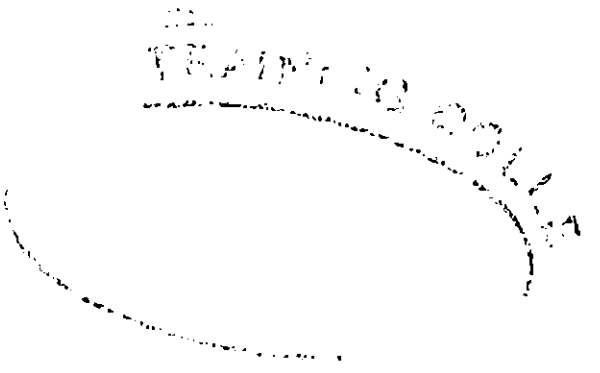
SAVING CHILDREN FROM DELINQUENCY



SAVING CHILDREN FROM DELINQUENCY

D. H. STOTT, Ph.D.
Research Fellow, Institute of Education,
University of Bristol.
Author of *Delinquency and Human Nature.*

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS LTD.
WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.4.

Made and Printed in Great Britain for the University of London Press Ltd.,
by C. Tinling & Co., Ltd., Liverpool, London and Prescot

CONTENTS

INTRODUCING THIS ESSAY

He who meddles in all things may shoe the goslings.
Proverb.

THE word 'essay' has been chosen in order to dispel any anticipation of this being a comprehensive treatise. It springs in the first place from my own special field of study—the development of the child's personality, within and without the family. But in propounding remedies I have had to consider the young person and his family in the wider human, cultural and administrative setting of a community. Not only have I thereby been forced to desert my psychologist's calling and turn social anthropologist for the time being; but I have had to touch upon topics which might have been better left to more expert hands. In extenuation I plead that there is no such thing as expertness in the study of delinquency itself, except in a narrow pedantic sense. Like geology or medicine or history it is really a compound of a dozen other sciences, to be knowledgeable in all of which is beyond the capacity of one individual. It is better to range widely, offering suggestions here and there which various specialists can take up, than to shout exclusively one's own academic wares.

In some fields I have not even been able to offer suggestion. This is notably so in such important matters as the working of the juvenile court, Borstal training and after-care, and the reform of our laws on the competence and incompetence of parents, adoption and the deferment of sentence in lieu of ineffectual short-term imprisonment.

I have tried throughout to respect the administrator's field of competence; in so far as I do occasionally develop the

detail of a suggestion it is to exemplify a method without claiming for it any universal virtue. Nor am I primarily concerned with the mysterious annual fluctuations in our delinquency figures, which may be due in part to changes in policy as regards prosecution. Rather I think we have come to a stage in our knowledge and in our civilization where endemic crime must be reckoned an unwarrantable superfluity. And it is largely from this point of view rather than because of the present statistical increase that I am urging its prevention.

Whatever theoretical contributions I have tried from time to time to make, my object has at the same time been to present the results of my researches in such a way that they can be readily utilized. Far from being a devotee of a pure and detached science, I feel strongly that whatever psychology has to tell us about the emotional health of the child must be made available, not only to social workers who are responsible for the care of children but also to the nation's parents. In any case, as I try to demonstrate in the course of this essay, the incidence of minor but potentially dangerous emotional ill-health is far too great for a small body of specialists to cope with. It is also part of my philosophy that the value of any piece of scientific information, in the ethical sense, lies in the benefit it can ultimately bring to mankind. For the psychologist to restrict or withhold his knowledge, or even to clothe it in obscurity, is anti-social. It is his positive duty to give his work social relevance by making his findings available to the worker in the field.

During the last two years I have discussed the prevention of delinquency and maladjustment with many kinds of social workers, until I can no longer say which ideas are mine and which theirs. Continually I found the very phrases I was writing snatched from my pen. The truth is that in many

quarters similar social needs, and release from old shibboleths, are generating similar thoughts. Lest any feel that I am claiming a spurious originality for my ideas, I hereby make a general acknowledgment to all those whose brains and experience I have picked; they have contributed to the spirit of our times with me as their scribe. My chief regret is that I have been able to tap so tiny a proportion of the ideas which are growing at the points of contact with day-to-day problems and difficulties. And there must lie unreported, and so denied the general application they deserve, innumerable other happy solutions to these problems. By my reports of some of those which I have been able to discover, the field-worker may come to see his or her daily practice as part of an unfolding social pattern, which, in so far as it is successful, deserves repetition elsewhere. In short, my aim has been not to be dogmatic about particular procedures so much as to inculcate a greater awareness of the field worker's function within a developing community—to relate, for example, the way in which a House Mother runs a particular Children's Home to our future as a nation.

More explicit acknowledgment of the help and encouragement they have given me must be made to W. McG. Eagar, C.B.E., M.A., to the publication of whose history of the Boys' Club Movement many of us look forward; P. H. K. Kuenstler, M.A., Research Fellow, and J. G. Lang, M.A., Secretary of the Institute of Education, University of Bristol; John Mack, M.A., Stevenson Lecturer in Citizenship at Glasgow Universtity, who is preparing a survey of delinquency research for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust; John Spencer, Ph.D., Lecturer in Sociology at the London School of Economics; K. D. Thompson, of the Croydon Probation Service; and, more recently, to Sir Philip Morris, Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University.

It would, however, be fair to them to add that while they have treated the manuscript sympathetically and each has done some pruning away of its grosser faults, they have not thereby committed themselves to an endorsement of all it contains.

I have also to thank the Editors of *The Times Educational Supplement* and of *Probation* for their permission to use revised versions of articles published in those journals.

This essay was written and the material for it collected while I was still enjoying the financial support of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. The work is a private contribution, but it was made possible by the freedom which the Trust gave me to write a supplement to my earlier report.[1]

May I finally offer a word of excuse for devoting two chapters to the Approved School in an essay on the prevention of delinquency. Partly, of course, this is due to my own acquaintance with approved schools. But I have also felt the need to answer the taunt, so often thrown at the psychologist, that he fails to tell people what they should do with a delinquent young person *now*. To be able to take up this challenge I have stretched my title to mean the saving of children from further delinquency.

D.H.S.

Institute of Education,
University of Bristol.

[1] *Delinquency and Human Nature*, published by, and obtainable from, the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, Comely Park House, Dunfermline, Fife, price 5/– or $1. Not obtainable through ordinary trade channels.

CHAPTER ONE

WOULD PREVENTION PAY?

> " . . . until the mind can love, and admire, and trust, and hope, and endure, reasoned principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the highway of life which the unconscious passenger tramples into dust, although they would bear the harvest of his happiness."
>
> SHELLEY, Preface to *Prometheus Unbound.*

To estimate the gain, from a budgetary point of view, of the various suggestions to be outlined in this essay will not be accurately attempted. For two reasons, however, it will be useful to fancy the kind of interrogation to which a far-sighted but economically minded Chancellor would subject a reform-minded Home Secretary. The first reason is that human welfare is somewhat out of fashion just now, at any rate when it costs money. At other times it might seem pusillanimous to balance the present cost of delinquency against the probable expense of preventing it, but it behoves the humanitarian when he is in a tight corner to demonstrate that his reforms are a paying proposition.

Secondly, such an accountancy will make plainer the real social problem of delinquency. That it lies deeper than cosh-scares needs no saying; what is less often realized is that it lies deeper even than Jeremiads over the lowering of moral standards. Beneath our contemporary crime statistics lies an inarticulate mass of mental suffering. This can only be reckoned in the coin of human happiness. But the wasted life and the unemployability of the criminal, and of his brother the non-delinquent neurotic, admit also of entry in the nation's economic balance sheet.

