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The Problem Boy of the Indianapolis Public Schools: A Product of Social and Domestic Pathology

Agnes Mahoney

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THE PROBLEM BOY OF THE INDIANAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS:
A PRODUCT OF SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC PATHOLOGY

By

Agnes Mahoney

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Department of Sociology

DIVISION OF GRADUATE INSTRUCTION
BUTLER UNIVERSITY
INDIANAPOLIS
1935
This thesis is an attempt to discuss and to describe the study and treatment of problem boys as met in Indianapolis Public Schools and to interpret the results obtained. It is written to be helpful to others who are trying to understand children who are unhappy, worried, misbehaving, and generally poorly adjusted to life.

We have had the privilege of intensively studying, treating, and following cases of problem boys for more than fifteen years. Some of the group discussed in this thesis are still under our observation, some cases we see only occasionally, while other cases are never heard from.

Deepest gratitude is acknowledged to the numerous people who assisted in any way in this study of "problem boys" -- the officials of the Indianapolis Public Schools, principals and teachers with whom I worked, parents, and friends interested in the boys, and librarians of Teachers' Special, Main Library and Forty-Second Street Branch of Indianapolis, and Indiana State Library at Indianapolis.

For the stimulating interest, guidance, and criticism made by Dr. Tolbert Reavis of Butler University, I am particularly grateful.

To Mary Pratt for the proof reading incident to the final preparation and to Ann Auferheide for the clerical work necessary I am deeply indebted.

A. M.

Indianapolis -- 1935
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

For fifteen years, we have been interested in boys whose scheme of life has broken down; boys who do not get on well with their fellow citizens; boys whose conduct is antisocial or unintegrated; whose activities satisfy a particular motive for a time, but which in the long run are not consistent with the best interest of either the individual or of society. We have been interested in them not because we look upon them as inferior, not because we think of them as having "character defects", but because in the midst of this very complex civilization of ours they have lost their way or perhaps never have found it. The quest of this investigation has been to find what it was that brought about their difficulties, their pathology, or disintegration, and how, if at all, the causal factors may be removed. We are not interested in purely impulsive or accidental antisocial behavior which is not characteristic of the individual or likely to be repeated, but in the antisocial conduct which persists for varying lengths of time.

Children whose school progress is erratic and puzzling, whose behavior is perplexing, or whose personalities manifest traits that give cause for concern are to be found in every school.
Sometimes these children are unresponsive, repressed, or unhappy; sometimes they are serious discipline cases.

Whatever the type difficulty, the past few years have seen a significant change in attitude toward these child problems. Better methods, based upon efforts to understand the child's nature and the factors in his environment which are causing his difficulties, are gradually replacing the older forms of repressive discipline and blind compulsion.

It is often found that the problems are due to unsuspected factors for which the home, the school, or neighborhood influences, rather than the child himself is responsible.

Ways are being sought and followed to give early attention to these difficulties with which such children struggle, and to prevent serious problems of poor scholarship and defective conduct from developing.

Years of actual work with problem children prove that we have still very much to learn about what can be achieved in struggling against bad behavior responses. Consequently all sorts of reasonable and justifiable methods should be tried. Our social customs and civilization create an environment that demands complex adaptations which no child can make without the help of some older person who has not only technical Understandings of these adaptations but has sympathetic attitudes toward them.

In recent years, this task of adjusting has fallen more and more on the teacher. It is she who is required to help the child adjust himself to this complex surrounding with happiness of spirit and with satisfactory social behavior. It is she who must constantly find the answer to the question, "Why does the boy feel and act as he does?" If the answer is to be of any practical value in altering the child's behavior, we must be ready to replace the old behavior with a pattern accepted by the social
order — a pattern which will allow the child to be happy, independent, and resourceful.

A child's mental life is to a large extent developed, shaped, directed, and given force by the sum total of his experiences and of his mental responses to them. He does not bring with him, in unchangeable form, any large part of his emotional life when he is born. It evolves from his experiences and is altered as life progresses.

We propose to illustrate some of the common types of problems among school boys as found in the Indianapolis Public School System and to indicate the methods used by this system in studying and helping such children. These problems involve psychological and social factors which if allowed to persist frequently lead to serious permanent maladjustment.

It is hardly necessary to state that all names used are fictitious and that other background facts were altered as seemed necessary to conceal identity. Care was taken, however, to make no alterations which should affect the essential factors in the child's problem or in the relation of school, teacher, or society. The antisocial behavior of the types illustrated by this series of twenty-five boys concerns society deeply as well as involves the happiness of these young individuals.

Notions often exist that the problem child is possessed or that he is a special order of being, different in physique, physiognomy, and mentality from law-abiding citizens. In the one case the public falls back on the laws of biological inheritance for its authority and in the other case it falls back on superstitious or magical explanations. But in either case the problem child is assumed to have "it" in him — that is, his violating nature — no matter whether he inherited "it" or is possessed of "it". The biological type which is supposed to become an
offender is just as fictitious as Lombroso's born-criminal type which was explained by atavism and degeneracy. Goring in his study "The English Convict" demonstrated by subjecting prison populations to measurements, that there were no biological criminal types such as Lombroso had described.

One of the most significant findings of modern sociology is that many human nature and personality traits --- behavior traits which earlier authorities thought were biologically inherited turn out to be acquired in the life experience of persons. Race and class attitudes, differences in the interests and attitudes of the sexes, character and dispositional traits, wishes and desires, manners, philosophies of life, etc., have been found to be largely acquired in social experience. Most psychologists and sociologists agree today that many forms of human behavior which formally were classified as instincts are acquired patterns.

Perhaps the most recent of the fallacious public conceptions about the delinquent or problem child is that he is feebleminded --- a moron. Ever since Goring announced, without the aid of standardized psychological tests, that the criminal population showed a much higher percentage of weak-minded individuals than the civil population, many people have looked upon feeblemindedness as the major explanation of delinquents and problem children. The conception was given wide currency, especially by the implications of eugenic reports and more directly through the newspaper stories of "morons". One of the foremost authorities, who has had the opportunity to study thousands of cases of juvenile delinquents, says:

Concerning the relationship of feeblemindiness to delinquency, the point of view has largely changed within the last decade (given in 1925). There is now quite general acceptance of the minimized roll which mental defect plays in the genesis of misconduct and of the correlated fact that the
When we consider all the facts, a child's case is explainable in sociological terms. The detailed study of individual cases shows that the behavior of children, which gets them into the arms of the law or under an official organization or agency, can be explained more adequately by definite individual and social factors than by the assumption of an inborn tendency which leads its possessor to violation of society's code. When organized society met the problem-child at close range for the first time, when the individual case method was put into operation by the social agencies dealing with youthful offenders, the close-range pictures of them, acquired from numerous individual case studies, turned out to be very different from the stereotyped notions which still linger in the minds of the public. At the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Juvenile Court in Chicago in 1899 --- a gathering of the representative workers in the field of juvenile work --- there appeared to be consensus to the effect that delinquency was a problem in adjustment of the child's personality.

At this meeting Miss Van Waters portrayed the delinquent as "Youth in Conflict".

The offending child is in conflict with the behavior-codes of the normal home, school, neighborhood, and community. We call him "unadjusted" or "maladjusted", because his behavior is out of harmony with the standards of chastity,


property, order, and personal safety with which we are familiar and to which we yield our social approval.

It was also at this meeting that Doctor Healy announced that delinquency resulted from the interplay of the person in his particular setting, in other words, from the total situation of which he is a part.

It is not our purpose to overestimate the importance of social factors, but it is true, nevertheless, that delinquency is a social fact and not a biological one. Problem behavior occurs in a social situation always, a social situation that is the field of operation of persons who are influenced by their past social experiences, by their biological make-up, and by the immediate situation itself.

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CHAPTER II.

DEFECTIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Of all social background facts, the important influences are those in operation for the longer period of time, and of those periods of time, the most important is that embracing the earlier years of childhood. Thus the home environment is the outstanding social background of the individual offender.

In years past parents, teachers, and social workers have tended to label the maladjusted school child as a "dunce" or an "incorrigible", depending upon his particular type of behavior. The blame for his conduct was laid upon the individual's supposed perversity. Recent development in the sciences of psychology, psychiatry, health, and sociology have centered attention upon the problem child as frequently the product of problem parents or of unwholesome community conditions. There is rather definite agreement that maladjustment results from a number of factors. No agreement exists as to origin or relative weight of the various factors. There is evidence however that the defective family relationship is likely to combine with other factors in producing antisocial behavior.

Healy and Bronner found that only seven and six tenths per cent of

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two thousand Chicago and Boston delinquent cases came from homes "reasonably satisfactory" for rearing children. This is a startling fact and is enough to make anyone "right about face" who clings to purely physical or hereditary explanations of delinquency or problem children.

Broken Homes

Shideler, on the basis of study of the 1910 census returns, estimates that 25.3 per cent of all children in the United States live in homes broken through death, desertion, divorce, or imprisonment, while 50.7 per cent of delinquent boys come from such homes.

Burt's figures on this point are strikingly similar. He finds such defective family relationships as causal factors in 57.9 per cent of the delinquent group, twice as often as they occur among the nondelinquents.

Sla!awn compared 1,694 delinquent boys in four institutions in New York with 3,196 public school children representing various social levels, in regard to mental relations of the parents. He found that in the case of 45.2 per cent of the delinquents, one or both parents were dead, or the parents were separated or divorced. In his group of public school children either the father or mother of 15.2 per cent of the group was dead and a total of 19.3 per cent were of "abnormal parental relations" (came from broken homes). Thus there were 2.3 times as many boys

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2E. H. Shideler, "Family Disintegration And The Delinquent Boy In The United States", Journal Criminal Law and Criminology, pp.714-717, 1918


of abnormal parental relations among the delinquents as among his unselected group of New York.

Out of four hundred seventy-two cases we investigated at the Indiana Boys' School, 63.1 per cent of them were found to be from homes of "abnormal parental relations". A check of 636 children in a typical Indianapolis public school showed only 21.7 per cent of the group were from broken homes. In one of the special schools of Indianapolis we found that 41.8 per cent of the 204 boys and girls came from the "broken home".

George K. Pratt\(^5\) states that:

Mental hygienists are stressing one great point, namely, that in most cases of nervousness, in many cases of delinquency, in some cases of insanity, and in almost all cases of child behavior or conduct disorder, the trail leads inevitably and directly back to the home and the parents.

These and other investigations report similar findings and support the theory that the "broken home" is an important factor in the problem child.

Home Broken by Death. -- Harry W., age fourteen, was a bundle of nerves and lawlessness. For eight years he had been what every teacher and social worker termed "impossible". As time passed his lawlessness became more evident, and as another plan must be tried he was placed in one of the "special schools" of the Indianapolis Public School system. His record read:

nothing was safe in his hands. He scratched well-polished desks, stole pens and pencils, destroyed books, and lied furiously. He was a most disturbing element in a well-ordered system. Neither kindness nor stern reprimands had squelched him.

The novelty of the new school room seemed to hold him for several days, but fourteen years of antisocial living does not drop off like magic and so the old behavior pattern -- truancy, lying, stealing, fighting -- once more became active.

One morning, Harry's father came to the school room door dragging frowzy-topped, smudgy-faced Harry. "Here he is. You'll have to watch him," said the father. "He is no good at home; he's a thief, a liar, and a cheat." All of this we knew. "He is not my own son; if he were I'd fix him." All of this, we did not know. Because we regard our boys, not as creatures belonging in a class apart, but simply as ordinary human beings with special problems and experiences of their own, we grasped this new fact imparted by the supposed father, as a key -- a causal factor in this boy's pathological behavior.

In Harry K.'s case we began with the clue given us by the stepfather. Our first step was to create a friendly relation between Harry and ourselves. This was no easy task to build up a friendly belief and trust. We decided that the first thing necessary was to have definite and personal knowledge of home conditions. A visit with the mother revealed many things: that there was much economic stress, many neighborhood quarrels and dissatisfactions, and that the mother herself was extremely ill. The mother told about the many trips she made to school and about the long arguments and discussions she had with the teachers and principal in regard to Harry's conduct and management. There was a strange mixture of praise and condemnation of the boy and criticisms of teachers for punishment for things of which he was unquestionably guilty. The mother said she "worked her life out for the boy and worried about him" and that she did as much as any mother could do. Her second marriage
had taken place when Harry was five years old. Harry had two older
brothers and one older sister and one stepbrother. The mother admitted
that Harry had been punished both by herself and stepfather but never
severely. There was little reason to believe that this boy could be per-
manently helped if he were left in this environment.

A change was strongly advised, but for various social and economic
reasons it could not be carried out. After the visit to the mother, the
boy became more difficult in school, uncommunicative and sullen. It
seemed as if all avenues of reaching him were closed. The week following
this visit, Harry had to appear in Juvenile Court for fighting children
of his neighborhood. By special permission of the school office we went
to the court room. We greeted Harry pleasantly but were met with a very
impolite response, "Aw, what you doin' down here?" Our response given in
the same tone and manner as our greeting was, "To see if we could help
you in any way." This seemed for a second to stun him, but before long
he came back with, "Well, you're the first person in my life that ever
wanted to do that, and it won't pay you. Besides, what good could you
find to say about me?"

Before we could give response, the case was called to the court
room. Witnesses were heard, parents of abused children, social workers,
and his own parents. All present gave only damaging evidence. The boy
himself was placed upon the stand and acknowledged his misdemeanors but
refused to tell the judge why he had assaulted the children. When asked
by the court why he did not care to give the reasons for his fighting, he
answered, "No one ever believes what I say, so why bother to say any-
thing?" The judge asked, "Do you mean 'no one'?" and then for the first
time he seemed to lose just a little of his bravado and said he believed
there was one — his teacher, who was sitting back there.

Judgment was withheld, and we were called later into conference with the judge. The court placed the boy in the Detention Home, but he was permitted to attend the special school during the day. This was the beginning of a very close relationship between the teacher and Harry. As the boy became better known, we found that it was very evident that unusually unhealthy and profound personality responses based on a concealed mental life was a great problem in the boy's make-up. Harry told us that he thought a great deal about his own father, and that he hated his stepfather because he had taken his father's place, and because his mother liked his stepfather and let him punish him excessively and severely.

