitted in October 1902 contains a note that Karolina Szinke undertook to make a single donation of 40 roubles for the House for Old People and the Disabled<sup>38</sup>. In general, however, the Committee of the House checked the material situation of the residents. At one of its meetings in 1913, it made a decision not to admit Marianna Zakrzewska, who had two rich sons<sup>39</sup>. The age requirement was also observed. In 1913, the Committee asked Marianna Bartkiewicz (47) to leave the House voluntarily, because she was *a young woman* and, according to the certificate issued by the doctor at the House, she was seriously ill, what qualified her for hospital treatment.

Residents were admitted to the House for Old People and the Disabled for a temporary or permanent stay. Sometimes, the Committee requested that a resident be expelled from the institution, frequently due to reprehensible behaviour. However, some of them could return to the House. The documents of the institution include a few notes about such events. For example, in 1903, Nowak was reprimanded and threatened with expulsion because he was unceremonious towards the staff, frequently left the House, and abused alcohol<sup>40</sup>. Apart several reprimands given by members of the Committee and administrative staff, in 1913 it was decided to expel Józef Zajdler for bad behaviour, with no right of return, while Emilia Müller was expelled for rows and fights with other residents<sup>41</sup>. Other residents left the House wilfully, without notifying the staff, what also qualified them to be expelled. Sometimes, residents of the House for Old People and the Disabled decided, on their own, to leave the institution for ever. In such cases, the Committee tried to return the money if the residents had paid for the admission to the institution.

The House for Old People and the Disabled was maintained by the Society, which allotted a certain amount for the activities

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<sup>38</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 206. Henryk Roslau donated rb 300 for the House. Upon their admission the institution, Janiszewscy (the married couple) donated rb 500.

<sup>39</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 201. In the same year, the Committee examined the case of expulsion of Josef Schefler because his son was *an owner of a House and a butcher's shop*.

<sup>40</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 200.

<sup>41</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 201.

of the institution each year<sup>42</sup>. Moreover, the House also used voluntary donations and gifts made by Łódź society. A certain, although not permanent, income included donations made by residents upon their admission to the House. In order to increase the funds, the institution sold livestock and potatoes. A small income was derived for *plucking feathers* and *tying cotton* by residents of the institution. Expenses were made mainly for the purchase of the most necessary things, i.e. foodstuffs, clothes, and medicines. Large amounts were paid for administrative, economic, insurance, and funeral costs. Incomes and costs of the House for Old People and the Disabled are presented in table no. 3.

The data from table no. 3 indicate that in the discussed period the income of the institution exceeded the costs each year, what was beneficial for the maintenance of the House for Old People and the Disabled; as a result, the residents received proper care.

The analysis of donations received from the ŁChTD central fund shows that the authorities of the Society tried to satisfy everyday needs of the House as much as possible. In the first years of the activities of the institution, these funds constituted app. 90% of its total income. The reduced share of the donations of the ŁChTD authorities (63.4%) can be seen since 1910. That year, a significant amount, i.e. over 4,000 roubles (13% of the total income) was paid by residents admitted to the institution<sup>43</sup>. The total income of the House was also increased with financial donations and contributions in kind. The first type of support (money) was offered by rich people, while the other one (material gifts) – from the less wealthy<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Incomes and costs of the House for Old People and the Disabled recognized in reports concerning its activities for 1892-1911. *Sprawozdanie z działalności Łódzkiego...za 1904 r.*, p. 10.

<sup>43</sup> In 1911 – 2,179 rb; in 1912 – 2,225; in 1913 – 2,805; in 1914 – 1,602. APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 205.

<sup>44</sup> Permanent donators included the Scheibler and the Herbst families. In 1901, F. Mitzner donated rb 500 to the House for Old People and the Disabled, while in 1910, Emil Geyer donated rb 3,000. Ref. to S. Pytlas, *op. cit.*, p. 189. Contributions in kind included fuel, clothes, food, items necessary in a household and in an office, medicines, tobacco, books, and soap. Some daily newspaper publishers, such as „Lodzer Zeitung” and „Dziennik Łódzki”, donated copies of their newspapers to the residents.

When calculated into roubles, contributions in kind were worth definitely more in the discussed period<sup>45</sup>.