To begin at the more modest end of the calculation, if a social practitioner employed at, say, £800 a year succeeded in averting annually the delinquent breakdown of but one lad who would otherwise cost the nation £6 a week for three years in an approved school, he would be justifying his salary. If his therapeutic efforts score a mere ten successes in each year, the combined budgets of the State and of local authorities concerned would effect a saving, against his £800 salary and his office expenses, of some £9,000. It will be argued that he could be much more successful than that. Carrying this accountancy one stage further, and assuming that a quarter of our approved-school population will find their way to other approved schools (in the case of young boys and girls) or to Borstals and prisons, then one must add to this net saving the cost, idle to estimate, of so many boy-years of detention. And some of these 25% will become habitual criminals spending most of their lives battening as unwilling guests upon us, the grudging yet impotent hosts. If the social practitioner can save us half-a-dozen of these during the whole course of his career he will be repaying his own expense.

The above would be direct savings to public funds; but they represent only a small part of the saving to the community. Of the 102 lads who were the subject of my approved-school study 26% of those over school age had proved themselves virtually unemployable.[1] Quite apart from his delinquency, the delinquent tends to be an economic liability. The community is poorer by a working life. If full employment, as we hope, is maintained, this means a loss of productivity amounting to, say, £400 a year per unemployable adult. One might estimate, on the basis of an average working life of 30 years, that the communal wealth is depreciated by a total of

[1] cf. the Statistical Summary of *Delinquency and Human Nature*.

some £12,000 in respect of every unemployable criminal. We are not yet in a position to know what proportion of our malingering, inefficient or troublesome delinquent youths will in fact become such, but again, if the social practitioner can intervene at a vital stage in a life otherwise doomed to waste (and later, it will be postulated, this means a fairly early stage) the social dividend will be immense.[1]

These nicely counted monetary considerations may have provoked the humanitarian impatiently to remark that after all they are secondary to the reckoning in terms of human unhappiness. The criminal naturally estranges sympathy; the more unfeeling his crime the shorter the shrift we are inclined to allow him. Yet wrongdoing springs from a misery of an inner kind; it is as good a measure as any of the amount of emotional ill-health endemic within a nation. On the surface it may appear as mere greed, callousness or foolishness, but fundamentally it represents a blind, irrational attempt to break out from an emotionally intolerable life-situation. The bad attitudes which make up the potentiality for evil-doing are themselves produced by years of emotional ill-treatment. Those who are starved of love, or who sense that no one really much minds what becomes of them, or who feel themselves to be positively an encumbrance, cannot afford, if they are to retain their sanity, to go on asking for affection. The strain of asking and not receiving becomes too great; their defence is to deny to themselves their need for human fellowship, and because this denial is so difficult they must, like the fox and the grapes, go to the other extreme, and cultivate ill-will. They become 'moral defectives', feeling no scruples or loyalties, and flaring on occasion into active spite. Such is their retort to

[1] These calculations leave out of account the loss and damage to property for which the criminal is responsible. Much as this aspect of crime is in the public eye, this item is inconsiderable compared with those listed above.

a world by whom they have been hardly used and little cherished. But because human nature is built on fellowship they can never quite succeed in eradicating the need for fellowship in themselves, and so they are intensely unsettled and miserable. There are none so unhappy as the wicked, unhappy not *because of* (as traditionally supposed) but *along with* their wickedness; it is a case of dual symptoms in the single disease.

Such people do not inevitably break down in formal crime. For every one whose misery gets the better of him, whose lack of scruple is combined with too sanguine a judgment of the risk, or whose weakness succumbs to particular temptations, there are perhaps ten who evade crisis, whose wickedness rests at the stage of bad feeling, bad influence and bad doing within the law. Alternatively, according to their individual conditionings, they may break down in neurosis or insanity. In any case they mark the existence of an emotionally diseased human situation, a breeding ground of unhappiness. And this may be only the contemporary phase of a family tradition of affectional inhibition and neglect which has produced generations of unstable, anxiety-ridden, delinquent people—parents emotionally ill—treating children who, unless their emotional therapy is taken seriously in hand, will in turn make unsuccessful husbands and wives, mothers and fathers. The social practitioner briefed with the task of forestalling delinquency will find himself faced with the wider problem of rescuing the breakdown family which is one of its chief breeding grounds.

Once this inter-relationship between crime and unhappiness has been appreciated, the least we can do is to evaluate the effectiveness of the means of social therapy available. Not to do so is to hold human happiness cheap.

In fact, there are indications of a readiness to consider a

more systematic approach to the problem of delinquency. From many quarters simultaneously one hears voiced a dissatisfaction with our present hit-or-miss methods. Magistrates, it is pointed out, have no means of ascertaining at present whether they have hit or missed, unless each one carries out an individual research into the subsequent careers of the juveniles who have come before his court. And there is a very general feeling that magistrates find themselves called upon to deal with many youths at a stage when no treatment they can prescribe will be effective.

The crux of the problem is one of belief or disbelief in the efficiency of preventive measures. So long as we have that sort of fatalism about evil-doing which finds expression in the assertion that 'you'll never change human nature', or so long as we hold the belief that some people are born with an over-dose of original sin, then the only logical form of prevention is the old-fashioned one of hanging the criminal as early in his career as possible. Fortunately, however, there is no need to-day for such pessimism. We are beginning to be able to trace deformities of character to precise influences. We know what to look for in the upbringing of a youth who is suspicious and anti-social or who is so dominated by his bravado that he can be egged on to commit foolhardy crime. The notion of an inborn 'moral defect' is as dead as a door-nail. To know the sort of situation which breeds the criminal is three-quarters of the way to lessening the number of such situations. The social practitioner equipped with this knowledge would be a profitable investment.

CHAPTER TWO

A STITCH IN TIME

> ". . . his Father could not endure him; and when he came home at night the Boy would use to be in the chimney corner, and my Husband would cry take away this snotty Fool, and jumble him about. . . ."
>
> *Titus Oates's Mother.*[1]

THIS essay aims at outlining some of the preventive methods which, with our present knowledge, would seem to hold out a reasonable prospect of success. Our programme, in the mind's eye and to a certain extent in practice, can be divided into three stages. The first, the short-term measures, would have the object of rehabilitating the actually or imminently delinquent. The second would concentrate upon the discovery and eradication of those situations which are known to produce a delinquency-susceptibility. Since an ever-growing amount of evidence is pointing to the overriding importance of the influences of childhood, this stage would aim primarily at discovering the child in a deleterious situation at an early age. While some of the work of the second stage would avert delinquency within a year or so, its fruits would mainly be reaped after an interval of 5–10 years. The third stage would be largely a building for the future. Its aim would be to improve our family tradition and carry out a more conscious emotional education of the nation.

The second stage of our programme—that of meeting the delinquency-producing influences half way—is most conveniently considered first because it would be most

[1] From *Titus Oates*, by Jane Lane. (Andrew Dakers, London).

likely to yield decisive results within our generation and would probably engage the major part of the time of the preventive workers.