After he was released from the Detention Home and returned to his home, he exhibited marks of severe lashings on several occasions. Despite these, he assumed a much more normal attitude towards many things. He was by no means a complete success, but in a large measure he was overcoming the bad habit of feeling sorry for himself and of day dreaming on the basis of this self-pity. What was more important he was finding that his new emotional attitudes and his improved behavior were bringing him more satisfaction and happiness in life than did his old ones. Double tragedy entered his life at this time — the oldest brother fatally shot the father and the mother died of a long standing cancer.

A short time later Harry was placed in an institution in the northern part of Indiana. Reports from the superintendent of the institution substantiate the happy spirit in his letters to us. Whether his improved behavior will carry over when he again assumes his role in society is yet to be seen.

Home Broken By Divorce. — Just as Harry was a problem boy due to
John was a problem due to a home broken by a divorce. John was an attractive-looking active lad, well developed and healthy. He made an unusually favorable impression by his conversational powers, his excellent general information, and his reasoning ability. John's home had been broken up about four years before we met him. His father and mother lived separately. The father continued to love the mother, who cared nothing for him. Each was trying to possess John, their only child, but the mother paid little attention to him when she had him. The father criticized the mother and told John that she was seriously delinquent; while the mother retaliated in a similar fashion. For a time John lived two weeks with the father, then two weeks with the mother. Danger lay in the discouragement and in the unhappiness that came when he tried to live with either of his quarrelling and separated parents. The situation at school, in the neighborhood, and the home became more acute. He was caught stealing. He confessed to having stolen frequently, but evidently none of the stealing was for personal gain, because he did not keep the loot and he had more than enough money to buy the articles he had taken.

The father, who was deeply concerned, asked the court to turn the boy over to him for a definite term of one year. This was granted. The mother was relieved to think she would be freed of any responsibility but in front of the boy put up an elaborate emotional "mother" show. She also had the personal desire to make things as hard as possible for the father. She went to the school to see the boy but on notice of Social Service Department was forbidden to come to the school. The boy found this out and then became a real problem in the school. At this time he was transferred to the special school.
The special school program embraces a conference period in each day's program. At this time children discuss with the teacher their individual problems such as their school work, their difficulties which they wish to overcome, their ambitions, and, if they desire, their home worries. In such an interview we felt that John was obviously reaching out for help. He seemed to appreciate our ability to understand his problems and to think about them in the same way as he did.

While considering with him his many conflicts over the father-mother situation, we discovered that he was trying to deny the real significance of his mother's behavior, that he was trying to make himself feel that his father did not really care for him. He definitely said that his father did not understand him. Some concrete advice was given the lad that was and will be of use to him, but the bottom of the problem was not reached and the probability of great and permanent improvement in his behavior is not to be expected. However, his school work improved, and by the end of the first year we felt we had at least created a desire in him to better himself. During the vacation, the one year granted the father terminated, and the mother again communicated with the boy. Children seldom thrive in an insecure world, a world where fear and suspicion rule. This was a case where we found the spring of trouble, but there was no way in which we could change the condition in the home other than to advise and encourage the boy to take the right track.

Home Broken By Desertion. — "He's not all there," was the common phrase applied to William B. by classmates, neighbors, and teachers. He recognized neither law nor order, and followed the mood of the moment regardless of consequences. These traits do not tell the whole story, but one thing was an absolute surety -- William could not be kept in a regul-
lar room another day.

Application to special class was made, and in accordance with regular procedure psychological and physical tests were given. His physical condition was fair, somewhat undernourished, and nervous. The intelligent tests did not prove either a solution or a statement of the problem. Since the physical condition could not wholly explain William's poor conduct, it was reasonable to believe that the unsatisfactory progress of the boy may be primarily or even entirely sociological. With which of the great list of causal social factors possible should we begin? Was it poverty, a defective family relationship, defective discipline, a vicious home, bad companions, undesirable recreational facilities, uncongenial school, or any one of a hundred other conditions?

This then was our problem. For four months we failed even to contact a friendly spirit. William responded to nothing. Not one thing on the face of the earth seemed to appeal to him. Conferences with the mother shed no light; the father according to all reports was dead. As time passed William seemed to grow even worse. In desperation we decided to talk to the mother one more time, to probe a little deeper into the paternal angle of the boy's life. All other causes investigated seemed negligible. The mother, too, was at her wit's end and because she realized that the boy was slipping farther and farther away from her control, decided to confide in us the true story of the boy's father. The fact of the matter was that the father, an army man, had deserted the family and the army and was not dead.

The mother not realizing that news travels fast and far, thought she could flee from what she termed "the worst disgrace that could befall a woman -- the disgrace of a husband and army deserter."
Despite the mother's exceedingly careful and well laid plans, William had discovered the true fact concerning his father, and when he found out that the mother whom he most trusted had deceived and lied to him, the first emotional conflict was set going. This mental shock started in later years the more serious one of doubt that his mother had ever been married to his father.

From wide experience in diagnosing cases of juvenile delinquency, Doctor William Healy of the Judge Baker Foundation, Boston, has gathered a vast amount of case material which demonstrates the decisive influence that mental conflict may have upon conduct. Doctor Healy\(^6\) declares that the mental conflict is essentially emotional in character and comes about as a result of disturbances due to conflicting elements in the inner life of the child. These conflicts most easily originate in early childhood. They are frequently concealed from relatives and friends and may therefore be unsuspected by the child's adult associates. They may result from a mental shock. They may occur as the product of outward experiences or they may issue from the child's inner thoughts. The child's doubt regarding his own parentage is a most prolific cause of emotional disturbance. This uncertainty concerning parentage has for the child a much greater emotional content than the adult usually appreciates.

Apparently parentage is a matter that to the child has supreme emotional significance. Any doubt leads to an emotional upheaval and frequently to bad conduct, as in the case of William B. There seems to be no rational connection whatever between the undesirable conduct and

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the problem. But, since we do not believe in born criminals, we must assume that there is rhyme and reason in the behavior.

Children not infrequently go through emotional experiences which to an adult are ordinary enough, but to a child are terrifying or shocking, and there are formed "unconscious complexes", "repressed ideas", or attitudes which on certain occasions influence conduct, but of which the child himself is not clearly aware. When these non-integrated unconscious tendencies to response are aroused, we may expect poorly integrated behavior. Reasoning is a highly effective means of adjusting to problematic situations. Reasoning involves facing the situation squarely with a thoughtful attempt to make the best of it and presupposes the possession of a wide and effective stock of social habits and concepts, together with the habit of self-criticism in the light of ethical standards—equipment certainly not possessed by children.

The bad behavior in William's case was a more or less deliberate means of expressing defiance to what he thought was unjust parental trickery. Of the true nature of the situation William was as ignorant as the white rat is of the maze problem, but like the white rat he kept on acting in response to the total situation, until the motive or problematic situation discontinued to affect him.

William's first antisocial acts of torturing animals, did not have the effect of relieving the chief motivating situation, however, they did have the effect of satisfying the motive for the time being, and since the acts did not at once lead to serious effects, then there were favorable conditions for their fixation. According to psychologists, if the commission of an antisocial or unethical act satisfies the underlying motive and does not lead to deterrent consequences, outer or inner, then
we should expect repetition, other things being equal, when the problematic situation continues to exist. With every repetition of the act, the next repetition, other things being equal, will occur more readily, and habit will be fixated which may become powerful and dominant. After such a habit has once been formed, we shall expect it to become automatized, and to tend to recur involuntarily (that is, without preceding thought) under the preceding appropriate stimulation. This of course is the explanation of such phrases, frequently used by problem children and delinquents, as "I don't know why I do it", "I just can't help it", or "A sort of wave comes over me and I do it". Just as an ordinary perceptual-motor habit, once formed, may function in the absence of the original motive, so may various habits of antisocial behavior. In such cases we may assume that the activity once fixated as a satisfaction of a specific motive, sometimes comes to "furnish its own drive" and is then a sort of play.

Such was William's case, and his antisocial acts of torturing animals turned into torturing other children and finally himself. We felt we had reached the spring of the discord in William's make-up, but before William's reeducation, to the end that he might again take his place in society with new habits and more desirable social attitudes could begin, other problems had to be solved. First the mother had to be made to realize the necessity of telling William the true story of his father -- careful well-laid plans had to be made as to why his mother had originally told the story, and an entirely new relation between mother and boy had to be built. We realized that just verbal information would not be convincing to William; so actual records had to be looked into, witnesses to his mother's and father's marriage interviewed, and all had
to be coached as to proper behavior in the case.

Preparations had to be made to convince both William and his mother that other acts in life were much more disgraceful than a family deserter, and convincing arguments were ready for presentation to them that any act of the father did not necessarily affect their character, although it did affect perhaps a change in their way of living. It necessitated the building up in both of them a desire to live above all that they considered disgraceful. The true facts were finally revealed to William, and he fell in with the home plan of good will, fair play, and affection, much better than was expected. But new problems arose.

These antisocial habits of William did not cease with the correct knowledge of home conditions, and new motives for forming better habits had to be provided. This was not as easy as one would suppose, because William took the attitude that he now had to live up to the reputation he had established for himself. After about a year of a very interesting school program, an entire shift of classmates, taste of success and praise, William began to live like a normal boy, and today, three years after his entrance in special class, rarely presents a maladjusted behavior problem.

Home Broken By Imprisonment. -- Richard G. sat idly in the principal's office. The principal had decided that this was the most effective measure of dealing with Richard, when his teacher sent him from the room for annoying her. The principal's idea was that in time he grew weary of doing nothing and would be ready to behave. Just how many days' schooling he had lost through this disciplinary process no one had figured up. He was finally transferred from regular class room to the special class. Richard looked decidedly sulky, but by no means dull. He was active mentally and physically but without interest in school or in any wholesome
outside activity.

The general procedure of special education classes of the Indianapolis Public Schools was followed. Physical examination, mental examination, school history, home history, personal interviews, and any community information attainable was gathered. As far as his physical and mental examinations were concerned, Richard had an enviable record. No boy or girl to our knowledge had a better physical record, and his mental record showed a high normal mental level. His school history was easy to obtain because he had attended the same school his entire school life. His first grade teacher declared him to be the worst "day-dreamer" she had ever met, (she had taught first grade for thirty years) and this reputation had followed him ever since. "If Richard could keep his mind on the work at hand he would be an interesting and good pupil. It is difficult to help him, for he refuses to cooperate and will not follow directions." "Richard has ability but he fails miserably. Sulkiness, moody spells, and an antagonistic battling against life marked his behavior in my class." "Richard felt that he could not do the work. His attitude of feeling inferior to the other members of the class inhibited him. Most of his time was spent in daydreaming." These reports and others from his different teachers all revealed the same story.

The home was then visited. The first few visits revealed very little except that the "G." family numbered five, the mother, father, Richard, and two older sisters. Both girls were attending high school and were students of more than average attainment. The teacher was told that the father, however, was away working and had not been home for several years.
The home itself was nicely furnished. Unusually good pictures, and a large library of well-selected books were all evidences of refinement and culture. Everything pointed to an orderly and systematized home. The food was wholesome and well-cooked. Richard's sleep averaged only about six hours, and this was not sufficient for a boy of his age. Mrs. G. had ceased to demand that Richard go to bed on time because, as she said, "There was so much disagreement and such an upheaval that she had given up the fight years ago."

During one of the home calls, the mother quite irrelevantly said, "Richard has had an inferiority feeling since he was six or seven years old, and I could shake him for it. He can hold up his head with the best of them. Of what has he to be ashamed? We come from a fine, cultured family, and he has good blood in him." This was the first time the mother intimated a skeleton in the closet. From the rest of her conversation it was apparent that the same type of resentment, sulkiness, and daydreaming shown in school was being displayed at home. As time went on Richard grew worse and Mrs. G. was eager for the assistance of the school.

Richard's explanation was just an incoherent story of, "I don't know why I don't get along because I think I'm trying. None of my teachers ever liked me." One morning Richard failed to report to school. Communication with the home revealed that no one had paid any attention to him when he left home because father had returned the evening before and they were too excited to pay any heed to Richard.

A few days later Richard was returned from a neighboring state where he was picked up by the police. He was placed in the Detention Home where the teacher visited him. He burst into tears and wept hysterically. "Now what will they think?" The true facts were finally re-
vealed. The father had been serving a term in prison for some mixup in a political graft. To one of Richard's impressionability, the separation from the father was a severe shock. The constant schooling at home that his playmates must never know that the father was in prison filled Richard's mind and soul with shame and distress. As a result he felt resentment and dislike for everyone at school, in the neighborhood, and at home, especially the mother.

No explanations offered by the mother eased matters; kindnesses went unappreciated. On every hand there was evidence that the broken home situation could not be faced. These attitudes of Richard's cannot be explained away by human meanness and perversity. They are the result of a permanent hurt to a sensitive nature and of the lack of understanding of it all. In school, as a consequence, Richard could not cooperate and appeared to be battling against the unconquerable forces of life. His attention was not upon school work but upon finding an answer to the insoluble home problem.

What can be done for a child who is the victim of this type broken home and who feels the disgrace of a father's imprisonment so keenly? The fact remains that the fundamental difficulty was a feeling of shame and emotional upset about the conviction of father and separation of his parents. No permanent results would come unless shame was eradicated.

The school must try. In simple language and as tactfully as possible, Richard was urged to bring his whole trouble into the open and talk about it. The virtues of the parents were extolled. It was shown to Richard that unfortunate as it may be, other children are victims of broken homes under such circumstances. Nothing could change that fact now. He would have to accept everything just as it was and make the best of it. Richard
was still too young, perhaps, to understand the whole argument but he did respond to the encouragement and understanding which he felt that he was receiving.

At the close of the semester, his desire to put forth effort had increased. Can there ever be a permanent cure? It is doubtful. The soul of this impressionable youth has been permanently scarred.

**Vicious Homes**

Studies show an undue prevalence of poor home conditions among problem and delinquent children as compared with non-problem and non-delinquent children.