Table 3  
Funds allotted for the maintenance of the House for Old People and the Disabled of ŁChTD in 1897-1914

Years	Total income	Incl.: from ŁChTD for the main- tenance of the House	Total costs	Incl.: for food, clothes, and medicines
	roubles		roubles	
1897	15,111	13,700	14,977	7,250
1898	23,687	21,200	23,687	11,579
1899	30,188	26,530	25,983	13,749
1900	29,610	28,109	29,239	15,071
1901	31,367	29,000	30,539	15,136
1902	33,335	29,800	28,303	16,840
1903	26,508	23,700	25,192	14,910
1904	28,211	26,597	27,550	14,551
1905	25,764	22,900	23,519	13,582
1906	28,046	22,500	25,337	14,003
1907	27,903	26,003	27,736	15,314
1908	27,914	21,997	27,831	15,418
1909	28,420	22,521	28,294	15,605
1910	31,204	19,794	27,888	15,567
1911	33,932	22,998	31,171	15,973
1912	34,667	25,383	32,111	16,883
1913	37,334	25,861	x	x
1914	27,415	21,854	26,596	15,614

x – no data

Source: the author's own study based on: *Zarys działalności Łódzkiego..., Przylulek dla Starców i Kalek*. Reports concerning activities of ŁChTD for 1904, 1906–1912. APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 205: *Armenasyl. Rechenschafts-Berichte...*

<sup>45</sup> In 1900, the donations included rb 690 and contributions in kind worth rb 1,033; in 1911, rb 940 and rb 925, respectively.

The expenses of the House for Old People and the Disabled depended on the number of residents and were rb 15,000 with 147 residents in 1897 and over rb 27,000 with 255 residents ten years later. In this period, the highest amount for the maintenance of the House was spent in 1912, i.e. over rb 32,000.

Analysing the expenses of the House, it should be stated that the largest amounts were paid for foodstuffs, clothes for the residents, and medicines<sup>46</sup>. In the discussed period, they constituted over 50% of the total expenses of the institution<sup>47</sup>. Funds spent for the maintenance of and meals for one resident daily are shown in table no. 4.

A yearly cost of the total support of one ill person was between 22 at the beginning of the discussed period and 31 kopecks at the end of this period. The daily costs of meals for one person decreased since 1902. The costs of support of one person and the costs of meals for one resident became definitely disproportionate then.

Meals at the House for Old People and the Disabled were prepared three times a day, i.e. at 7.00 a.m., 12.00 a.m., and 6.00 p.m.<sup>48</sup> For breakfast, the residents had two cups of coffee and two rolls. The lunch usually consisted of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a litre of soup (e.g. pea soup, beetroot soup, or cabbage soup) and potatoes, while supper – of half a litre of potato soup<sup>49</sup>. Apart from this, each resident received app. 250 grams of bread daily and app. 110 grams of meat twice a week.

Before Christmas and Easter, parties were organized for the residents. They were held in the evenings on days preceding the holidays. Christmas was celebrated in a particularly ceremonial manner. Apart from the residents, invited guests participated in the festivities as well, who included the President of the Society and his wife, the presidents and supervisors of district committees, and representatives of industrialists, e.g. the Herbst and Leonhardt

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<sup>46</sup> Upon admission to the House, some residents brought clothes or bed linen. However, most of them were poor and had nothing. APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 206.

<sup>47</sup> Other expense items include administration, laundry, light and gas engines, fuel, household expenses, interior equipment and repairs, fuel costs, contributions to funeral funds, sewage disposal, office costs, real properties insurance, and phone. *Sprawozdanie z działalności Łódzkiego Chrześcijańskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczynności za 1911 r.*, p. 10-11.

<sup>48</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 27: *Otczet o diejatielnosti Lodzinskogo ... za 1892 god.*, p. 7.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*.

Table 4  
Daily costs of the stay of residents at the House for Old  
People and the Disabled of ŁChTD in 1897-1914

Years	Daily cost of maintaining one person	Daily cost of meals for one person
	in kopecks	
1897	22.0	19.4
1898	24.1	22.4
1899	23.6	22.3
1900	29.0	24.0
1901	29.3	x
1902	26.3	13.8
1903	25.0	13.4
1904	25.0	13.0
1905	23.0	12.7
1906	26.0	13.0
1907	29.3	14.0
1908	28.7	13.0
1909	25.8	12.0
1910	26.0	12.0
1911	29.0	13.0
1912	29.2	13.5
1913	31.2	13.3
1914	22.3	12.1

x – no data

Source: the author's own study based on APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 205.

families *as long-standing noble guardians of the House*<sup>50</sup>. The programme of Christmas festivities included masses in a chapel with the participation of clerics, a ceremonial dinner, and gifts for the residents and staff of the House.