One of the most serious conclusions arising from recent delinquency-research is that living in an adverse emotional situation *for a number of years* can produce character defects so ingrained that by the time the boy or girl reaches a senior approved school or a Borstal it may be already too late to rescue him or her from recidivism, vagrancy, prostitution or insanity; at any rate the rescue will only be effected at a much greater monetary expense and by the exercise of more longsuffering patience and personal devotion than are likely to be available. Consequently, if the 'hard core' of criminalism is to be eliminated, the emotional ill-treatment must be detected in its beginnings. Several years of being unloved, discriminated against, or unfeelingly removed from the charge of one adult to another may produce that inhibition of social feeling and deep embitterment which make it possible, say, for a youth of 15 to commit violent robbery. Eight years back he might have been nothing more than a youngster feeling sore at being placed in another care because his mother wanted to re-marry without the encumbrance of him, or protesting against the diversion of all the parental love and attention on to a baby sister. The degree of the inhibition of social feeling, with which goes the loss of moral compunction, can be seen in each case to be proportional to the degree and duration of the affectional deprivation. (The prognosis, for example, for a child who has spent only two or three years with a kindly foster-mother is much better than that for a child reared in the impersonal type of institution with an intermittently interested parent in the background; and among institution children the pretty or winning child is likely to be less socially withdrawn because it has been able to attract more

than its ration of the affection and attention which the staff can parcel out among a large number of children).

It is a fortunate circumstance that before the settlement in anti-social attitudes takes place the child advertises his distress. The initial reaction is a demonstrative rather than an inhibited one. His quarrel with his environment may be expressed as a baby by screaming fits, as a toddler by repeatedly wandering off and getting lost, or by any combination of those annoying ways which earn the name of tiresomeness.

During the school days the range of symptoms widens as the pattern of maladjustment begins to be formed. The nuisance may become a more enterprising form of mischief or malice. In studying the earlier boyhoods of persistent delinquents one is struck by the amount of truancy, wandering, running away from home, restlessness and gross overactivity which their parents tell of. However, the parent generally only reports the trouble at a late stage, when things may have gone too far. So the symptoms which manifest themselves in school are especially important from the point of view of prevention. This is not the place to do more than exemplify the nature of the signs; but one can say that all the 'educationally subnormal' must be regarded as 'susceptible' if they are also restless and unable to concentrate. The same applies to children who are habitually on bad terms with their schoolmates because of their annoying ways; who get into mischief out of bravado; who are overquiet and show no desire to associate with other children; who combine high fears with bullying propensities; or who have worried, quizzical expressions. In short the observant teacher who is alert to the signs will be able to spot the one or two grossly unsettled children in each class with a fair degree of certainty. This type of observation does not need a lot of formal training; rather it is a question of realizing that such things should be observed. Once our

attention has been directed towards something, we notice it time and again, whereas previously, as far as we were aware, the thing did not exist at all.

To stress the part that the schoolteacher can play in the early detection of delinquent susceptibility or 'pre-delinquency', as it has aptly come to be called, is not to absolve from responsibility other people whose jobs bring them into contact with children. Among the pre-delinquent symptoms shown by my sample group of approved-school boys, the most frequent was that of truancy and wandering between 5 and 10 years.[1] My own experience as a teacher leads me to suspect that much of what is now regarded as irregular attendance is really truancy, and this may apply even if the parental note of explanation be duly forthcoming. A practised eye running over a school register will get all the evidence needed for our purpose (no formal accusation of truancy being made of course without proof); and the suspected truant or malingerer would be referred to the school Welfare Officer. The latter, because of this high association between juvenile truancy

[1] Of the 102 cases I was able to get information about the early childhoods of 90. Of these 62, or 69%, has shown at least one major symptom of being emotionally unsettled during their early years (i.e. up to the age of 10).

The incidence of the symptoms was as follows:—

Truancy and wandering, 5–10 years	29
Early mischief and nuisance . .	24
Pre-school wandering (i.e. before 5 years)	22
Shyness or being a poor mixer .	18
Early inhibition of affection	16
Home pilfering .	15
Bedwetting . .	14
Bullied by other children . . .	9

These are not necessarily diagnostically the most valuable early symptoms; they do not include facial appearance or any of the finer points of behaviour, as the memories of parents about these would have been very unreliable. Very few of the boys, furthermore, came into contact with clinics during this period of their lives. That is to say, their unsettled, pre-delinquent state remained undiagnosed.

and subsequent delinquency, also occupies a key position as a 'spotter', and he has the advantage over the schoolteacher in having access to the home in the normal course of his duties. His training should certainly include the kind of First Aid work in family therapy that is later advocated for the probation officer. His job more than any other provides immediate opportunities, with the minimum of administrative disturbance, for the application of the new techniques.

All sorts of other people also have their reponsibilities, and should have their weather-eye open for the symptoms. The family doctor is obviously one of these, even though his ostensible function be the treatment of physical disease. There may be common factors between breakdowns of all kinds; but we need further evidence before the relationship between emotional tension and physical breakdown can be precisely formulated. In certain diseases, such as asthma, rheumatism, tuberculosis, we are beginning to recognize the part played by emotional stress. Possibly the medical theory of the future will embrace a many-sided causation including both emotional and physical strains and will recognize the need for attending to the human situation of the patient. The key to a child's bronchitis may be physical strain resulting from the restlessness and overactivity which are often found in insecure children. Indigestion or malnutrition may be provoked by a bolting of food or by overeating, which may in turn be reflections of an unfulfilled emotional need.

Speculation apart, we are on fairly sure ground with the attribution of a whole range of childish pains and illness—generally called hysterical—primarily to emotional causes. Among the 90 delinquents-to-be mentioned above no less than 31 had at some time been prone to nervous or hysterical complaints such as 'bad turns', sudden collapse, epileptiform fits, unaccountable pains, fixed limbs or rheumatoid con-

ditions resulting in incapacity or queer gait, and—most frequent of all—recurrent headaches and dizziness.[1]

One cannot, of course, label all the children displaying this wide range of symptoms as of necessity pre-delinquent, but they are the raw material from which delinquents may be made. Some may succumb to a non-delinquent form of breakdown. Furthermore, they will instinctively seek some readjustment of their situation that will alleviate their emotional malaise (possibly by finding substitute-parents among relatives or friends) and their unsettled state may pass off without breakdown, as indeed it probably does in the great majority of instances. Nevertheless, whether destined for delinquency or not, the unhappy child needs succour. As things are now a child is not usually referred to a clinic until the school staff have reached the end of their disciplinary resources, or until the school welfare officer, school medical officer or school nurse recognize some blatant symptom of maladjustment. This is not enough: present nuisance or unhappiness, while bad in itself, must be regarded as a boding of worse to come.

The forestalling of eventual breakdown will seem less formidable if we bear in mind that breakdown into persistent delinquency only occurs in a complete emotional impasse; so long as there is a chance, however slight, of removal from the anxiety-creating situation by natural means, or of

[1] See factor J 22 in the Statistical Summary of *Delinquency and Human Nature* and the case-histories indicated. There was a big element of doubt in many cases because it was quite impracticable for me to consult the doctors who had treated them many years back. On the other hand I excluded from the 'hysterical' category all illnesses, like bronchitis, which had been given a definite name and which were possibly purely physical in origin. Probably it is in any case wrong to divide diseases into the mutually exclusive categories of organic and nervous. Again, until our techniques for the observation of the emotional condition of children are more developed and much research is done with their aid, it will be impossible to apportion the main responsibility to a physical or a psychological cause.

improving that situation so as to bring it within the limits of the tolerable, it seems that breakdown will be averted.

A second consideration is that, whatever susceptibility may exist, the actual delinquency is always provoked by factors operating within the contemporary life-situation, and that the first principle of therapy is to secure such re-adjustment of this situation as will render it at least bearable. Since, furthermore, the relevant factors are the human ones, the therapist's main procedure (without which all else is certain of failure) is to secure a betterment of the personal relationships within the patient's home circle.