The deliberate training of a child in criminal conduct Burt finds extraordinarily rare, but vicious examples are common. Burt continues in this same report that there is four times as much sexual immorality in delinquent as in non-delinquent homes, and nearly three times as much quarreling. Altogether the frequency of vicious home conditions in the delinquent group is five times that in the control group.

Healy and Bronner find excessive quarreling in the homes of twelve per cent of their cases, and alcoholism, immorality, or criminalism in twenty-one per cent. As a check on the negative findings Healy and Bronner made a special investigation of 1,000 cases each in Chicago and Boston to determine in how many homes of delinquents really good family conditions prevailed.


9 Ibid., p. 129.
If we ruled out the families in which there were such clearly unfortunate features of home life as poverty, great crowding, or very insanitary surroundings, extreme parental neglect or extreme lack of parental control, excessive quarreling, alcoholism, obscenity, immorality, or criminalism, mother away working, mentally deceased parent in the home • • • there were, living under reasonably good conditions for the upbringing of a child, only 7.6 per cent.

Arthur W. was overbearing and wanted to dominate any group in which he chanced to be. Often he struck other children without a word of warning and seemingly for no cause whatsoever. On one occasion he brought a loaded gun to school, and bragged that he had picked out the fellow he was going to shoot. When the principal asked for the weapon he meekly handed it over and cried and said he needed it to protect himself when collecting on his newspaper route.

Arthur's several mental examinations rated him as having low normal ability. He was a well-developed healthy boy with regular, well-formed features.

From his total appearance one would judge that he came from an average home. After the gun episode we decided to visit the home. The address given the teacher by Arthur was fictitious. This immediately led us to think that there was some sort of discrepancy in his statement. Questioning Arthur with regard to his home address did not help matters as Arthur was never caught off guard and stoutly maintained he had given the correct address. Questioning other boys with whom he seemed to be friendly gave us no help in locating the home.

In a few weeks we planned to follow Arthur. We were rewarded but on this occasion hastily retreated to make our call when Arthur was not likely to be at home. We were certain from outside appearances we knew the source of Arthur's trouble. The family lived in one of a row of
delapidated shacks that had been built on the banks of the river. These shacks were built of old tin signs, heavy cardboards, wooden boxes, and any other material found in the dumps. As we approached the shack on the next day we heard quarrelling, much swearing, and abusive talk. Because of the sound of things and the sight of a body lying half in and half out of the door, we decided to retreat again. On three different occasions we encountered the same quarrelling, fighting, and vicious situation. We finally were successful in finding a lull in the tempestuous home.

The mother was a nice appearing woman, ready with excuses for her appearance, the appearance of the home, and the situation of the same. She discussed freely their living conditions and only hoped somebody would advise her. She admitted that most of her husband's earnings went for drinks. Immorality and fighting were part of their everyday life. She kept Arthur dressed cleanly and nicely so people would not suspect their home condition and because Arthur caused so much trouble at home when she did not have clean clothes for him. She, like a great many other adults, felt that she had not neglected Arthur in any way because he had plenty to eat, a place to sleep, and clothes to wear. The idea that domestic strife of a vicious nature damaged the boy's mental health and was causing him to become a serious delinquent never bothered her in the least. As far as she was concerned Arthur was a good boy because he never bothered her. The social workers were called in on the case and the entire situation discussed with juvenile court authorities. It was decided to give the social worker a chance, but because of the constant drunkenness practically nothing could be accomplished.

The family was finally brought into court. No specific charge of child neglect could be filed as Arthur was not kept out of school, he was
properly clothed and clean and had plenty to eat. The parents were admonished by the judge as to their vicious habits and they promised to reform, but since there could be no check up on this promise it was valueless. The only bright spot in the whole affair was that Arthur was allowed to go to a Y. M. C. A. boys' camp for the summer. This helped to give a little relief to a soul wearied with quarrels, drunkeness, and vile language. Because the school was responsible for the enjoyable camp placement, Arthur tried very hard the following year not to cause any trouble. He has been permitted for three summers to attend this camp, and his school adjustment has been fine.

We are aware, however, that soon his happy school and camp days are over because of age limit, and we feel that three years of school and camp will not carry this lad very far on the road to proper social adjustment.

Unhappy, Irritative Homes

Closely allied to the vicious home is the unhappy irritative home. Roy M. furnishes us a very good example of a problem behavior child with this factor as the prime cause of his undesirable adjustments.

In appearance Roy was a pleasing, attractive, and bright lad. When we first met him at the age of fourteen he would stand out physically in appearance and in good health in any group of adolescents.

Roy's school work showed constant failure from the first grade on. Demotion did not seemingly worry him. Other bad habits were constantly increasing. He was known as the school's "best liar". He could always explain away his difficulties and his failures. It became necessary to check and recheck carefully every statement Roy made.

Physical examination proved that Roy's appearance denoted an excel-
lent general physical condition. Mental tests showed intelligence quotients of 109 to 110.

During the physical and mental examinations Roy was very restless, fidgety, and extremely loquacious. Roy's mother seemed most cooperative in trying to help find a solution of Roy's problem. As far as Roy's having any difficulty in learning, the mother felt that this was impossible as he learned anything he wanted to around home. She admitted that her son told of nothing that happened at school.

On one occasion in discussing Roy with the mother she said in all sincerity, "I will consider it a favor if you will show Roy no leniency. Make him do his work. Tell him that if he fails in anything whatsoever you will notify not me but his dad. I think that he'll get busy then." Whenever we discussed Roy's failures with him he assumed a nonchalant pose, making plausible excuses for his failures if he felt like it. Following the suggestion of the mother, Roy was informed that the next unfavorable report or failure would be communicated to his father at his office. There was an immediate change in his indifferent attitude, and he actually pleaded with us not to do that, as his father complained of everything he did as it was.

One sensed in a very short visit in the home a strain and tension. The father seemed quiet and extremely courteous, but the mother talked fast and constantly as if she feared that something might happen if there was the slightest gap in the conversation. Roy spoke little, and whenever he did watched his father to see if his remarks met with his approval.

At the next interview with the mother she admitted there was a
breach between the father and son, that from the child's birth his father had been extremely jealous of the intimacy between mother and child and always showed extreme emotion toward Roy. He always called Roy "mother's child" never "our child". He frequently berated him for trivial matters and was constantly on the watch to punish him and call him a thief and liar. Everyday he took some occasion to tell Roy he would have nothing to do with him.

During Roy's absence from home everything was peaceful and pleasant, but the very mention of his name created a commotion and hostility. Roy's mother had been married while very young to this man nearly twenty years her senior. Their early married life was very happy, but a decided change took place when she announced her pregnancy to her husband. His attitude was one of disgust, irritation, and extreme jealousy, and he declared he did not want the baby.

Since there was constant lack of sympathy during this period of pregnancy, it is not surprising that Roy was a nervous irritable baby. As a result of this the mother was kept constantly on edge and in grave fear that the newborn baby would disturb her husband to such a degree that he would leave her.

All during Roy's earliest years he was led to evade his father and never face an issue with him, and it is most certainly to be expected that Roy in adolescence would never actually face the truth.

Satisfaction of instincts and longings and cravings is an appetite just as wholesome and worthwhile and respectable as the appetite for food. Adolescents by nature seek explanations and compensations. At home Roy was nobody and did not amount to much. Seeking for an explanation to the attitude of his father, trying to gain a security of feeling, and trying
to satisfy the longing and craving for paternal love led Roy to the behavior as was seen in his schoolroom, the behavior of failure and lying.

We were sure no permanent cure could be gained until both the parents, especially the father, recognized the underlying cause of the difficulty. The father had to realize the seriousness of his hateful attitude. Furthermore, unless Roy himself could be made to feel that he was wanted by both mother and father and unless the tension in the home was relieved, the feeling of insecurity and inferiority would still be there and Roy would continue to seek compensation.

With the mother a plan was worked out to send Roy to a military school, with the following summer vacation spent in the country with some of the father's relations. The fact that Roy's father paid the tuition without complaint seemed to relieve some of the stress and strain of disharmony. Roy in his first semester achieved a small distinction scholastically and in the sport's field promised to be a "letter"man. The mother reports that since an outsider perceived signs of promise in her son and others saw something to admire in him, the father has evinced a desire to become acquainted with his son. Whether the father is sincere or not in this reaction, and whether or not a comradeship can develop between father and son when they are physically in each other's company is yet to be seen.

Defective Discipline

Family situations which produce the spoiled small child and the repressed or rebellious older child occur with marked frequency in the experience of those who study difficult children.

Both the causes and some of the results of maladjustments in these parent-child relationships has been set in a clear light by Doctor
Bernard Glueck"10 "The process of growing up," he points out, "is to a very large extent taken up with the problem of adjusting oneself to the guidance that comes from one or another of the authoritative sources surrounding the child;" and those who have the training of the child in hand should, while recognizing the need of guidance, be "aware at the same time of the dangers of over-guidance and of the fact that an essential element of maturity is a relative freedom from the need of guidance."

"A nice balance between the disposition to self-esteem and the tendency to self-abasement" is essential to mental health, and contact with an unintelligent exhibition of parental authority may and does hamper the individual in the attainment of this nice balance. The pathological deviations may be either in the nature of an oppressive sense of inferiority and a self-depreciating attitude in the face of one's daily problems, or an ugly, overwhelming haughtiness of manner which frequently deteriorates into a tyrannical bullying of one's associates or dependents. The over-reaction to an oppressive authoritative ness may also lead to a chronic state of rebellion and active antagonism to all forms of authority.

Healy and Bronner11 found that in forty per cent of the homes of their 4,000 boys and girls, lack of parental control was a feature of the home life. Burt12 observed defective discipline in the families of eighty per cent of his delinquents, and in only eleven per cent of the non-delinquents. He considers discipline defective when it is too strict, too lenient, or virtually non-existent. Burt says,

"Of all environmental conditions, indeed of all the conditions whatever that find a place in my list of causes, the group showing the closest connection with crime consists of those

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12Cyril Burt, op. cit., pp. 65, 92.
that may be summed up under the head of defective discipline.

Over strictness was reported in ten per cent of Burt's cases.\textsuperscript{13} Parents who deal too strictly with their children and make the family atmosphere one of constant repression get their children into a state of mind that sometimes in the later years of adolescence results in a serious mental conflict. Such parents develop in their children a spirit of rebellion by their policy, and when the child struggles to free himself from the tyranny of home, he occasionally finds himself involved in a very disturbing mental conflict; his impulses lead him toward freedom, while habit and the ties of affection bind him to his past behavior.

This excessive punishment imposed by the parent is bound to call forth some reaction -- either by swift and open retaliation, as in a physical attack or running away from home, or by hidden mental processes, as in reactions more indirect, like theft, lying, immorality, and persistent truancy.

Discipline Too Strict. -- Ray S. was a boy whose problem behavior found its roots in parental suspicions, over-severity, and nagging due to bitterness felt because he had fallen below the standard set by older brothers and sisters.

The ridicule and punishment that might have rolled lightly off some other boy was deeply resented by Ray and was constantly thought about. He mulled over in his thinking the treatment that seemed to him to be unjust until so far as his emotions were concerned he became a rebel, eager to attack any form of authority. Unfortunately for Ray his early schooling was in a private parochial school where the teachers felt that they

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 92.
must stand for many abuses since the parents paid tuition. Ray placed in

For over a long period of time Ray developed his antisocial behavior to compensate for his harsh home treatment. Affairs at school finally became so unbearable that the boy was expelled. He entered the neighborhood public school with both parents accompanying him, and in his presence they advised the principal that the only way to make Ray mind was "to whip him -- hard and often". Naturally Ray's general attitude of antagonism was fired to greater intensity; and on the first day he achieved great success in causing pandemonium in the new class room. The new teacher and principal talked with him on this occasion, but previous and frequent vicious beatings had so hardened him that they kept him from responding to the chastening effects of properly administered punishment.

For six weeks this new school labored to conquer Ray, but he was irrepressible. At this time the social worker contacted the home and took steps for transferring Ray to a special school. Here unfortunately Ray also encountered circumstances which abetted his antisocial behavior. The regular teacher had been injured, and the school was going through the hands of a series of teachers inexperienced and most of them unsympathetic with problem boys, and lacking in understanding of them.

Ray was a natural leader, and in this turmoil which gave his rebellious spirit a chance to assert itself most fully, he became master of twenty-six boys. A new teacher arrived, the eighth in less than three months. This to Ray only meant another "authority" to conquer, and with his "gang" behind him he launched forth his campaign. But this new teacher was a different type. She played the game with the boys, and before the week was up she was the leader of most of the gang and Ray with his very few became more desperate than ever.
The climax of the rebellion came with a snake, which Ray placed in
the teacher’s smock pocket. Instead of becoming hysterical at the sight
of the snake, the teacher fondled it and took time out for a nature study
lesson. At the close of the lesson she advised that the snake was harm­
less and should be returned to its freedom and handed the snake to Ray,
who became very ill with the thought of having to carry the snake in his
naked hands. (He admitted later that he had paid a fellow to put the snake
in a box and that it took all the courage he could muster to bring the
box to school.)

In turn the teacher offered it to each of Ray’s remaining gang, who
each refused with one excuse or another. With a very quiet assertion
that snakes made many people uncomfortable and that she could handle them
she remarked that she would dispose of it herself. A few evenings later
Ray lingered to apologize for the snake. The teacher confessed to Ray
that he had done something for her that she wished she could do for him.
She acknowledged that she had always been more or less afraid of snakes,
but the occasion demanded she conquer herself and her fear. "And," she
said, "you see I could." Ray was told that there was something that he
disliked or feared very much, and the teacher wished she only knew what
it was and what she could do to make him happy.