The analysis of the social and welfare activities of the House for Old People and the Disabled enables the author to state that it performed a significant role in the community of poor people in Łódź. The constantly increasing number of residents shows that it was

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<sup>50</sup> APL, ŁChTD, s.a. 32 *Protokoły...* Anna Scheibler gave presents and money to all residents each year.



needed. Owing to a well-organized care and aid, many old, disabled, poor, and ill people could live with dignity. The decreasing number of people leaving the House, including those leaving it upon request, may suggest that the authorities tried to provide the residents with optimum living conditions<sup>51</sup>.

In difficult years of the World War I, where there were poverty, epidemics, and lack of food, fuel, and medicines in Łódź, even more homeless, poor, and ill people sought shelter and place at the House. Its residents managed to survive mainly owing to the involvement of the members of the Committee, staff, guardians, and generous residents of the city of Łódź. During that time, the authorities of the Society tried to admit as many people needing help as possible to the institution; as a result, the House was dramatically overcrowded. The number of residents living at the House significantly exceeded its spatial and financial possibilities, what resulted in a lack of food, inconvenience, and bad sanitary conditions. However, what was the most important thing at those times was to have a roof over one's head, food, and a guarantee of everyday care. And that was what people who needed them received at the House for Old People and the Disabled.

## **Streszczenie**

### **Opieka nad kalekami i chorymi w działalności Łódzkiego Chrześcijańskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczywności w latach 1885-1914**

Opieka nad ludźmi kalekami i chorymi stanowiła priorytet w działalności Łódzkiego Chrześcijańskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczywności (ŁChTD), działającego na polu społecznej filantropii od połowy lat osiemdziesiątych XIX w. Wpisywała się bowiem w wielokierunkowe inicjatywy podejmowane przez tę organizację charytatywną w sferze społecznej, socjalnej, ochrony zdrowia i opiekuńczo-wychowawczej w Łodzi na przełomie XIX i XX w.

Pierwszą powołaną do istnienia przez ŁChTD placówką opiekuńczą był Przytułek dla Starców i Kalek. Znaleźli w nim schronienie

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<sup>51</sup> In 1897, 14.3% of residents left the House; a year after – 18.5%; in 1902 – 5.7%; in 1904 – 1.9%; in 1910 – 3.9%; in 1911 – 3.7%; and in 1914 – 4.2%. APŁ, ŁChTD, s.a. 205.

i opiekę ludzie starzy, schorowani, samotni, osoby kalekie i ubogie. Ta grupa społeczna, z uwagi na niezdolność do podjęcia pracy, a niejednokrotnie także z braku zainteresowania ze strony rodziny, pozostawała bez środków do życia i dachu nad głową. W świetle ówczesnych poglądów, formułowanych w kwestiach przyczyn nędzy ludzkiej, osoby z tej grupy zaliczano do kategorii *ubóstwa niezawinionego*. Jego podłożem były stosunki społeczno-gospodarcze, jak: ciężka fizyczna praca, głodowe zarobki, nędza, nieszczęśliwe wypadki, przebyte choroby, a także skutki uczestnictwa w wojnach i powstaniach. Nierzadko starcy, ubodzy i niedołążni powiększali rzesze żebraków i ludzi z tzw. marginesu. Liczba takich osób w rozwijającej się przemysłowo i demograficznie Łodzi przełomu XIX i XX w. nieustannie rosła, a ich położenie materialne stawało się coraz trudniejsze i wymagało stosownego rozwiązania.

W łódzkim Przytułku dla Starców i Kalek przebywały kobiety i mężczyźni wyznania katolickiego, ewangelickiego i prawosławnego. Liczba pensjonariuszy na początku działalności tej instytucji wynosiła 30 osób, od 1891 r. przekraczała 100.

W artykule skupiono się na genezie, rozwoju i działalności Przytułku dla Starców i Kalek do wybuchu pierwszej wojny światowej, chociaż instytucja ta funkcjonowała do czasu likwidacji ŁChTD w 1940 r.

Gmach Przytułku dla Starców i Kalek istnieje w Łodzi do dziś, obecnie jest własnością Uniwersytetu Medycznego przy ul. Narutowicza 60.



The building of the former House for the Old People and the Disabled in Łódź, the present day (the author's collection).