To diagnose accurately what is wrong within a family requires skill, but, with new techniques of case-analysis now being developed, it is not a fortuitous business. The diagnosis may suggest some quite straightforward adjustment. The child, conditioned to an anxiety over its mother by early separation or delicate health, may possibly construe the mother's going out to work and leaving it to the care of others as indifference or virtual desertion. Or if the father is the preferred parent, the child's anxiety may be heightened by his working away from home or being on service abroad. Alternatively, the investigation of the emotional pattern of the family may indicate that the child should live with another relative to whom he has formed a primary affectional attachment. In the case of a child who is a misfit as a result of the parent's re-marriage, the obvious step is to place him with a foster-mother at an early stage, before he becomes unmanageable.

In the great majority of cases, nevertheless, it will be a question of securing some betterment within the home situation without resorting to the extreme remedy of removing the child. It may be asked how an outsider can be expected, with the means at his disposal, radically to change

the characters and attitudes of those, the parents, who set the emotional tone of the family, and who are necessarily no longer young? But as one examines a number of real situations it is seen that the issues are, fortunately, not so clear-cut as this. There is a category of unsettlement which arises in part at least from misunderstandings or a misconstruction of essential attitudes. Especially if the parents are of an inexpressive type or if they fear that overt affection will make a child namby-pamby, the latter may suffer from a chronic uncertainty in regard to them, which can only be resolved by submitting their loyalty to rigorous and possibly delinquent test.

It must be admitted, however, that most juvenile anxieties are not fanciful, but are based upon some real defect of parental love and interest. Yet even here, disheartening as the therapist's work will often be, he can encourage himself with the reflexion that utter lack of feeling in a parent is rare enough to be left out of account; not being completely callous, he or she will also be suffering anxiety at the bad relationship. The more vehemently expressed the parental hostility in fact the greater is likely to be this anxiety. One unhappy person within a family circle means other unhappy people. Consequently most parents, approached with the necessary caution, and given time for their resentment to abate or for their inhibitions to dissolve, will be eager to discuss their troubles and to accept suggestions. Probably the majority of unsatisfactory parents are of the moody type, whose own needs for affection are more intense than the ordinary but who are quick to misconstrue or reject. Being also inferior-feeling people, their false pride prevents them making up quarrels, much as they secretly long to do so, and consequently they will be glad of some excuse, such as persuasion by an outsider, to give their son another chance. This

type of parent, owing to their habit of rejection, invariably make tactical mistakes against which they can usefully be warned. The threats they use against their children may bring anxiety and spite to a crisis. Few mothers of this kind realize how seriously young children may take their threats to clear out; and theatrical gestures of putting on hat and coat or packing up belongings, or even temporarily staying away from home, may destroy that implicit trust in the parent-figure upon which a child's personality, and morality, is built.[1] To an antagonistic father the revelation of how deeply distressed his son is at their quarrel may produce a softening of heart. With the most explosive temperaments, nevertheless, where it is felt that no reconciliation, however sincere and warm, can last any great length of time, the therapist may engineer it that the boy attend a voluntary boarding school and spend his holidays at home. It is after all not uncommon for parents and children who cannot live amicably in the same home to get on excellently for short periods.

As yet, needless to say, our experience in treating unsatisfactory family-situations is scanty and not organized

[1] When idle threats are repeated it might be thought that children learn to discount them. To a large extent they do, but the prospect of their mother's leaving the home or otherwise abandoning them is something about which they cannot afford to have any uncertainty whatsoever. And quite apart from the natural credulity of children their need for security induces them to build up a picture of their parents as people to be believed and trusted; they are emotionally conditioned towards belief, so that the alternative of discounting the idle threat, involving as it does a destruction of the integrity of the parent figure, also entails shock and insecurity.

A woman of mature years once told me how, when she was 17, she longed to have her hair cut short (which was then the fashion for grown-ups), but her parents forbade her. In the end she cut it off herself. Her father, a mild man not given to drastic action, told her that if she did not grow it again she would have to clear out and find another home. Absurd as the threat was, she took it seriously, and alarmed at having nowhere to go to if turned out, she grew her hair again.

in any easily available body of knowledge. In due course we shall no doubt be able to draw upon an exact analysis of successes and failures, and be in a position to act with reasonable certainty in each type of case. The first need in our clinical work is for an accurate technique of diagnosis.[1] It must be such as can be used fairly objectively, with suitable training, by the clinical personnel without any suggestion of their requiring special, semi-occult powers. It should also be comprehensive; being a question of systematically taking soundings of the child's behaviour in a number of typical situations and towards given people over its complete lifetime. Provided the soundings taken are relevant ones, the delinquency or other abnormal behaviour will be seen as belonging to a more general pattern of reactions; in other words the causes of the misbehaviour will be disclosed.

It is of the utmost importance, of course, to take the right soundings. Whether one studies a criminal outbreak in relation to the phases of the moon, or racial type, or the quality of the home life, will depend upon the ideas which we bring to bear upon our enquiry. There is, however, a very general contemporary tendency among sociologists and psychologists to think in terms of human relations, that is to say, we investigate the way our patient has behaved towards other people, and the way other people have behaved towards him. (His attitudes to things, while significant, will probably be secondary to his person-attitudes). It is now a question of perfecting a schedule of diagnosis along these lines by many psychologists and other field workers acting in co-operation.

Having made the diagnosis, the next step would be to place the case in one of four broad grades according to the treatment indicated. The first grade would comprise those

[1] See Appendix I.

cases where the family-situation has deteriorated in a large part as a result of mutual emotional misunderstanding or mistaken tradition. It is the English and Scottish fashion to despise sentiment, but in doing so we deprive ourselves of the necessary little rituals for setting misunderstandings right and for the making up of tiffs. Every member of the family occasionally finds that his or her inclinations are thwarted, and it is only human to resent such frustrations. The natural affections of the family are thus subjected to a kind of wear-and-tear, which has to be made good. If there are no rituals for the re-affirmation of the basic affection the petty damage of momentary bad feeling may amount to a general decay; sourness and resentment may become the habitual relationship between parents and children, quite hiding their real concern for each other. Secondly, many parents, purely as a device of discipline, threaten to hand the young child over to the policeman or to some other bogey man, or tell the older boy that they will have him 'put away'. Another variety of the rejection-threat as disciplinary measure is the suggestion that if the child is naughty or disobedient: "Mummy won't love you any more." It is unlikely that such sowing of the seeds of affectional uncertainty will in itself produce break-down, but my recent study of approved-school boys suggested that combined with other unfortunate circumstances it may have this result. For example the child, separated from the parents because of evacuation or other war conditions, may compare the inexpressiveness of parents at home with the affectional spontaneity of foster-parents; or regard the insistence of the parent upon evacuation as a crowning act of rejection. There were other instances where parents allowed the child virtually to be taken over, possibly with an eye to future benefit, by relatives or by well-to-do friends. A mother who leaves a boy with a foster-mother or

in an institution (even though this be inevitable or in his own interest) runs a serious risk of emotional misunderstanding if she reclaims him upon his entry into employment. And to a child who can turn to a lax and pandering grandparent parental discipline and frugality may have the appearance of hardness.