He very calmly talked over things and said he was bitter against
the home. Ever since he could remember his father had beat him every
night for nothing at all, hated him, and wished he were dead. The mother
nagged constantly and blamed him for things he never did. His brothers
and sisters made fun of him. The teacher finally convinced Ray that if
he made a success of school his parents would begin to see him in a dif­
ferent light. A special program was worked out with particular emphasis
on woodwork and mechanics, in which Ray later excelled. After a few weeks a good report was sent home. The mother visited the school and said she just could not believe the report was true. A few samples of his vocational work, a few academic papers were convincing enough to her. She only hoped her husband could be made to believe it. A visit was made to the home, and the parents both promised to trust their son with a growing measure of confidence. Ray's grade and junior high school work progressed beyond expectation and is continuing to progress in senior high school. The home is much happier and to see the father's smile when he accompanied Ray to the school's annual homecoming is assuring that the father's repressed pride and affection for Ray is renewed.

The turning point in Ray's case was the point at which his parents were led to appreciate that their boy was found by others worthy of liking, of trust, even of a little admiration. The chance they gave him to reinstate himself in their good graces was quickly seized, and what threatened to develop into a fixed grudge attitude in the boy was quickly dissolved. No child will remain normal in his behavior when he has been deprived of his sense of security by his parents' mistaken attitude and over-strictness.

Discipline Too Severe Due to Religion. — The over-strictness of Al Mac's parents was much harder to handle than that of Ray's parents because their over-strictness was due to their religious belief. It was not until Al Mac was almost fourteen years old that the cause of his very antisocial behavior was found.

Of all his behavior, Al's temper tantrums were reported as the worst. These would come on suddenly without much cause but would leave very slowly. In fact, each one seemed to make him more stubborn than the one be-
fore. He had developed the very unhappy habit of shutting other people out of his life. He liked to make people think he was being friendly and frank with them when he was not. He was very skillful in deceiving strangers in this respect. We could get nowhere on the basis of discussing his behavior. This was what he expected and what he was prepared to resist. He did not believe that anyone ever understood him, loved or trusted him, and he did not think that he wanted them to.

He had fair average mental ability but in his academic work was constantly failing. He came from a home that was reported exceptionally favorable. Five other children, three older and two younger, had attended or were attending the same school and attained high scholastic standing and were considered model children. The parents cooperated with the school and were deeply concerned with regard to Al's behavior.

When Al Mao entered the seventh grade, the teacher decided that there was certainly something physically wrong with him. So she took him to the school doctor to arrange a physical examination. Al went quietly, but when the doctor gave him a slip which asked the presence of the mother at this examination, he tore the slip in many pieces and threw them in the doctor's face. Without a word he left the room. The teacher said nothing but decided at the earliest possible time to have an interview with the mother regarding the physical examination.

During this interview it was learned that medical attention was not permitted, and that for the first time the home would not cooperate with the school. If Al Mao had anything wrong with him physically, it was due him because he was not good, and as soon as he learned to live as the family did he would not be ill-disposed. While the teacher was there she asked the consent of the mother to allow Al Mao to join a school Art Club
which met on Friday evenings from three to four. Here again, the teacher met objection. "Art, music, and such things were of the devil," said the mother, "and the school art lesson is bad enough." If their children could have been excused from such lessons, the parents would have been pleased.

Each day Al Mac seemed to grow more sullen. Only during the art period did he show any animation or desire to do anything at all. After an interview with the child, we arranged to give him extra art periods; and things moved more serenely until the parents objected. All art periods were reduced to the one period required of every child.

We again interviewed Al with the hope of working out another plan to help him. During this interview he told of the extreme strictness in his home in accordance with the religious tenets of their belief. Only bare necessities of life were allowed. If the father earned more than these necessities demanded, the money was turned over to the church fund.

No music was allowed in the home. No pictures, no magazines, only religious or school books were in the house. Automobile or any type riding except for conveyance to work was tabooed. "Oh, Miss W.," he cried, "you don't know how I like pretty things. I want to paint and draw; and I'd like to ride in an automobile -- just once." For almost an hour he poured forth the bitterness that had been accumulating in his body for fourteen years. He didn't want to be different from his brothers and sisters.

It seemed as if everything he did or thought was wrong. He had been whipped so much, deprived of meals, sent to bed, and made to read so many extra prayers, but none of this ever cured him. Even the school did not understand how he felt. We assured him we were beginning to understand and wanted to help. He was willing to work with us. For a time,
things seemed to move along much more serenely, but we knew Al Mac was far from happy. Then one day we were notified that Al was in jail. He and another boy had rented an automobile, had driven it out of the state, wrecked it, and abandoned it. Through our efforts we had the boy moved to the Detention Home and the case transferred from criminal court to juvenile court. In the meantime the owners of the rented car were interview-ed. The boy's story was related, and they were very willing to drop all charges if damages were taken care of. They were even willing to accept this payment weekly in small installments. Juvenile authorities were also made aware of the strict home conditions, and the mental conflict with which the boy struggled daily. When the case was called in court, the judge listened to all sides. After reproving the boy for his fool-hardy trick and giving him to understand that he would have to pay so much each week until restitution had been fully made, he sent the boy from the room. He then tactfully took up the boy's case with the parents. At the end of the consultation the parents agreed to follow the program that the school outlined.

Al was to be permitted to live a more normal and free life. They even conceded to a few pleasures, and Al's heart's desire of studying art was to be given fullest freedom. As Al Mac's life history indicates, he was not inherently vicious or bad. He had been denied an inner craving, the right to develop this gift from God -- the talent for painting.

Years have passed and Al Mac has made a name for himself in the art world. In the past few years he was awarded the Grand Art prize of Paris. But best of all, Al Mac is happy and an asset to society instead of the menace he was headed to be.

Youth needs sympathy, profound understanding, skillful guidance and
training, and all the resources of modern science during his critical period of growth and adjustment far more than he needs precepts, commands, naggings, deprivations, and beatings.

When one thinks of how large and untried the world looks to the child, when one remembers his own childhood, whether or not it was a happy one, he realizes that lack of love and protection is of all things the most tragic.

Burt says, "Even commoner than a discipline that is over-severe is a discipline too weak and easy-going. It is reported in one case out of every four.

The family that has never succeeded in teaching its children good self-control prepares the way for an emotional crisis. The undisciplined child goes out of the home and soon strikes some irksome social repression. Not having been trained in self-denial, he finds it difficult to endure this unexpected coercion. Perhaps he does as he pleases and immediately finds himself in a disagreeable social situation. He receives punishment for his disregard of his social responsibilities, and not infrequently this leads to sullenness and a desire for vengeance. He strikes back, is discovered; punishment follows again. His emotional disturbance grows and deepens. By this process he slides into a state of chronic rebellion, developing in his outlook toward life an antisocial attitude of mind which keeps him perpetually in social turmoil.

Discipline Too Lenient. -- The school had despaired of Paul T. before he was in the third grade. His classmates were afraid of him, and the neighborhood was contemptuous of him.

14 Ibid., p. 93.
In the schoolroom, he disobeyed every rule that ever existed. His mind seemed to be occupied only with ideas that would cause annoyance to the teacher, disruption to the room. If the teacher ignored the disturbance at hand, he immediately proceeded with another plan. When he wanted to recite and was not called on, he would yell out the lesson at the top of his voice. He mumbled under his breath, threw things, and hid the books and materials of his neighbors.

To and from school, he defied the traffic boys and ran into the streets causing many a street-car motorman and automobile driver a heart-turn. He got into scrapes with anyone who was near. He disturbed the gardens, shrubs, and yards of all the homes on his route to and from school.

Paul also presented many physical problems. He was undersized and underweight. He had very defective vision, diseased tonsils, and teeth that had been from the start deficient in enamel and had since been miserably neglected. He had average mental ability.

Paul came from a home which offered many advantages that most children during these years of stress are deprived of. There was no want so far as food, shelter, clothing, and recreation were concerned. Interviews with Paul's parents before he came to a special school convinced us that their attitudes were largely responsible for his bad habit formation. When they were told of the physical findings, they admitted they knew that both his teeth and tonsils needed care, but Paul rebelled so when they took him to a physician that they gave in to his temper tantrums for the sake of temporary peace.

Paul was born when the youngest of the four other children was fourteen. Very, very early in life Paul learned that staging a temper tantrum
with shrieking voice, stomping feet, and clenched fists reduced the family to submission when it came to getting anything he wanted. Paul became a ruthless, domestic tyrant, whose every whim was gratified. The parents consoled themselves with the idea that "the school will take that out of him when he starts". The cards were stacked against Paul from the start. He had little, if any, opportunity to develop a normal emotional control because his family universe fairly revolved around him, and by parental weakness, he became a domestic tyrant.

If Paul damaged anything which belonged to someone else, the family quickly replaced it or paid for it; peace at any price.

Paul's school history strengthened our opinion as to the cause of his maladjustment. Paul's first day at school was his first experience with society when mother and dad and older bothers and sisters were not present, and for the first time he found out that other people have rights also. After enrolling the pupils, the first grade teacher asked them to sit on the little chairs circled about her while she told them a story. As soon as Paul discovered the story was not new to him, he began yelling out, "I don't want to hear that." The teacher patiently tried to explain that sometimes he would have to listen even if he had heard the story before. When the teacher proceeded with the story, Paul left his seat and began to torment the other children. The teacher then led him to a chair in the front row very near her. A little girl near by smiled pathetically at him and was promptly rewarded with a severe slap by Paul.

When Paul's mother called for him at the dismissal, the full story was related to her, and in Paul's presence she said, "He'll outgrow that once he gets started. He's just spoiled." Turning to Paul she, in a
very weak voice, said, "Paul, dear, you must be a nice boy and do as the
teacher tells you." Paul's response was to leave the room slamming the
door so hard that he broke the glass in it. We were told of numerous
other instances of Paul's belligerency in school.

The first step of the special school to which Paul was recommended
was to request that Paul's physical condition be taken care of immediate-
ly. The parents were willing but were afraid to mention it to Paul as he
had threatened to run away from home. A plan was worked out whereby the
parents signed all necessary papers at the hospital, and all arrangements
were made without Paul's presence. When three other children were taken
by the nurse to the hospital, Paul was taken along. Parents were nowhere
in sight. Paul did not want to be called a coward by the others so he
manfully went along. What went on in Paul's inner life we shall never
know, but his only outer remonstrance was, "Wait till my dad and mother
hear about this, somebody'll pay." When Paul emerged from the anaes-
thetic, Mother and Dad were given just a few minutes with him. He was kept
at the hospital several days longer than the other children, and on ad-
vice was retained two or three days without the special nurse.

The family were restricted as to visits. This proved to be much
harsher on the parents than on Paul, but they abided by the rules as they
realized the problem now on their hands.

With equal success Paul's eyes and teeth were taken care of. When
Paul finally entered the special class, the school was well established
and organized. Paul was taken about by some of the boys to visit the
classes. The boys talked over their work with him, and at the end of the
second day his program was completed. The school year was a struggle for
Paul, but he conquered himself remarkably well. We feared a summer vaca-
tion at home because we knew that practically all that had been accomplished, would be undone, so we prevailed upon the parents to send him to a boys' camp far enough from home to prevent mother from visiting too often.

Whether Paul's gains thus far will lead on to permanently satisfactory school adjustment no one can predict with certainty. We are not sure that the fundamental causes have been modified, but all the evidence available indicates the Paul's difficulties were of emotional origin due to weak parental discipline, and the fact that so many of his peculiarities have yielded to mental influences makes it probable that the line being followed is wisely chosen.

**Parental Neglect**

When the home fails the children are in real danger. The effort to strengthen weak homes, helping parents to realize their responsibility and teaching them how to meet it efficiently, is one of the most important measures in the prevention of problem and delinquent children.

"In Indianapolis a study of the apparent causes of delinquency credited lack of parental care with forty-two per cent..."15

Henry F. was a skilful petty thief, dishonest in many ways and at times a runaway from home for short periods.

He lived a street life in the congested district of the city. He was shrewd, self-reliant, and equipped with a fairly healthy active body and a mentality shown by tests to be slightly above normal. Like most street urchins he was an excessive smoker.

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His personality traits were reported as good by all who knew him. He was friendly and happy. With the exception of his habit of stealing and his truancy, his school behavior was good. He made friends easily and was a leader.

One who works with problem children soon realizes that a child who lacks love and protection faces the most serious of the emotional difficulties of childhood.

Repeated attempts to get Henry F.'s parents to school aroused our suspicions with regard to his home life. Frequent visits to the home reinforced our suspicions because we could never find anyone at home.

In talking over his delinquencies with him, Henry confessed he had never had anyone who really loved him and that he loved no one, nor was he loyal to anyone. He thought his parents had never really cared for him although he always had plenty to eat and nice clothes if he wanted them.

When contact was finally made with the home, the parents expressed surprise that Henry was in trouble, although we knew that the police and juvenile authorities had discussed Henry's case with them. The father said he was so busy making ends meet that he didn't have time to make a pal of his son, or even time to correct him. The mother, too, found her time limited when she tried to work and keep house.

Henry's home was a mere lodging place, most certainly lacking in those forces and influences that mould and make character.

Upon investigation we found that Henry's father earned better wages than the average person. The mother worked because she loathed house work and home-making and wanted little extra personal things. Most of their earnings went for clothes for themselves, automobiles, clubs, and parties. No amount of argument could convince the mother that her or her
husband's attitude was neglectful and responsible for the problem behavior in Henry. They corrected Henry when he needed it, but as we know they never knew when he needed it.

They could not understand that Henry should react any differently from the other two children. They all received the same treatment. When it was shown that the two younger children showed tendency toward misbehavior, she exclaimed, they were only human and were bound to make some mistakes, and besides she and her husband had to get something out of life besides running after their children every minute.

One can easily believe that Henry was probably leading a very normal mental life in response to his home environment, but his behavior was certainly very far from normal according to the mores of society.

Henry is an interesting boy, who will without a doubt, always live an active, dynamic life. The problem is to direct this activity along more normal channels. This responsibility should fall upon the parents, but so far we have been unable to impress the parents that this is their job. The school is trying to direct Henry's energy into useful and happy activities, but whether the few school hours per day, and the few days per year can influence Henry to carry on outside of school is yet to be tested.

Large Families

The size of the family itself has an important bearing on "problem behavior" in children. The Chicago investigation revealed the fact that among the families of 584 problem boys, there were in 277 cases

(forty-seven per cent) of six or more children, and in 122 cases (twenty-one per cent) eight or more. Among 157 families of problem girls in fifty-four cases (thirty-four per cent) there were six or more children, and in twenty-one cases (thirteen per cent) there were eight or more.

All social conditions affect the family just as it in turn influences every kind of social experience. The social life of the home has to accommodate itself to its physical equipment, and in this way the inner life of the family changes.

Bosanquet\(^1\) says:

> The strain put upon the home that tries to maintain itself in crowded quarters or under conditions that forbid the reasonable degree of privacy necessary for family home-consciousness, is all too well-known by social workers in our cities. A house cannot provide adequate conditions for a home unless it is closed against outsiders to permit the growth of a sense of home-exclusiveness.

Likewise Calhoun\(^2\) says:

> Crowding injures the family life itself. It may even destroy its happiness and drive the various members into unsympathetic attitudes toward each other. A working man’s wife is reported to have said, ‘The reason we don’t love each other as we should is because we don’t have room, we crowd each other.’

That Thomas J. should prefer sleeping under the porch, in a garage, or in any empty house in contrast with attempting to sleep where eighteen persons shared a four room house, seems good sense rather than delinquency and does not seem surprising.

Nevertheless neither garages, empty houses, nor “sleeping out

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nights" are desirable for young boys.

In a regular school room of approximately forty-five children, Thomas J. was constantly "out of order". Never a day passed without a fight reported in which Thomas J. was the main participant. All too frequently he was tardy. At least twice a week all evidence pointed toward his stealing something, although he was never actually caught. The parents to the very best of their ability cooperated, but Thomas never brought home any of the stolen goods. A close check up never revealed the disposal places. Finally Thomas was transferred to one of the Indianapolis special classes as a mental case. Mental tests showed him two years mentally retarded but with good general ability. His physical examination disclosed no special defects. The first week, as is usually the case with children transferred to special classes, went by uneventfully.

With his first case of tardiness came the first display of temper. Later on the same day a second violent temper spell was aroused at the close of a school assembly period for apparently no reason whatsoever. We made no comment with regard to either display but set about to find the cause. On the next morning the first theft took place. We felt sure Thomas was the guilty party, but we watched very closely for evidence of the stolen lumber-jacket. We were in a quandary. We were positive he did not take the coat out of the building at dismissal, but the fact remained the jacket was missing and could not be found anywhere. (It was found several weeks later stuffed in an abandoned ventilator in the basement.)

We again bided our time to discuss these things with him. We kept a chart of temper tantrums, tardiness, theft, etc. After a few weeks we observed that most of the misdemeanors occurred on the same days of the week. Most of the tardiness and fits of temper took place on the day of
auditorium, and the theft some time during the next day. We could see no connection between the acts and the days, nor could we believe that the auditorium activities, pleasurable as they were, could be a causal factor. Since trying to find out the cause of the maladjustment is part of our jobs, we changed auditorium from Wednesday to Monday. Much to our surprise the temper spells changed accordingly.

The father was called in for any enlightenment he might give before an interview with Thomas took place. In thinking over with us, the father tried to remember when it was Thomas had his worst temper spells at home. He had so many that it was hard to diagnose, but the father was sure he always had one the evening the family attended church. The next week before our interview, we found a job for Thomas to do at auditorium time, and we asked him if he objected to missing auditorium. "I'm tickled to death," he replied, "I wish I'd never have to go in there." We were reasonably sure we knew the cause of Thomas' poor behavior, but we had the interview anyhow.

During the interview he admitted he hated crowds. They always did something to his head. "Did you ever live with a gang of people?" he asked. "If you did you'd know why I hate crowds." The program for Thomas was changed. He was excluded from all large gatherings; he was allowed to work in the smallest group possible; as often as possible individual periods were given him. The parents again cooperated, giving Thomas an opportunity to eat alone, and as far as possible kept him from any larger crowd than that represented by the family. Thomas' adjustment was so marked that the school and parents immediately set about to find a home for Thomas in the country with a small family. An ideal place was found, and all reports in the last two years substantiate our findings
that the home environment of over-crowding and too much family caused Thomas to react in the manner he did.

Illegitimacy

A very unfortunate form of the defective family is that which includes the illegitimate child.

Jim H. had a rather dull, downcast, apathetic expression, slouchy attitude, and hanging head. He had been referred to us as a probable mental case. Jim's school record was a history of failures; after the second grade irregularity in attendance started, and in the fifth grade serious trouble began. The mental tests did not substantiate his failing work. His physical examination showed no particular irregularities. The family circumstances seemed good. The father seemed a little cold toward the discussion about the boy. The mother appeared very anxious to be helpful to the boy.

During the first few days in the special room, Jim showed rather a defiant attitude, but sometimes tears were in his eyes and he very evidently was suffering from some inner stress. He seemed to accomplish nothing in any line of work no matter how simple it was made. He constantly complained, "I can't learn. There's no use trying." One type of work after another was tried, but Jim continued to fail. He apologized frequently for his failures and begged us not to spend so much time on him. He was not worth it.

The fact that he realized we were working hard with him without perceptible gain encouraged us to believe that we would find a cause for his behavior at some time. One day his mother appeared at school in a great flurry. Her money was missing out of her pocketbook, and she was sure Jim had taken it. We brought Jim down and listened to the accusation and
denial, but were careful not to enter the discussion. The mother left in the same distracted state in which she entered. In less than an hour she called to tell us she had found the money in another pocketbook. We called Jim down to tell him. He burst into tears and poured forth the story for which we had been waiting.

He said that when he was a little fellow about seven years old he had picked a nickel up off the buffet. His parents, particularly his father, accused him of dishonesty, but he did not feel that what he had done was really dishonest. He was angry because his parents thought of his behavior in this way. He felt aggrieved and defiant, and these attitudes led to more serious offences. When these more serious things happened and his parents told him they would no longer own him, he became sure he did not belong to them, and they were only looking for a reason to get rid of him. He remembered hearing some whispered conversations about himself, and veiled remarks regarding him had been made in his presence ever since he could remember. He suspected there was something wrong about him. He talked with older boys and they explained that he could be an adopted orphan, have a stepfather, or be a "bastard".

He looked too much like his mother to be an orphan. He searched for pictures and old letters, and during his eleventh year when he was in the fifth grade, he was unfortunately rewarded with a record that proved him to be illegitimate. When he finally knew that the family was lying to him about his parentage, he decided that he was no good and that no one would ever like a "bastard". He believed that the family did not like him for this reason. He did not think his dishonesty or any of his delinquencies were half as bad as being an illegitimate child.

Now that the source of Jim's maladjustment was discovered a bigger
problem loomed, the problem of how to help him overcome this deep seated emotional conflict. Jim had already formed the habit of distorting and avoiding his life situation and mental responses, and this made it difficult to establish a rapport with him.

For a long time he refused to be frank regarding the true emotional response to his parents. He did not wish to understand himself, because the understanding made him at first more unhappy than he was.

Gradually and cautiously by means of biography, history, and newspaper items, Jim was brought to become more tolerant. Through the splendid cooperation of the home, where a real sympathetic understanding of the boy sprang up, Jim has dropped most of his worst habits, and soon we hope to develop an attitude of wanting to be successful. We are doubtful whether he will ever be entirely free of the thought of the disgrace concerning his birth, but providing the wound is not opened by thoughtless persons we feel that the old responses of theft, sex delinquency, lying, etc. will not return.

Foreign Born Parentage

The opinion is often expressed that in the United States persons of foreign birth or parentage contribute more than their share to juvenile delinquency and adult crime. Evidence collected by the Wickersham Commission\(^\text{19}\) does not lend much support to this viewpoint. On the other hand, the experience of social workers points to the children of the immigrant as a real menace. The inevitable conflict between traditions of an old and new country and the diversity of social standards are without

a doubt a factor in problem children and delinquency. Children of for­

eign-born parents, moreover, are more likely than children of native

white parents to live under environmental conditions in which alum con­
ditions, poverty, disease, and other factors seem to conspire with irreg­

ular family controls to force many children of immigrants into behavior
difficulties.

Tony P. was surly, sullen, and a possessor of an ungovernable tem­
per. He was an Americanized boy of foreign parentage. As soon as we
worked with Tony we realized his difficulties. He was a good looking
chap with a normal mentality and a healthy body.

Although Tony's family had been in America fifteen years, they were
as foreign as the day they set foot on American soil. They had settled
in an environment as similar to their native land as possible and there
lived according to their own social and moral concepts.

The child born in the midst of such a group is in a position which
presents many difficulties. He suffers from the inability of his parents
to guide him aright. They do not understand America and its temptations
and possibilities of crime and corruption, so they cannot protect their
children from demoralizing influences.

There was much tension in Tony's home due to the parents' old world
ways and Tony's too rapid Americanization. Not only was there a conflict
between the child and the immediate family, but also with the imposed
concept from the outside, with which the family itself was in conflict.
The conflict in the child of such a family is doubly severe. It is un­
fortunate that adjustment did not start with the advent of Tony's family
to this country.

Tony's personality had been moulded in harmony with the parents'
old world concepts and views. Though born in this country, he was still a foreigner born here. When he was well adjusted with his family life, he was sent to school where he came in contact with entirely different concepts diametrically opposite the concepts of his family. A conflict took place in school and another conflict at home. Little wonder Tony was at variance with the world in general.

Our task was to teach Tony to understand his environment and the realities of life as they actually were. It was almost impossible to make a change in the home although a very friendly relationship developed between the school and home, and the parents showed an increased interest in Tony's outside and school life. We tried to teach Tony to become a part of his environment, to understand that he must do his share in altering it, and to change himself to fit in with it as best he could. We were very successful in developing the habit of good reading, of proper responding to other people, and of enjoying the sport activities of life, thus avoiding the denial, repression, or distortion of his emotional responses.
Closely allied to the various defective family relationships which cause or help to cause problem and delinquent children is another environmental condition which most authorities list as an important causal factor in such children, the element of poverty.

The factor of poverty cannot be accurately weighed, but its importance is evident. In the General Report of the Committee on Socially Handicapped-Delinquency of the White House Conference, we find the committee reporting,

Poverty and economic stress are of the gravest importance in apprehended delinquency. Beyond depriving the child of essential physical necessities there is the deeper, more lasting, and more important hardening effect of constant financial stress and strain.

Sutherland in the following paragraph accentuates how poverty tends toward this "hardening effect" on humans.

Poverty -- generally means segregation in low-rent sections, where people are isolated from many of the cultural influences and forced into contact with many of the degrading influences. Poverty generally means a low status, with little to lose, little to respect, little to be proud of, little to sustain efforts to improve. It generally means bad housing conditions, lack of sanitation . . . and lack of attractive

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community institutions. It generally means both parents away from home for long hours, with the fatigue, lack of control of children, and irritation that goes with these. It generally means withdrawal of the child from school at an early age and the beginning of mechanical labor, with weakening of the home control, the development of antisocial grudges, and lack of cultural contacts. Poverty, together with the display of wealth in shop windows, streets, and picture-shows, generally means envy and hatred of the rich and the feeling of missing much in life, because of the lack of satisfaction of the fundamental wishes. . . . Poverty produces its effect most frequently on the attitudes rather than on the organism.

Miss Harriet Fulmer, Superintendent of the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago, in a paper before the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, declared that:

Two-thirds of the delinquent children, two-thirds of the physically ill children, one-third of the mentally deficient, one-third of the shiftless mothers, and two-thirds of the deserting fathers, come from homes where dirty and ill-ventilated rooms predominate. To bad living quarters can easily and without exaggeration be attributed two-thirds of the necessity for much that we call 'problem' in our reform work!

Mangold states that "Poverty means inferior homes, bad housing, inadequate recreation, and other disadvantages. The resulting lack of opportunities for children is registered in increased delinquency."

Breckenridge and Abbott found that thirty-eight per cent of 584 delinquent boys and sixty-nine per cent of 157 girls came from homes rated by the investigators on the basis of a study of family schedules as very poor. None of the homes could be classified as very good or wealthy.

Sixteen per cent of his delinquents fell below the margin of a bare

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4G. B. Mangold, op. cit., p. 414.
subsistence, Burt\(^6\) finds — one child in six was thus in want of the
common necessities of life. Only eight per cent of the non-delinquents
lived in such poverty.

Thirty-seven per cent of the delinquents came from the class of the
moderately poor, as compared with only twenty-two per cent of the general
population. "Thus," continues Burt\(^7\), "over one-half of the total amount
of juvenile delinquency is found in homes that are poor or very poor, and
the figures show very trenchantly, . . ., that poverty makes an added
spur to dishonesty and wrong."

The child, especially when he is sensitive, is keenly susceptible
to family situations. His pride is easily hurt when the home appears
inadequate or poverty stricken. These family conditions create mental
dissatisfaction as a result of the suffering they produce, and they fre­
quently curb normal self-assertion, which easily brings about some unso­
cial expression of this self-assertion.

Any kind of experience that seems to the child to destroy the re­
spect of his fellows or to bring him into social disfavor tempts him to
bad conduct.

Joseph K., a boy of thirteen years, suddenly awakened to the fact
that he was seriously handicapped as compared with other boys, because of
the family's poverty. To get his mind off his disadvantage he turned to
bad behavior that soon got him in difficulty. He was eager to bully and
to practice stubborn disobedience. This was soon followed by stealing.
He was doing something to meet his situation as he saw it, and he knew

\(^6\) C. Burt, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 62, 64, 65.
\(^7\) Ibid., pp. 66-67.
why he was doing it. He did not have the good things of life, so he was going to get them if possible.

The special school was then delegated the task of trying to save Joseph. As far as the economic condition at the home was concerned, the school could do nothing; a family agency handled this problem to the best of its ability.

Transference to the special school lifted Joseph from the community which knew his family life too well. He was given car fare for his transportation to and from school. Strange as it may seem these little things had their effect. The fact that for a little while each day Joseph had something besides slugs, something real, to jingle in his pocket, helped give him a different feeling. The noon meal of the school was much daintier and more varied than the almost daily dried beans. As soon as could be arranged Joseph was enrolled in a gym class in a neighboring gymnastic college, which he enjoyed for two afternoons each week. And, too, he was chosen as one of the boys to enjoy swimming at the Y one evening each week.