In the second of these 'treatment grades' would be placed those cases in which the mistakes of upbringing were due to wrong emotional attitudes of the parents; but where these, however, were not so gross or ingrained as to be unamenable to re-education. Some parents may be sincerely, even passionately, attached to their children, but being moody people their threats of rejection and desertion will not be routine disciplinary ones, but will be uttered with the force of full intention. In the more extreme cases parents of this type carry their gestures to the point of actually quitting the home for a while, or of refusing to write to the lad once he gets to an approved school. And they are apt to quarrel violently among themselves without regard to the anxieties they create in their children. We are here faced with defects and weaknesses of character, and it is not wise to be optimistic about providing the mature and middle-aged with new personalities; but there is a fund of affection to work upon, and I believe that the *knowledge* of the harmful effects of ill-considered acts and words will, over a period, bring about an improvement in this sort of insightless, temperamental family situation and so render the crises less frequent and less severe. Very similar as regards this lack of insight is the quite unconscious preference which many mothers have for one child. Some favour the youngest because they 'like them young'; babies are as reliable as dogs and cats in their response to petting, and so moody, uncertain mothers feel more confident with them. Other parents favour the

one sex or the other (step-mothers as a class showing a strong preference for girl step-children); while an otherwise affectionate mother may neglect her family, in the emotional sense, during the courting stage prior to a second marriage. As far as fathers are concerned probably the most characteristic well-intentioned mistake is that of forcing upon his children patterns of conduct and achievement which do not correspond to their physical, mental or emotional needs or capabilities. And of this type of mistake probably the worst is the attempt to make children tough and courageous by subjecting them to discomfort, hardship and danger. There is only a fine line between treating children thus because it is felt to be good for them and the callous neglect and hardness indicative of lack of affection. It is very revealing, in E. Arnot Robertson's semi-autobiographical *Ordinary Families,* how the efforts of the adventure-drunk father to toughen his children up to his own standards of physical endurance and risk-taking, and the acquiescence of the mother therein, produced the estrangement, the resentment and even the aloof affection-shallowness found in children who have become convinced that their parents do not care for them.

To these bad parental attitudes and the errors of handling which they generate the child replies in the majority of instances by bad behaviour. In just a few cases its anxiety is so great, or the discipline so repressive, that neurotic or physical breakdown takes the place of naughtiness. But the latter reaction may be described as the normal response of a child to emotional ill-treatment. This is well exemplified in the following record of a conversation between a woman (about to go into hospital) and her friend. The former described her 9-year old son as "a perfect pest and a nuisance":

"I have to nag him from morning till night to make him behave. I don't know what's the matter with him, I can't

understand it, he's frightened of the dark, nervy, noisy and all over the place. I often tell him I'll strangle him in his sleep one of these nights. He drives me mad."

"What will happen to him while you are in hospital?"

"I don't know and I don't care where he goes, I shan't have to bother about him once I am in hospital. I shall just pack my bag and go off—no goodbyes—we are like that in our family."

"Aren't you ever affectionate to him?"

"No, I don't believe in making children soft. Directly I had my children I began to throw them off. That's what you should do with children, especially boys, throw them off, make them independent. We never kiss in our family."

"What is he like at school?"

"Dreadful. I sent the other two children to private schools and they have done well, but it's not worth sending him to a good school. He can't do his work and he's very naughty. He goes to an elementary school; he's not up to winning a scholarship, so I don't know what will happen to him. I should never have had him at all, there's nine years between him and the next one and I didn't really want to be bothered with another baby, he's always been whiney and a nuisance. I could have been having a good time by now as the others are off my hands."

It would be very difficult to condense a greater number of mistaken parental attitudes into so few sentences. Like so many parents, this mother had erected her inability to give her children spontaneous, maternal love into a philosophy. She tries to justify her affection-shyness by deceiving herself that it is correct to dispense with any show of fondness. But in her case there is an aggravating factor: the child was an unwanted one coming nine years after the rest and so upsetting her plans for a "a good time". It never occurs to her

that the grudge she bears him on this account is affecting her treatment of him and is the prime cause of his bad behaviour. She is so lacking in insight that she can 'spill the beans' without any sense of self-reproach. Apart from the idea that naughtiness is due to lack of discipline[1] there is as yet little popular realization that tiresomeness or other undesirable behaviour in a child can be the parents' fault. There is always at hand the conscience-easing doctrine that a child is 'born bad'—a notion which more than any other in our folklore is productive of unhappiness and delinquency. It is important, therefore, gently to induce women of the above type to accept the fact that the child's naughtiness is really a demand for love and security and that if she could train herself to meet these essential demands of child-nature her efforts will not only meet with an unexpectedly rapid response but she will save herself a lot of trouble in the end.

This woman also has the insensitivity and lack of imagination about the feelings of children commonly found in people who are wrapped up in their own emotional troubles. She has never realized that her child has an urge to rely upon and believe her or that he might take her threat of strangulation seriously. And one can foresee that her walking out of the house without saying goodbye and her unexplained absence in hospital are likely to bring about a crisis of delinquency or maladjustment. It might seem impossible to undertake the maternal re-education of a woman of this sort. But if she can only be trained to avoid the howling mistakes she is at present committing and to go through the motions of affection some part of her child's personality will be saved. We are apt to speak of affection in a mushy sort of way, as if it was some mystical spiritual life-essence which is either present or not. Its emotional basis is tender feeling, but what counts

[1] For a fuller note on discipline see the fourth section of Appendix I.

so far as a young child is concerned are the manifestations of affection—untiring concern for its welfare, comfort and safety, together with those daily rites of fondness which in our culture take the form of cuddling, kissing, holding hands when out walking and verbalized endearments. A child may even have to be told that it is loved or otherwise, as a mother recently remarked to me, it may begin to nurse fantasies of unwantedness. Externals, then, are better than nothing, just as we may genuinely enjoy gestures of friendship from people who have no real concern for us. I believe also that for an affectionately inhibited mother dutifully to go through the routine of cherishing her child will help to release her caged-up maternal feelings. People can grow fond of one another through a veil of antagonism. After all, good feeling is the natural and coldness the unnatural state of affairs between people who have to live in close proximity to each other, so we may say that in matters of emotional as of physical health we have nature on our side. Let this thought be the therapist's talisman against discouragement.

To return to our rough categories of domestic situations, we may say that the essence of 'Grade II' is that while the parents are seriously remiss, there is a prospect of successful intervention by the therapist without having to remove the child. At present these parents are allowed to go on making mistakes, so that in the end a family breakdown occurs, and their children, who never need have been parted from them, are expensively relegated to approved schools or other institutions. In practice, until our techniques of family guidance are more fully developed and many different experiences studied and reported, we should be rash to be dogmatic as to whether any particular family will respond to treatment as a complete unit. For some time the procedure in borderline cases will be to try it first, and if no progress is made, to

recommend the removal of those children who seem likely to break down under the family strains.

Grades III and IV might be termed the removal grades. The first would consist of those cases where a deep estrangement has supervened between parent and child but where the latter is likely to settle down happily with some foster-parent of his own choosing, whether it be a grandparent or other relative, evacuation foster-parent, or a friend who is willing to undertake the responsibility. The fourth grade would consist of those cases in which no such substitute was available, and where there was such depravity, weakness, unbalance or fundamental lack of affection in the parents that they would be unlikely to respond to advice, or where the child was a storm-centre of marital conflict as sometimes occurs in step-relationships.

It may be useful to hazard an estimate as to how the 102 approved-school cases previously referred to would be apportioned into these four treatment grades. In eleven it seemed to me that the delinquent breakdown was the result of genuinely mistaken policy and tradition on the part of parents who ordinarily would have passed muster. It can be supposed that in this, the first grade, with correct diagnosis and suitable advice given within a reasonable time of the child's showing the pre-delinquent symptoms the delinquency would have been avoided.

There would have been 40 'Grade II' cases—where there would have been a sporting chance of helping the family over its emotional difficulties without having to remove the child. In 13 further cases the child might well have settled down with some substitute-parent of its own choosing. (And there is no reason why the standard boarding-out allowance should not have been given). Apart from two boys with neither parents nor relatives this leaves 36 in the fourth grade of

unamenable parents. Here the only sensible thing to do would be to remove the child before it was driven to delinquency and/or was emotionally maimed for life. Owing to the smallness of the sample these figures must be taken as only a rough indication of the probable effectiveness of preventive treatment and of the extent to which children needlessly become a public charge.

There are additional reservations to be made. First, as already admitted, we have not yet enough experience of family therapy to say with any confidence what our expectation of success with Grade II would be. Secondly, most of these boys had already passed through the sieve of probation and the normal means of deterrence, and so would not be representative of the general run of unsettled children referred for diagnosis. Among the latter there would probably be a large proportion suffering from some temporary anxiety due to some specific mistake in handling. (That is, Grade I would be expected to be much larger). For example, I have met cases of boys of six or younger breaking out in extremely difficult behaviour because they have heard, without understanding what it means, that their parents intend to send them away to boarding school.

The word 'advice', as used above, needs some clarification. It does not mean a general exhortation to the backslider to improve his conduct. When people are emotionally hard-pressed neither the appeal to moral principles nor to that of enlightened self-interest is likely to avail. It is often possible to reduce a lad to the most heart-felt and tearful penitence; but this will not prevent his being bowled over the next time he finds himself in a situation which touches off his weaknesses.

Such people can only be reformed by effecting a significant alteration in their life-situation. It is necessary not only to alter their attitudes to other people, but those of other

people to them. Family therapy, therefore, would consist in the first place in showing, in ordinary human terms that the parents and child can understand, how the difficulties have come about. Whatever defences of bravado or antagonism or pride any member of the family may assume, each one of them will be fundamentally uneasy and unhappy and eager at heart to find a way out of the impasse. But they must be shown a way of doing so without losing face, for it is pride which mostly stands in the way of spontaneous conciliation. Nor need we despair of our ability to give insight, for we are dealing with what is within the feeling-experience of everyone. Human relationships rest upon an unlearnt basis of instinctive reaction. Nearly all personal difficulties are the product of anxiety and uncertainty. Rather than risk being rejected we get rejection in first; it saves one's self-respect to be aloof or antagonistic if one feels that friendliness will be snubbed. And so a boy who thinks that his parents have no interest in him and wish him out of the way will try to make himself affectionately independent of them, or 'draw into his shell'. (There is a folk-terminology for all the basic emotional reactions, which it is well worth the while of the therapist to study and to use). The parents themselves, if they are conditioned to uncertainties, will interpret this inexpressiveness as indifference, and satisfy their own emotional needs by favouring another member of the family. And so, with many variants of rejection and counter-rejection, tensions are wound up in a vicious circle, with pride and resentment acting as ratchets to prevent the unwinding. People sometimes long for some excuse to make up a quarrel and often seize upon some extraneous happening which will enable them to do so without humiliation. It is in such situations that the intervention of an outsider will not come amiss.

These notes are intended to indicate the possibilities of therapy rather than to give a comprehensive statement of principles (wich must await the advance of knowledge). Nevertheless one of these principles must be mentioned lest too rapid results be expected. The ways in which we behave and feel towards people are in the nature of emotional habits, and no habit can be cured merely by the act of recognition. This is all the more so, since our essential person-attitudes begin to be formed from our earliest childhood. The view that they are exclusively formed then is no longer tenable in view of the abundant evidence of continuous adaptation. But bad attitudes are of long standing and tough, and with the best will in the world and the clearest insight we cannot shake them off easily. Consequently it is necessary to warn the patient against discouragement: however hard he tries he must expect the bad reactions sometimes to catch him unawares. Yet if he persists they will do so less frequently and less disastrously. Similarly it is well to warn parents not to expect any sudden reformation in a child who has developed deep-set habits of estrangement and resentment against them. Sudden improvements of course there may be, but they will be frail, and the disappointment caused by a relapse may be dangerous unless forestalled by warning.

For our encouragement it is good to reflect what an astonishing capacity young people have for getting on an even keel again once the squall has blown itself out. Mere removal from the anxiety-creating situation is sufficient to restore the majority of approved-school lads to common sense and stability—this being the reason why many approved-school people find it so difficult to believe that such normal boys are erstwhile breakdown-cases. And they show themselves pathetically willing to make a fresh start with parents by whom they have been emotionally ill-treated—a willingness in fact

which, considering the character of the latter, often partakes of fantasy. Human nature possesses this resilience because it is more natural and agreeable to be good. Wickedness is a form of maldevelopment and stunted growth, and brings its own pains.

CHAPTER THREE

THE COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL

"A happy child will always learn and hear."
CHAUCER, *The Prioress's Tale*.[1]

SOCIOLOGICALLY, every human being may be thought of as a single cell whose growth consists in a series of reactions to surrounding cells. This growth cannot be understood except in terms of these relationships, which, complicated and ever changing though they be, seem to obey unchanging laws—laws which make the study of Man, whether in literature or in science, possible. One of the chief laws of his nature enjoins upon him membership of a close-knit group. This does not mean that he has always to be physically in close proximity with a certain number of his fellows, but somewhere the group has to be in existence. Without it healthy emotional life is out of the question.

We are also coming to realize that the group itself (which for practical purposes means the family or some family-like substitute) cannot function as an isolated organ. Just as the individual cells of the body develop by inter-action, so the family, emotionally as well as economically, draws sustenance and takes its shape from community influences. The single family-group is too tiny a unit to contain the expansive human material of which it consists; and the interplay of the human impulses within itself will not spontaneously shape it into an integral part of the social design. When the patently unsuccessful or 'problem' family comes to be discussed this becomes doubly apparent. But in our present

[1] Neville Coghill's translation.

social conditions it is not only this type of family which suffers from being isolated. Even the most normal of families need to be within visiting distance of relatives or to be in close contact with intimate friends who may be called relative-substitutes. Upon these we rely for variety in companionship, for physical and material support in times of illness or other difficulty, for emotional support when we are miserable or lonely, for encouragement when we are despondent and for stiffening when we are negligent. These are the guarantees of the maintenance of our cultural tradition and the safeguards against demoralisation. In the British countryside and to a certain extent in the older and more settled working class areas of the towns each family is part of a constellation of relatives and old friends, that is to say, a fraction of a clan-like social group which is intermediate between it and the population at large. A family torn from this setting by migration to another part, or even by being re-housed in a large new estate among strangers and with no communal life, will be deprived of this social support. If it already contains some element of instability, then in the re-assorting of neighbours and play-fellows it is likely to be shunned or forced to associate with other less desirable families. The incidence of delinquency, as every social worker knows, tends to be high in the new housing estates. This is certainly in part due to their containing a number of disreputable families who have been brought from slum areas; but visits to the homes of council estate delinquents give the impression that they are no more members of typical 'breakdown' families than lads living in other districts.[1]

[1] Among the 102 boys studied in my recent enquiry, 36 lived in council houses, and 14 more had migrated with their parents from other parts. Since 12 other boys had no family accommodation, only 40 of the 102 came from non-council houses in districts where they had grown up. In other words, families who had lived for a long time in

The effect of uprooting a family and planting it elsewhere among strangers has a twofold effect upon the children: they are bereft of their habitual playmates, and they are cut off from their favourite relatives. Where, as in most cases, there is a primary bond of affection between the children and their parents these extra-familial severances will hardly matter: their parents are likely to make new friends and the children themselves new playmates. But where the relatives have become substitute-parents, or the child's human world is entirely centred upon its age-contemporaries, the removal may spell breakdown, and did so in quite a number of the cases included in the above quoted figures. I believe that research would show the high delinquency-rate in our council-houses to be partly due to the inability of the uprooted families to attach themselves to a new 'sub-clan'.