Joseph was happier and busier than he had ever been before. He enjoyed his school program. Despite all this, we knew that Joseph's problem was not solved. Although Joseph was now enjoying some of the sparkle and gleam of life that his whole being was so desperately craving, we knew this was not a permanent thing. What were the therapeutic measures which should be applied in his case? Work would have answered the question immediately, but a job was not to be had. We set about to find Joseph's interests. We found that he had a genuine interest in gardening. We felt sure that if a strong enough motive for a garden could be found, Joseph would be started on the path to the right behavior we desired. It
was finally decided to make arrangements for a school garden. In one of
the assembly periods an announcement was made about a school garden, and
the request made that if any boy would like to help he was to communicate
with the office. As we hoped, Joseph was one of the first to report.
The boys were told of the amount of work, the hours necessary to spend,
the responsibility and all with no pay except a limited use of the veg­
tables raised. Seven of the group decided to tackle the job. Joseph
was put in charge. The garden was a huge success, but better still
Joseph came through the summer without one report against him. He had
some difficulty with some of his helpers falling down on the job, but
this experience only helped to stabilize and develop Joseph. His follow­
ing school year, which was his last, was successful especially as far as
behaviorism was concerned. The family welfare agency moved the "K." fam­
ily to the outskirts of the city, and Joseph has been kept busy with his
gardening.
CHAPTER IV.

UNDESIRABLE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

A monotonous existence, an atmosphere of repulsion at school or at home, or a mere emptiness of daily routine, provides the setting for problem boys on the part of the boy whose physical energy and mental powers find no adequate outlet. The boy whose environment gives him no opportunity for absorbing or exciting experience, frequently stumbles upon antisocial conduct which provide the thrills he craves. Unlawful games, such as "flipping trains", provide excitement and rivalry which the boy in a more suitable environment would find in sports.

There is much discussion of the bad effects of too much or too little recreation. The problem is undoubtedly an important issue, but statistical study so far has not been able to furnish reliable data, due partially to the complexity of conditions involved in the study.

However, Healy and Bronner\(^1\) found poor recreations in 20.9 per cent of their 2,000 Boston cases; and street life in excess appeared as a bad feature in fifteen per cent of the boys.

Burt\(^2\) says, "Life for the street arab is full of random excitations; and becomes an affair of wits and windfalls, not an opportunity for steady,

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\(^1\) W. Healy and A. Bronner, op. cit., pp. 161-261. Table 57.

\(^2\) C. Burt, op. cit., p. 151.
well-planned exercise." He further states that the ordinary home is devoid of space or equipment for recreation. "If, outside the home, the immediate neighborhood is equally devoid of recreative outlets, then the temptation to unwholesome forms of excitement will be doubly great," continues Burt.  

Charles R. was haled into Juvenile Court because he broke the window lights in a house behind the large rooming house in which he lived with his mother and father and smaller brother. There was not a yard large enough to play a game within ten blocks of his so-called home. He lived in the most congested part of the city; factories, hotels, boarding houses used every available space. If a game of ball was started in the alley or street, a policeman moved his little team along. If he started a round of marbles on the sidewalk, traffic interrupted it. The judge called himself lenient when he let the boy off on condition he paid for the damage. A few weeks later found Charles again in court. This time he was brought in because he shot beans through a bean shooter at passing automobiles. Again leniency was shown.

The following week he and his gang gathered on the school ground after school for a ball game but were promptly chased from the grounds because of a school ruling which permits no use of the grounds after school hours without supervision of a teacher. Charles R. became so angry that he deliberately threw the ball through one of the school windows. So for the third time in five weeks Charles landed in court. This time we knew would bring forth a different edict from the court, so we presented ourselves at the trial. The judge was angry -- perhaps rightly

3Ibid., p. 149.
so from the standpoint of trouble caused the court. He had given the boy
two chances. But the court did not remember that excitement is the
youth's normal human craving, and if he cannot have it in ways that con­
serve the welfare of the social group, he will snatch at the thrills of
unlawful behavior.

Emptiness of life bore heavily upon Charles, whose environment was
constantly stimulating him but did not give him any outlet for free activ­
ity.

Breckenridge and Abbott⁴ say,

It is especially in relation to the play of children in
our congested quarters that we can see the necessity of de­
pending upon resources provided by the community. Meager
play resources lead many city children toward delinquency.
The community in the case of Charles did not find it worthwhile to
provide for the adventure craved by boys like Charles. The parents of
Charles showed little interest. They did not know what to do about it.
They did not feel they could move into a residential district of the
city. It would cost too much and certainly would not be convenient for
them. From the stupid legal point of view Charles had a good home -- a
comfortable bed and three square meals a day -- and no one could conceive
why he had to be always in trouble.

Charles was a good student in school, well-liked by principal, teach­
ers, and pupils. It was through this very fine report and the pleadings
of the teacher that Charles' sentence to an institution was suspended,
and he was placed under the direct supervision of his teachers.

It has certainly been found by experience that a gang of boys

started toward crime can be led away from it by coming under the influence of some sympathetic older person who suggests new and wholesome ways of finding zest and excitement. Society itself is guilty of negligence and is socially blameworthy when it denies to the growing child legitimate ways of finding highly stimulating experiences.

The problem at hand was to provide immediate recreational facilities. The teachers in the neighborhood school were all interested enough in the boys to give up one evening every so often to stay with them on the playground. Charles was delegated to form some baseball units. Each night the "gang" played from three until five. They were so exhausted at the end of that time that there was no fear of outrageous outbreaks of excitement or adventure. This however was just a tide over. Summer vacation was near at hand, and teachers would not be there to tide the gap. However, three outside sources were called upon, and the boys all found places for recreation in one of the three. Charles was taken care of by two of the agencies, and the summer passed without any serious trouble. The school in the fall provided the evening playground; the baseball nines became basketball fives.

We feel that Charles is safe enough now during his youthful play days, but we wonder what will happen at a later age when his recreational needs are different, but their difficulties and their eventual outcome are much the same.
CHAPTER V.

BAD COMPANIONS

Stanley Y. had talents as a comedian and a lively temper, both of which he displayed at school to better advantage than whatever capacity for learning he possessed. He was of an impulsive, irresponsible nature. He would worry about some prospective punishment while acting in the very way most likely to bring it upon him. He had some fine personal traits. He was generous, helpful when not in a temper spell, never held a grudge, and was sorry that he worried his parents and teachers.

His home life seemed ideal, both parents willing to carry out any program which seemed for the best interests of their children. Economic difficulties were not in the foreground.

Stanley showed average general ability on age-level tests. He was well-developed physically and was well-nourished. Until he was in the fifth grade he had no difficulty either in school or home. His program of school work and play seemed easily within the grasp of his abilities. When he was in the fifth grade, the teacher reported him as not working and as failing on this account. She said that he was a leader in mischief, and that he quarreled and fought a great deal with the other boys.

Simultaneously his mother reported him as being disobedient about playing in the streets; and she said that in coming home from school he got into scrapes that worried her. He quarreled with his brother and
and sister; and was very uncommunicative and hard to understand.

What caused the changing attitudes and propensities that directed Stanley toward problem behavior could not be determined. A physical check up proved nothing. No reason could be assigned for his perplexing actions by the parents or other children. The school was at a loss to account for his actions. He was having the same teacher he had in the last half of the fourth grade and with whom he had gotten along particularly well at the time. Nevertheless the school put him in another fifth grade room in the building, but instead of helping, the change made matters grow worse. At the end of the semester he was failed; and the next term showed no improvement. He became a very belligerent, impudent boy. Truancy soon followed on the heels of all of his other misdemeanors.

Through it all the parents tried to remain fair, sympathetic, and understanding, but they were desperate as to how to proceed. At their instigation Stanley was transferred to a special class.

For a long time Stanley joined in nothing the boys did. He was constantly complaining about this and that. One day one of the older and very large boys shoved him and said, "Line up there, and play." Stanley grew very angry and threatened the older boy, who had been a popular member of the special class for several years and who had always been a big factor in helping to adjust the new boys. About two days later a report came back shortly after the dismissal of school that there was a "big fight" about a block and a half from the school. We hurried to the scene of action. There in the midst of a gang of total strangers, fighting for all he was worth, was our "popular special class boy". Most of the crowd that had gathered dispersed when they saw us, but "our hero" and the "tough gang" were not through. When asked the meaning of the
affray, a spokesman said they were protecting a member of their "gang". That member proved to be Stanley, but he was nowhere in sight. When asked if they felt it very sportsman-like for seven to jump on one, they admitted that it was not, but they did not think it was very sporting of "this great big fellow to beat up on little Stanley". When asked if they knew this to be true, they could only reply that one of their "gang" had said so. They were invited to appear at school to hear the story of both boys and were asked to act as judges as to what was the best thing to do.

The next morning Stanley appeared in our doorway about a half hour before regular coming time. He seemed desperately in need of help, and we immediately went into conference with him. He had joined up with this gang just shortly before his trouble in the fifth grade started. After he got in with these companions, he never could find a way to sever his connection with them. They had taught him many things he knew were not good for him. At first they seemed pleasurable, but now he wished someone would help him break away. He seemed much relieved to think he could be helped and promised he would follow all instructions that we would give him. The parents were notified and all worked together. The break was accomplished very slowly as Stanley had several relapses into emulating the evil ways of his companions. His parents still cannot comprehend when these companionships were ever formed.

These parents agree with Mangold's¹ statement: "The environment of the boy outside of the home and the character of his associates leave their definite prints upon his moral nature, and are a large factor in producing delinquents." Stanley would have slipped much farther down the

¹G. B. Mangold, op. cit., p. 409.
path of delinquency except for the excellent ability and subtle power of his home life. His behavior in school and at home was in response to the conflict in his inner self between the fine ideals practiced in his home and the vulgar acts of his companions.

Healy and Bronner² believe that a large show of all delinquency among juveniles is a companionship affair. They state that in sixty-two per cent of 3,000 cases companionship could fairly be regarded as a causative factor in the delinquency. They agree that frequently the companions were not worse and perhaps even not so much to blame as the offender, but it can be safely concluded that if it were not for the companionships the misdemeanors would not have been committed.

Burt³ says:

Influences that affect a child beyond the circle of his family life may at times be the sole factors in his delinquency. As a rule, such influences are harder to ascertain, more frequently overlooked, yet often in the end the easier to cope with.

This was the case with Stanley. The sympathetic understanding of his parents helped stabilize him much more quickly than would have been otherwise possible.

²W. Healy and A. Bronner, op. cit., p. 179.
³C. Burt, op. cit., p. 123.
CHAPTER VI.

UNFORTUNATE SEX INFORMATION

Another cause that operates to produce problem children may be gathered under the title of disturbances of the instinct and emotion of sex that result from conflicting elements in the inner life of the child.

No aspect of the personality has suffered such manifold distortions as the sexual instinct. Sexuality needs to be recognized if for no other reason than because it is and it cannot be dealt with by refusing to see it. The child needs to be recognized as possessing a sexual instinct, and that instinct needs due consideration in the process of its growth and development.

Burt \(^1\) declares that sixteen per cent of 200 delinquent cases were caused by an over-potency of the sexual instinct. In about two per cent of his cases of boys, and seven per cent of girls, this was the chief contributory cause, and the offenses themselves were sexual. In the remainder, most offenses were not sexual but of a so-called substitutional type, and the instinct, partly or wholly repressed, acted usually through the formation of some hidden complex.

Most of the cases of problematic behavior due to the sex emotion that we have encountered in our work have not been due to the physical

\(^{1}\) Ibid., p. 413.
Shame with respect to bodily functions, undue modesty, an overemphasis on sexual responses in childhood, mystery placed about sex, the unnatural reactions of parents and teachers to harmless questions, and interest on the part of the child are at the root of much sexual perversion and the cause of many maladjusted children.

Frequently the information asked regarding sex is mostly curiosity and not sex in any proper sense. To frown on these curiosities of sex does not stop them but piles up trouble for the child and parent later. The very mystery placed about it naturally impresses it more upon the child. If the child is of a sensitive and timid nature, he keeps the questions to himself with fear. With attention driven to the new and mysterious interest, the child has no outlet, no method of correlating this experience with the rest of his life. In this way discord with its unnatural, emotional reaction and conflict enters the child's life. If the child is of the courageous and bold type, he keeps his eyes and ears open and bides his time to satisfy his curiosity by asking older and wiser playmates.

Leroy N. was boisterous, noisy, forward, and at times very rude in his behavior. Despite this he was a likeable chap with a very good mental ability, and a strong physique.

He lived in a well-kept middle class home with his father, mother, and three other children.

His personality traits, which his parents believed were the seat of his trouble, were reported as selfishness, disobedience, dishonesty, and distrustfulness. At times he was very affectionate and always industrious. The parents were worried and discouraged by Leroy's behavior and
by his bold antagonistic and disobedient attitude.

All whom we interviewed with regard to Leroy said they could not understand him nor understand why he was a "bad boy". The boy himself exaggerated his delinquencies and tried to impress others that he was a daring fellow. The night following his first interview with us he stayed out all night. He seemed to enjoy shocking his parents and his teachers by this bad behavior more than he did the actual staying out itself. We felt that we must find some way to understand Leroy's personality responses before we could give constructive social advice. He would not help and did not want to help. He was very proud of the fact that no one understood him. He believed himself perfectly competent to solve his own problems. His ideas and his attitudes could not be altered or even pierced. He thought we knew much about boys' problems, but he knew more than we did.

At the close of his first three weeks in the special school the first report given by the special class teacher rated him "particularly nervous", "never looked her straight in the eyes", and she felt that his trouble was due to a fear. His school work was very poor, especially his arithmetic and reading. At the next interview we tried to draw the boy into a general conversation, but he would talk only when asked definite questions. He drifted along for about a month when suddenly a crisis arose. The teacher intercepted a note full of vile words and with a very vulgar picture which Leroy had written and drawn.

Later in the day we brought Leroy into a quiet room secure from interruption. With little encouragement Leroy talked about the note. We urged him to go back as far as he could remember and tell all. He first remembered being curious about the condition of his mother before the
birth of a younger sister. When he inquired of his mother why she looked as she did he was told not to ask so many questions. After the birth of the baby he again asked questions and on one occasion was whipped for being too inquisitive. Some time later he asked an older boy who described to him a great many things in detail. He and another boy taught him self-abuse. These words and these actions always made him afraid.

More acknowledgement of wrong-doing, however, was not all that Leroy needed. We tried to make him see that fear had gripped him because his mind had been full of things that he thought were bad, and because he had been doing things that he felt were not proper.

Later he was helped by the school physician in understanding the real facts about life. He did not know the connection between sex and birth, and when this was explained to him in a way that he could understand, release from the fears seemed to take place at the same time. He was made to feel that he was not bad but only ignorant, and he quickly realized that he felt stronger and better after his behavior improved. At the close of one of his interviews he said he did not know that boys ever talked about such things with grown people. He thought they just had to find out for themselves.

His parents were advised in proper treatment, with the hope that Leroy and his father could be frank with one another and that the same mistake will not be made with the youngest boy.

We agree with Breckenridge and Abbott who state:

There is no question that the sex urge is one of the most powerful in society; there is equally no question that until recently the ignorance regarding sex was appalling.

\[2\] S. P. Breckenridge and E. Abbott, op. cit., p. 159.
Fortunately this ignorance is beginning to be dispelled.

Parents, churches, and schools are coming to realize the necessity of discussing sex just as they discuss freely the other problems of life. Gradually the taboos are being lifted, but still with too portentous a gravity.

When parents and teachers cease to suffer from the impurity complex and when they become less impressed with the emotional content of sex, our children may become better prepared to meet these situations naturally and without conflicts.
Conspicuous among the causes that lead to tragedies of youth is the uncongenial school.

Burt\(^1\) finds uncongenial school conditions much more frequent among the delinquents than in his control group, and believes that in seven per cent of his cases of school age, the influence of an uncongenial school may be the principal factor in the bad behavior.

The Committee on Socially Handicapped-Delinquency of the White House Conference\(^2\) believes that before the school there is a real program for the prevention of delinquency. They further claim that school dissatisfaction is "rich soil for delinquency". There is bound to be school dissatisfaction if the schools do not recognize that each child has its own individual needs and must learn to make proper school adjustment to these needs if he is to be satisfied.

Healy and Bronner\(^3\) fix dissatisfaction with school as a major cause of the delinquency in nine per cent of their 2,000 Boston cases.

The particular form which the maladjustment takes differs greatly

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\(^1\) Burt, *op. cit.*, pp. 125, 174, 466.

\(^2\) White House Conference-Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

\(^3\) W. Healy and A. Bronner, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
from one case to another. The cause for school dissatisfaction is just as varied. Sometimes discipline is either too lax or too rigid; the curriculum is impractical, uninspiring, inadequate in individualized and specialized training; rules exist against moving and speaking; there are inadequate facilities, seats of improper height impeding circulation, poor ventilation; teachers are temperamentally unsuited to the profession as far as personality traits are concerned, teachers unaware of many of the deeper springs of youthful conduct and behavior; many school systems still emphasize the thing taught instead of the person taught.

"Truancy", one of the major practical problems of school in relation to Juvenile Court, "may be a misplaced virtue," so states Van Waters.4 "It may be a biological protest against bad air and physical defects, or healthy criticism of a course of study hopelessly dull, heavy, mechanical and uninteresting."

Lester K. was referred to us when he was in the seventh grade at the age of twelve. His little brown beady eyes snapped as he walked into our office, and his whole being seemed to shout out, "What are you going to do about me?" His very childish face accentuated his height. He never missed one detail that was in and about the office. He observed all of the people who came and went. While his enrollment card was being filled, he asked questions as fast as they could be answered. When he was told that no special home room would be assigned until he visited about the building for awhile, he laughed, and said he guessed he would pick out the room he liked and stay there. This he was allowed to do pending his various examinations and investigations. His choice proved

to be the room best suited to him and his needs. The only change made was with regard to his vocational class, and he readily saw that it was better to start with a class not so advanced. A rest period was also added to his program on recommendation of the examining physician. Mentally he was of superior ability by age level tests.

His home history showed no outstanding good or bad features. His parents were as interested as the average parents are. They cooperated when called upon. They did not like to interfere with the school unless the school informed them of a necessary task. They did not feel Lester was a "bad" boy around home, but they were concerned about his poor school reports.

His school record declared Lester was the most "uncivilized child" they had ever met. This reputation had followed him from the first grade on through the seventh. He was considerably over-active, and sometimes his over-activity seemed unmotivated. It seemed to be part of this school's policy for the children to sit perfectly still and not indulge in activity of any sort. Of course Lester would not fit in with a program of this sort. His superabundant energies, his inquisitiveness, his intellectual ability would not thrive under such repression. As he grew older, his ever-varying pranks increased. He seemed to take great delight in plaguing his teachers though he declared he did not dislike one of them. If the teacher paid no attention to his talking out, he whistled, clapped his hands, snapped his fingers, or rapped on his desk.

His ingenuity in wrong doing seemed inexhaustible. He was one of our easiest cases, never a problem from the start. He frequently remarked about how much he liked school and could not understand why he used to always be in trouble. He was not mature enough to realize that the school
itself was the cause of his misbehavior. In his new school, a freer curriculum gave more legitimate opportunities for activity and so diminished his restlessness and pranks. His physical need for regular relaxation was taken care of. The nature of his school work was less abstract, and his school experience was accepted as an experience in life itself rather than as merely a preparation for life.

We will keep Lester K. with us until he is ready for the ninth grade.
CHAPTER VIII.

POOR PHYSICAL CONDITION

The old idea that delinquency and crime result from inborn general physical constitution has been entirely discounted by scientific research. The notion that there is such a thing as the direct inheritance of delinquent or criminal tendencies is also not an accepted theory today.

Most authorities agree that the problem child or delinquent, as such, conforms to no definite physical type, and that constitutional inferiority as a cause of crime is a negligible factor.

Healy\(^1\) reported that physical ailments were a major factor in forty out of a thousand cases of juvenile delinquency, and a minor factor in 233 cases.

Burt\(^2\) finds that in about ten per cent of the boys and seven per cent of the girls examined that some illness or bodily infirmity seemed the preponderant source of the child's misconduct.

Healy and Bronner\(^3\) believe that physical conditions are never the sole cause of delinquency, but counted 5.6 per cent of 2,000 cases as apparent actual and direct causes.

\(^2\)C. Burt, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
\(^3\)W. Healy and A. Bronner, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
Slawson found no evidence of inferiority of size or weight among his delinquents, but did find a significantly larger percentage of sensory defects among his boys than among unselected boys.

While there is no reason to minimize the importance of good health, it is apparent that there is no close connection between physical defects and problem behavior. Many maladjusted children are quite healthy and free from physical defects; many normal children are extremely defective from the physical standpoint.

However, we have found that there are individuals, who because of the existence of certain physical defects and peculiarities, are maladjusted, and the school should be constantly on the watch for such problem children.

General Lowered Vitality

The child of lowered vitality behaves differently frequently from the very fact that most of the time, he cannot partake in the activities that are normal to his age group. To fulfill his natural ambitions and desires, to keep up with his group, he reacts abnormally because he is thwarted by his physical defect.

Robert A.'s general weakened condition affected his personality characteristics through actual physical weakness, physical irritation, and through a feeling of inadequacy. He believed that his parents were ashamed of him and therefore did not like him as well as the others. He did not blame them for this feeling; perhaps it was his own fault and perhaps he was born "that way".

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The children of the other school called him "sissy" because he could not play as hard as they did; others called him "the old man", because of his poor posture with rounded shoulders and projecting shoulder blades, undeveloped muscles, and dry skin. The teachers said he was restless, inattentive, irritable, and forgetful. When it was suggested he take a rest period in the nurse's room each afternoon, he became rebellious, and if he was coaxed into going there, he frequently left the school.

After his transference to a special class where the physical side of the child was considered first, he went to the rest room with the other boys without a murmur. He drank milk at the morning lunch without coaxing, and at noon he ate the foods provided. No complaint was registered because everybody else in the group was doing the same thing, and he was not outstanding because of his lack. He followed the directions with regard to health habits at home because he wanted to be able to report a gain with the others. It became a game in which he was able to take part. His social adjustment is taking care of itself, and it is believed that in the next two years with his program of rest, nutrition, and school work that is so fitted as not to be a source of anxiety or depression, Robert A. will be able to take his place with the other children in the high school.

Eye defects, ear defects, speech defects, and crippled bodies may easily cause irritability and discomfort, retardation in school, lack of success in efforts, dissatisfaction with school, truancy, association with bad companions, and general view of one's self as an outcast. There is a tendency for such persons to be ostracized, forced out of the groups. Unless such persons have a forcible strong character, their behaviorism
is bound to be affected. Some of these physical conditions are easily discernible, others require careful examination by physicians and specialists.

Two important phases of work with these children is necessary. The first step is to see that proper medical care is obtained. The second phase is to teach the disabled child to meet his disability without bitterness, his handicaps without defects, to meet himself and his problems squarely, and to learn how to know, use, and conserve the assets he does possess.

Defective Hearing

Clarence R. was beyond a doubt the most stubborn and perverse boy who ever attended a certain school. So said his teachers. Whenever he was told to close his book he opened it; if the command to stand was given he remained seated. He always did just the opposite. His teacher sent him to the nurse to see if there was anything wrong with his ears, but she found no trouble. His mother said he could always hear what he was not supposed to hear. Each year Clarence became more vexatious, more antisocial, and more retarded in his school work. He finally came to a special class. He adjusted himself immediately and worked very hard at his lessons. He seemed to take part with the small groups with which he was thrown exceptionally well, and the only time the special teacher reported him as being perverse was when he was in with the larger group and was farther removed from the seat of action. When he was being interviewed, he was asked if he ever felt he had trouble in hearing. This he immediately resented and said, "That's what they tried to say at the other school, but I recite and get along fine here." After his physical examination he was, however, convinced that he was partially deaf, and
the physician explained that the deafness could be intermittent. The fact had seemed really to cause more irritation to those with whom he worked than to himself, and their actions toward him developed his anti-social attitude. Advice is given Clarence as to how to take care of his ears; he has been given vocational guidance to occupations where his trouble will handicap him the least. He fits well with his special class because a great deal of his work is done in close contact with the teacher.

Defective Speech

Charles Y. was handicapped with a speech defect of stuttering and at times seemed almost speechless, entirely unable to express himself at all.

The home was physically good, the parents kind and patient with all their children but especially with Charles. Charles was of a low normal mental ability. He was solitary in habits, excessively sensitive, remembering injuries and slights for a long time. He often misinterpreted statements or behavior of others as reflecting on him. He had most unusual ambitions and a dogged stick-to-it-iveness that one could not help but admire although you realized that these characteristics added tremendously to his problems and to his unhappiness. He was a refined boy, very particular in his personal habits and in his appearance. He felt himself an outcast from normal society. In his pre-school days, he was teased and mocked considerably by most everyone. His parents even plagued him with the hope of causing him to overcome the stuttering. As a consequence of this perpetual jeering and jibing he became worse as far as his speech was concerned, and very unhappy and morbid emotionally. Arrangements were made to have Charles attend a special school where he could receive
special speech aid, and he was placed in a class with companions who would be more sympathetic with him than could the ordinary run of children. It was felt that if any way this unhappy lad could be made happier it should be done. In his slow plodding way he has thought with us about many problems that most children with a higher intelligence quotient could not recognize as existing. "Are you sure you know I can make my living when I grow older?" he frequently asked. Particular emphasis is being placed on his vocational guidance into a line of work where speech has little value.

Defective Vision

Jack C. would fight at the drop of the hat and most often before the hat was dropped. Invariably the same response was forthcoming when asked why he had been fighting -- "He called me names." And the names proved to be always the same -- "cross-eye", "four eyes", "cock-eye", etc. No amount of talking to Jack ever made him understand that no matter what people called him it really did not hurt him. Neither could you make him see that the other boys called him these names just to get him to fight. When Jack finally gave up fighting, he became a truant. When he was brought back in by the attendance officer, he was extremely disagreeable and antagonistic. Here was a real problem of maladjustment.

Our first task was to convince the parents that an operation on Jack's eye would help save him from becoming further delinquent. After this the hospital had to be urged to call Jack's case an emergency even though he had been suffering from strabismus (cross-eye) all his life. The waiting list for eye treatment would have deferred Jack for nearly five months. The hospital finally agreed to take Jack, and then Jack's parents, who had been told some malicious gossip about what sometimes happened to
people operated for cross-eyes, backed out and refused to take Jack to the hospital. Another outbreak of truancy, stealing, and staying out most of the night, brought them to school with pleas for help. Another hospital date was set, and this time Jack was brought in.

The operation was very successful, but Jack was advised to remain out of school until the fall semester to give his eyes a good chance for healing. In the meantime the parents were prevailed upon to move into a district where Jack's antisocial behavior was not known, thereby giving Jack a new start in life. The last time we heard from Jack he was progressing very nicely.

The Crippled Child

Claude E., who was a cripple due to infantile paralysis, was referred to the special school because he was so retarded in his school work. Mental examinations revealed to us that there was no cause mentally for this retardation. After observing him about the building, we were fully convinced that his physical deformity was at least partly responsible for his retardation. Almost daily he had a severe crying spell, saying that his leg pained him severely. A report of an examination at the children's hospital warned us that this was a developed mannerism of Claude E. to get sympathy and to avoid having to work. After that we ignored most of these spells. Occasionally we surprised him by saying we were sorry that he felt so bad, as we had planned for him to do some errand for us. He usually perked up and said he could work even if his leg did hurt him.