We can no longer afford to rely upon the spontaneous cohesive power that groups of people have. Natural communities are welded into social organisms in response to myriads of individually felt needs and collective intuitions. It is a slow process, based upon no consciously analysed development, but progressing tentatively by the solution of contemporary requirements. The method has been one of trial and error, rightness or wrongness being decided by the success or failure of the community. The haphazardly planted colonies of North America succumbed until they accepted the social discipline of Dissenting pastors or Catholic priests. So long as the failure of a community is a local, circumscribed

settled working or middle class districts contributed fewer to this sample of approved-school boys than did council tenants and local immigrants. Before any definite conclusions are drawn from these figures, however, it will be necessary to study a much larger sample and to find out what proportion of working class families as a whole fall into these various categories. Of the 14 'breakdown' families—where severe delinquency and/or neurosis extended to more than one of the children—five were council tenants and five local immigrants.

disaster, the law of survival remains, racially speaking, a practical one. But when communities are nation- and continent-wide there is no alternative but to replace the primitive organizing rituals by a science of social development. Industrialism with its vast growth, shifting of population and reintegration of social classes has in any case outpaced collective intuition, and the nation has been broken up into millions of individuals and families with little communal coherence. This, on the social plane, is largely the explanation of our endemic delinquency-problem. It can be more closely analysed in terms of individual anxiety and breakdown and of failures in personal relationships; but these psychological events are referable to our defective social relationships. It is an anthropological truism that the breaking up of a community-structure entails the demoralization of its component individuals unless some happy alternative social pattern emerges. Since, in summary, we cannot afford to rely on the haphazard emergence typical of the old social rituals, and since in any case they develop too slowly, we shall have to think and plan sociologically, that is to say, knowingly to plan and encourage new social techniques.[1]

The above is a long preface to our specific discussion—of what the school can most urgently do to save children from delinquency. But the role of the school and club cannot be understood apart from this community-family-individual cycle of cause and effect.

To indulge in a wholesale criticism of a national educational system from one point of view—that of reducing the delin-

[1] The concept of 'social integration' which is implied in the above remarks and which runs through the following chapters has become a basic one in social anthropology. The reader will appreciate its meaning in a modern European community, and be brought to realise how 'disintegrated' our urban conglomerations are, if he allows himself the pleasure of studying *Life in a Welsh Countryside* by Alwyn Rees (Univ. of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1950).

quency-rate—would be a piece of one-sided arrogance. It is also difficult to put forward new perspectives without seeming to disparage the spectacular progress which has been made in British education during the present century. The greater the progress, however, the greater possibilities of further progress are brought within our ken. Thirty or forty years ago middle-class parents would use 'the Council School' as a threat to their children when they were naughty; to-day middle-class children go to the state school as a matter of course. It is probably because two generations of teachers have so largely succeeded in civilising us as a nation that we are now in a position to attend in detail to the happiness of each individual child.

It might be said that this civilising mission of the teacher, as regards his or her contacts with the child in school, is in the main fulfilled. The delinquency, the maladjustment and probably much of the unteachability that we now have originate in the home life. If the teacher is to exercise an effective counteracting influence and help these children to build better characters, his association with each pupil must be closer and longer than our contemporary form of school organization permits; each child, especially the unsettled and naughty one, must be understood in relation to his home background. A school is organized at present according to the exigencies of the instruction. Each teacher is responsible for imparting a quota of knowledge to a particular year-group of children. This accomplished, the latter pass on to the next teacher, when the process of getting to know begins afresh. A rigid instructional framework is preventing the teacher from embarking upon a new phase of his social mission. If, having made us a civilized nation, the teacher is henceforth to make us a happy one, the paramount consideration must be a more enduring personal influence by the

teacher upon each group of children. Rather than relinquish each class after one year it should not be impossible to arrange for a class to remain under the tutorship of the same teacher for the 3–4 years of each schooling phase. The teacher would then be able, without an altogether impossible addition to his or her duties, to get to know the families around their own firesides of those children who are suspected of being handicapped and unsettled by their home circumstances. (With our large classes and shortage of teachers this is perhaps the most that can be hoped for at present).[1]

It may be asked in what ways such an extension of the teacher's social function would help to alleviate delinquency and its associated problems. The first, that a family near breaking point or one which is in danger of becoming demoralized is encouraged by the friendly interest of an outside person; their feeling of self-worth is enhanced and they have some incentive to improve their standards. After all it is not only the demoralized housewife who smartens up the house preparatory to a visit. The writer's experience in visiting parents of both day-school and approved-school children is that not only were they appreciative, but that from then on he was on a completely different footing with the child. One is a friend of the family. This introduces the

[1] A head teacher who had had some twenty-seven years experience in primary schools, which included that of a class-teacher retaining the same group of children year after year, recently made the following observations to me after the above was written:—

> "It takes six months for a class of *normal* children and their teacher to begin to know each other well. By the end of a year, when the children move on to another class-teacher, the personal relationship has reached its best and is beginning to bear fruit. The move means that the process must begin all over again. (With backward children the getting-to-know period is usually longer). On the other hand, three years of one teacher with one class of normal children is too much. A change every two years would be better, but of course much depends on the individual personality of the teacher." I defer to his experience.

second advantage: breakdown only occurs when the child sees no way out of its emotional dilemma, and above all has no alternative to the unsatisfactory human relationships of its home. This is not to say that a teacher can accept the responsibility of becoming a substitute-parent, but he or she can provide just that amount of continued interest and good feeling which may give encouragement to a child in an otherwise desperate situation. Again, the writer has witnessed the pathetic importance which approved-school boys, who are otherwise absolutely alone in the world, attach to the interest of a sympathetic outsider. The third advantage hangs upon the advisability of spotting the unhappy child at an early stage. Rather than repeat earlier remarks or forestall the diagnostic hints given in Appendix I, it were best to reinforce this point by quoting Sir Martin Roseveare, Chief Inspector of Schools:

> "For instance, juvenile delinquency. . . . The particular lad, for instance, who has made a bad start—is he, or was he, on our school-roll? If so, looking back (for the benefit of the future) what symptoms were there which might have told us (or did tell us) that things were going awry? Looking forward, what can we do with him and for him? Do we understand him? Have we secured his confidence? What can we do to help to rehabilitate him? How can we ensure that his life contains enough elements that are healthily stimulating, that demand real effort by him and that bring him a sense of achievement and success and well-being? If we are lucky enough to have none who have been 'up against it', are we, nevertheless, on the look-out? Are there any tell-tale signs of aloofness, moroseness, truancy, gangsterdom, which will call for all the tact and judgment of which we are capable?"[1]

[1] From Sir Martin Roseveare's address to the Easter Conference, 1950, of the National Union of Teachers.