Since we were reasonably sure that Claude's case was not a mental case, we transferred him to the school for crippled children. We felt that they were better equipped to prevent Claude from becoming more socially maladjusted. There they worked with him to prevent his "cripple
psychology", from becoming so developed that he would soon be exploiting his conspicuous deformity for profit as is so often the case. They were trained to teach him to take his place in the social and economic world and to apply his ability and knowledge to the highest degree of efficiency of which he is capable.

By working in an environment of group fellowship and of active participation in group experiences comparable to his own, he could develop within him the self-confidence which will later enable him to work with normal associates in a normal community.

Furthermore in this school for crippled children he was given the opportunity for physiotherapy treatment prescribed by a physician for his physical rehabilitation.
CHAPTER IX.

MENTAL RETARDATION

For a long period of time, criminologists and psychologists were convinced that there was a close relationship between delinquency and mental defectiveness. However, present day conclusions are dispelling the usual assertion that all delinquents are mentally backward. Figures are still extraordinarily divergent.

Various institutions for juvenile offenders place their figures near or over seventy per cent as mentally defective.\(^1\)

In Chicago, Healy\(^2\) maintains that among the personal characteristics of the juvenile offenders "mental deficiency forms the largest single cause of delinquency". He found in his delinquent group 11.2 per cent. Healy and Bronner\(^3\) find that the feebleminded appear among serious delinquents from five to ten times more frequently than in the general population, but, even so, they form not more than one-fifth as many as the mentally normal. Their figures in this study of 4,000 repeated juvenile offenders show 13.5 per cent clearly feebleminded.

Two hundred juvenile delinquents with four hundred non-delinquents

\(^1\) Renz at Columbus, Ohio; Hickman at Plainfield, Indiana; Gifford at Newark, New Jersey.

\(^2\) W. Healy, op. cit., pp. 131-132.

\(^3\) W. Healy and A. Bronner, op. cit., p. 151.
of the same age and social class, were compared by Burt.\textsuperscript{4} He classified 7.3 per cent of his delinquents and only 1.2 per cent of his non-delinquents, as mentally defective (below seventy I. Q.). There was a wide distribution of intelligence in the delinquent group.

Slawson's\textsuperscript{5} studies with over fourteen hundred boys in four institutions for delinquents in New York state, show that it is impossible to argue that there is a direct causal relationship between inferiority in tested intelligence and delinquency, because the low intelligence test scores may be partially due to any one of a number of other factors such as social status, achievement, racial origin, etc.

His studies do indicate that inferior intelligence is far less an important factor in delinquency than has been supposed.

In our own study we feel that the fact that there are a great many delinquents mentally deficient does not explain by any means delinquency or problem behavior. We have found many mental defectives who are not problem cases. We do find demoralized folk whose native ability is of high grade, and we find feebleminded folk who are making their way rather well in the world. Mental defectiveness by itself may be a very great contributory factor, but it is not a deciding factor.

We believe that with proper home, community and school environment, and adequate training, few of the mentally retarded cases would become delinquents.

However, we need to remember that mental deficiency is an element to be reckoned with in many types of problem children.

\textsuperscript{4} C. Burt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 287.

\textsuperscript{5} J. Slawson, \textit{op. cit.}, Chapter I-II.
Walter W. was one of those children who seemed born with a passion for the limelight. He desired attention first and foremost, admiration if possible, but even disgrace was preferable to disregard. He was wildly restless and distractible, with an unending flow of conversation most upsetting to classroom discipline. The falsehoods he told were not the mere ordinary defensive lies of childhood but elaborate fabrications, concocted mainly with the air of magnifying his own importance. He stole at every chance. He would go out of the room with his class, then return and pick up any little thing he saw lying about. Apparently it was not the desire to possess these objects. If some child reported his pen, pencil, book, or other article missing, Walter was the first to be ready to search for it. He was always ready to brag and bet that he'd be the one to find it. He usually did.

Discussion with the parents did not enlighten us with regard to Walter W.'s problem. Their only contribution was that Walter is different from all the other children. The family consisted of the father, mother, and seven children. They were living on direct relief, and both parents were living worried, unhappy lives.

Reports from the school from which Walter had been transferred substantiated the same recital of queer behavior as observed at our school. They blamed the economic condition of the home as the responsible factor for his "wild and peculiar" behavior. The neighbors in the community thought him the most reliable boy in the neighborhood. He could always be depended upon to run errands, and any odd jobs that the housewives needed performed, Walter was ready to do. One woman showed us how well Walter dug around her garden and shrubs. "Better than any man," she said.

To make a child acutely conscious of the fact that he presents a
problem is not usually the best way of helping him to solve it. However, we felt that we must do something for and with Walter as soon as possible. So we started with an interview before he was examined physically or mentally. He did all the talking. One tale contradicted another. He talked of his parents. In one breath they were drunkards and terrible people; in less than three minutes they were next to angels. The school, according to Walter, could not teach him a thing. If he wanted to read all those books and learn all "that stuff", he could, but it did not help you make money, so why bother your head. He continued this soliloquy for almost an hour and no doubt would have continued longer if there had been no interruption. We decided to do nothing with or about Walter until after his examinations. We did make arrangements to have him tested in place of another pupil whose antisocial behavior was not so pronounced.

Although we believed that Walter's I. Q. would classify him below normal, we were indeed surprised to find him as low as he tested. A second and third test were given and all findings were about the same. The highest I. Q. was sixty-nine. His physical examinations showed no outstanding defects. He was somewhat below normal for his age in height and weight.

The parents were glad of the interest shown in Walter. They were deeply concerned about his poor school work, especially the fact he could not read. It was some time before we shifted him from the regular classroom to a special room. We were waiting for a chance to do this without causing a new conflict in Walter. The chance came when Walter's room became overcrowded. A request for a volunteer to be shifted into another room brought Walter to his feet. His desire of being in the limelight helped our situation. Walter was moved to the room for mentally retarded
The first few weeks showed no change in Walter. He was the same loquacious, busybody, but gradually the old antisocial pattern of lying and stealing began to fade. Walter stopped in the office occasionally to tell how much he was learning. He appreciated the attitude and interest of the teacher toward him. On one occasion he said, "Miss ------ knows me and likes me." He insisted on bringing his reading cards to the office to show his progress. The success achieved in transforming his attitude, in changing him from a trouble-maker into a useful member of the school community, shows that this trick can sometimes be turned even with boys of low mental ability. Sufficient good-will, ingenuity, willingness, a kindly attitude on the part of the teacher, not an attitude of distaste or aversion, a program of studies (far removed from the conventional academic lines) suited to his abilities, a chance for legitimate avenues of successful expression helped turn the trick.

The school offered him a chance to act successfully, and just as he apparently sought social disapproval before, he was now seeking social approval. Walter became the simplest of behavior problems when his energy could be used in a useful activity that brought success. Failure and misconduct lay in his low level of native intelligence. But Walter's relative success when conditions were favorable indicates clearly that an I. Q. is by no means the most significant element in the understanding of a "problem boy".
A superior intellectual equipment, even with excellent bodily health, does not always indicate that the individual is making a satisfactory social adjustment to life.

Ted. L. had shown signs of severe maladjustment all through his school life, but when he was in the fifth grade, his behavior became such that something had to be done about it.

In his earlier school life he finished his work so quickly that the teacher could not provide enough. He was double promoted twice. The fifth grade teacher blamed these double promotions for his present predicament. When called on to take part in the class work, he frequently failed. His written work was so poorly done that most of the time the teacher would not grade it. He annoyed the other children so often that he was placed in a portable seat some distance from any neighbor. Even there he was a disturbing element, spending most of his time trying to entertain the others with his grimaces and "monkey shoves".

Ted came from an exceedingly fine home. The father held a fine executive position, and before her marriage the mother was an outstanding high school science teacher. Although Ted was an only child, the parents felt they had not spoiled him. In the home there were little or no behavior difficulties. He enjoyed the evenings with his parents playing

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adult games of cards, playing the piano and reading books. After school his mother and he read, discussed and studied birds, plants, rocks and insects. His collections were outstanding, and his knowledge and ability to discuss them was unusual. In the school room, it would have been impossible to tell he knew one bird from another. Things became so acute in the classroom that the teacher openly declared that either she or Ted had to leave. Before any steps could be taken, however, in open rebellion against an English assignment which he refused to do, Ted played truant. His parents felt something had to be done. Until they could decide upon what would be the wisest procedure to follow, they had Ted placed in one of the public special schools.

Ted's parents had had him tested previous to his assignment to our building, and the results were made available to us. However, we planned to have our own tester and own physician put him through the same procedure required of all our special class students.

The findings were practically the same. Ted's chronological age was nine, while his mental age was fifteen. No small wonder Ted rebelled against the tasks that were given him in school. At home the parents treated him as a fifteen year old boy; at school he was being directed and controlled much like a seven-year old. Physically Ted was about normal for his age. His high mental maturity combined with his chronological and physical immaturity made it difficult for him to find suitable companions. The older boys and girls looked upon him as a baby beside them; the younger children played games and talked things "too babyish" for him. And so, a lonely figure, Ted developed unsocial attitudes through it all. Our special classes can not boast of classes to give advantages to our "gifted" children, and so we had to plan a program for
Ted on an entirely different basis from any other. It took us about three weeks to get any workable program at all, and several times after that we made changes.

In physical education, school assemblies, and club work, we directed Ted's work with children of approximately the same physical and social maturity as he was. Ted could not have played successfully with boys fourteen or fifteen years old, but he could enjoy a fine relationship in the physical interests of children of his own development.

In general science and English work he was very happy with the seventh grade group. In the social studies, his own grade level, fifth grade gave him a chance to develop as a leader. In arithmetic, the subject in which he was poorest, he worked with a small group of boys who assembled from several grades. Vocational work was omitted entirely. At the periods assigned for this, Ted spent his time at the piano, in the art or science room. Through it all, the teachers brought Ted to appreciate the things which other children can do better than he can, and they exerted a very wholesome influence against any tendency to egotism on his part. His adjustments were so successful that his parents took no further steps in finding another school. At the age of twelve, Ted was sent on into the ninth grade. His high school record was outstanding, as was his college record. The last report we have found Ted a busy but happy intern in a hospital of one of our large cities.
CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION

Our selection of boys has been made with no thought of illustrating completely all types of problems and personalities. So complex is the work and so vast the stream of disordered, perplexed humanity that it would be impossible to treat all behavior patterns we have met. We know, too, that general classifications are dangerous, and typical cases are apt merely to suggest rather than characterize.

Everyone of our problems needs to be studied not only from the standpoints of heredity, physical laws, mentality, and economies, but also with reference to the human relationships involved.

If biological inheritance were the whole or even the chief explanation of human misfortune, there would be little to do for those in trouble.

Healy and Bronner\(^1\) assert:

The chance of success where there is good heredity is not enough greater according to our findings, to warrant the assumption that on the basis of heredity alone one can predict the likelihood of ultimate success.

As we study human maladjustments we find many whose difficulties are overcome, in spite of whatever handicap may have been imposed by

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\(^1\)W. Healy and A. Bronner, op. cit., p. 102.
heredity.

So we accept as our working basis the belief that other factors are at least no less important than heredity.

Conduct may be looked upon as the response of a particular individual to a particular environmental situation at a definite time. Therefore, if we are to understand conduct, it is essential that we know as intimately as possible both the individual and his environment, in order that we may see more clearly why he reacted as he did under certain conditions. So long as human beings are human and their environment is the world, it is difficult to imagine a state of affairs in which both they and the world they live in will be in no need of adjustments and readjustments.

Maladjustments in one individual affect all others. Progress depends then to a greater extent than is sometimes realized on the amelioration of the maladjusted.

Many antisocial unhappy children become antisocial unhappy adults because no one in their environment correctly interpreted their childhood behavior. Many delinquent children remain delinquent all their lives because no one understood the mental drives behind their early delinquencies. The young react in natural ways to conditions for which we, their elders, are responsible, if anybody is.

The school is today showing reanimation and a quickened sense of its responsibility toward young persons in conflict. They are ceasing to label such offenders as "bad". They are beginning to ask themselves why they act differently and to make some attempt at understanding them, rather than to go on stupidly punishing and creating more and deeper conflicts in them.
No longer can the schools go on nonchalantly expecting problems of individual maladaptation to be suddenly solved by our social workers, by our police, by the courts and public institutions, after the potential deficiency has blossomed forth into either a definite social menace or a distinct social liability.

The school is the logical place from which to work for the prevention of delinquency and other social problems. Every person connected with schools is aware of the fact that schools have in their enrollment children in every degree of maladjustment. We all know the quiet retiring youngster who perhaps does his work well but who is very unhappy; the mean person who constantly creates disturbance in the group; the egocentric who makes himself unpopular; the compensator who steals, lies, and is truant; the pupil of low mental status who cannot accomplish or find satisfaction in the ordinary school curriculum; the pupil who has ability but who has trouble with learning on account of all sorts of emotional upsets; and the pupil whose superior intelligence makes him exceptional.

Because the teacher comes in closer touch with more individual cases of social maladjustment, especially in the earlier and more curable stages, than does any other person, she must accept her definite social responsibilities. She must exert herself to seize the signal opportunities to detect symptoms of maladjustments as they appear in school dissatisfactions, poor school work, indifference, in persistently troublesome or erratic behavior, in rumors of undesirable companions or unwholesome interests, in apparent neglect, in environment or home conditions that are predisposing to antisocial behavior. And after detecting the symptoms she must set about to remove the cause, if at all possible. As
we have set forth in our cases, the chief difficulty may be physical, mental, or social in its origin. But with a scientific attitude, with the realization that there can be no divorcement between the life of the school and that of the community since they are in constant reciprocal relation, with the willingness to work with and learn from the parents, doctor, psychologist, clergymen, psychiatrist, social worker, public health nurse and every other constructive force of our social organization that has the welfare of childhood at heart; with a honest belief in our youth; with unceasing effort and sacrifices, the real philosophy of education — the adjustment of the individual to life — can be accomplished.

The final victory will never be won, the battle must continue as long as man exists, but each specific adjustment is a score of another victory on the final scoreboard of the world. To participate in some degree in this work is the opportunity and privilege of every man and woman.
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MISCELLANEOUS