It may further be asked why these particular functions of the social practitioner should devolve upon the teacher (who would certainly require time free of teaching duties for such work). The reply would be that the teacher is already in daily touch with the child; that he or she has the best of reasons, without arousing suspicion or fear of administrative action, for visits to the parents; that such a relationship between parent and teacher is natural, human and direct, free of the delay and distance of official procedure. Furthermore, the school-child in need of some supplement to the interest and affection which it gets at home does turn to its teacher under present conditions. With the variety which this work outside the classroom would bring and the widening of his or her social responsibilities, the teacher may gain a higher sense of purpose and fulfilment. The capacity for work of all of us is expanded by the zest of achievement and diminished by frustration. It is also quite feasible that the improvement of the human relationships within the school will more than compensate, in terms of the amount of learning, for a slightly lessened instructional time; and the emotional stability of a nation is an economic asset which it is worth a little extra expense and effort to contrive. The majority of teachers are not, of course, formally qualified in the diagnosis of juvenile unsettlement. But because of their choice of, and continuance in, their profession, they are usually people with human feelings. Without specific training the experienced teacher can spot that there is something wrong with a child; if the symptoms persist the more expert diagnostician and therapist would be consulted.[1]

[1] Study is in progress at the Bristol University Institute of Education of the behaviour and attitudes of normal, backward and unsettled children such as can be observed by the school teacher. From this, it is hoped, will result a comprehensive Personality-Guide which will enable the teacher to recognise the early symptoms with greater certainty than has hitherto been possible, and to report systematically upon them.

Delinquency and truancy tend to go in families. Where they are a family tradition the influence of a teacher, even for three or four years with an individual child, may be unavailing. Once matters have got beyond the scope of informal friendship and encouragement it is rather a job for the school welfare officer (formerly known, before his or her social function was widened, as the school attendance officer). Few of them, no doubt, would feel confident in taking responsibility for the emotional health of the truant's (or other unhappy child's) family, but this is due to the newness of our knowledge rather than to any deficiency in the school welfare service itself. As we see more clearly what part this service can play in our social scheme, so improved courses of training can be arranged; and we shall have to rely, as I later suggest in respect of the probation officer, upon the practitioner in the field to contribute to our knowledge of the truant, the misfit and the backward child. Considering that a large part of the duty and interest of the teacher must always be in the actual teaching, there will always be a need for a body of men and women, such as our school welfare service represents, whose main business is the emotional health of the schoolchild. If some major addition to a social pattern is required, mere exhortation to already overworked people to cope with the need is likely to be unavailing; just as a primitive folk organize themselves for the fulfilment of the necessary task by means of a ritual, so we have to give this need administrative shape, which mostly means making it someone's job. The school welfare service should be given the facilities to fill this gap; and when eventually the individual teacher is in a position to undertake the First Aid work of family therapy it may be anticipated that the school welfare officer will, by his experience and ability to specialize, have made himself into a more expert diagnostician and adviser.

With our expanding social services many people are feeling that too much responsibility is being taken from the parents. A closer connection between the teacher and the home would, on the contrary, have the object of heightening the parents' sense of responsibility. The teacher (or other home-visitor-cum-family-friend) would aim at persuading them to conform to modern standards of caring for their children, at easing family tensions, patching up estrangements and misunderstandings, counteracting favouritisms and tactfully referring to the mistaken acts and words by which so many unsuspecting and good-hearted parents worsen family relations. The family adviser will indeed only succeed by educating parents to a higher responsibility. As a last resort, however, when he judges that his efforts to do so will fail, or finds in practice that they have failed, he will have to recommend a removal of the child to other care. To be obstinate about parental responsibility in such cases is to condemn the child to life-long instability and unhappiness, and to prepare for society an economic burden, a potential criminal and an infecting point of unhappiness and ill-will in others.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE YOUTH CLUB

"The things which our friends do with and for us form a portion of our lives; for they strengthen and advance our personality."

GOETHE, *Reflections and Maxims.*

IT is frequently observed by magistrates and others how very few of the young people who are brought before the courts are members of a youth organization. This, of course, may be due to the good influence of the latter and to the opportunities for harmless leisure which they provide; or to their failures to attract, or at least to retain, the potentially delinquent types of youth. It is impossible to know, with our present sociological technique at any rate, to what extent youth leaders do prevent the development of anti-social attitudes by the provision of good human experiences. One feels at any rate that the cumulative social effect must be considerable; and it would be wrong to deride our club movement because, by and large, it caters for the normal boy and girl. Every adolescent is in need of a framework for social broadening, and the main function of the youth club must be to provide this for the ordinary, sensible young people who run no danger of relapsing into criminalism anyway. There is, however, much evidence of a general kind accumulating to the effect that the club movement has tended to limit itself, in practice if not in explicit purpose, to those who are unlikely to become social problems. Of the 102 delinquents with whom the writer had to deal only two had remained long in any youth organization, although many had sampled one kind or another. One can, in effect, make the cautious observation

that our club movement does not attract, and therefore does not help, our *unsettled* youth.

A second criticism can be made, more serious because it concerns those whom it does attract. It should be the main function of a club to provide a locus for the exercise of good human relations; the leader should be in a position to set the tone in fellowship, and this entails the exercise of positive *personal* good feeling between himself and each club member. There is no sharp line between formal therapy and just being friendly and thoughtful for the personality of others. (We are all aware of the power that other people have to evoke either good or bad attitudes in ourselves). Yet this essential function of club-ness, even if nowhere denied, is not explicitly enough recognized at the present time for it to be consistently translated into policy and given organizational expression. The official adoption and subsidizing of the youth movement have brought with it a danger that its progress may be counted in numbers—in the numbers of young people who avail themselves of the entertainment space provided. The existence of a youth club, however, is not necessarily a good thing in itself; and a large, impersonal one, even though it functions smoothly as an institution, may be of negative value. This same contradiction between purpose and form was expressed at a recent refresher course for youth leaders; a youth committee chairman was quoted as saying to an applicant for a job: "We have 800 members in our Club. You'll get to know them all personally, won't you?" Always to be on the edge of knowing people and yet never quite, having to control personal actions without personal understanding, such situations are in themselves frustrating and fraught with incipient antagonisms. The influence of anyone, in the fellowship-sense, is limited by the size of the natural intimacy-circle. The hostility and aggressiveness which may

manifest itself in a gathering of 50 persons will be absent in a discussion among 12 or less.[1]

All this does not mean that large clubs should be discontinued and their premises abandoned, but that they should become organically more differentiated. That is to say, they should be divided into stable 'sub-clans', each of which would be too small to allow any club member to be an outsider or a stranger to the people he has to mix with.[2] It means also that the club leader, if his influence is going to be effective, must work within a group sufficiently small for him to have his topics of conversation and varied style of fellowship with each one of its members. He should be on such terms that if he chooses to drop in at a boy's home he will be naturally wel-

[1] Since the above was written I have been privileged to read the manuscript of what will certainly come to be regarded not only as the standard history of the Boys' Club movement, but also a classic of social history: Mr. W. McG. Eagar's forthcoming work on the origins of the Youth Movement. I was struck by the remarkable parallel between our present boys'-club problems and those of the early pioneers, and also by the amount of valuable experience which, but for Mr. Eagar's patient research, would have gone to waste.

In general the early workers amongst boys in our big cities adhered firmly to the small-club principle: "Historically, personal friendship, uncalculating and needing no formulas, has been the effective element in Boys' Club work." But in Manchester, under the influence of the go-getter extravert Alexander Devine, the mass-club came into being. However, it never shook the faith of the London men in their own methods. ". . . It may be fairly assumed that the emphasis placed by Pelham on personal influence implied some criticism of the recently founded Manchester Clubs with their membership rolls of several hundreds. He repeatedly stressed that word 'personal'; 'Personal influence is one of the first conditions of success.' Though there might be a committee of gentlemen to manage the Club, personal work with the members was best done by one man unfailing in attendance. The rougher types of boys would only be held to the Club by warm personal friendship."

[2] I am told that in practice this is difficult to achieve, but here again there is scope for experiment. Once the need for the formation of smaller groups is generally recognized people with more general club experience than I have had will probably find a way of giving it practical shape.

come. The reported objection of club members to the leader's visiting their homes is understandable when he is a virtual stranger. It is, however, not for a comparative outsider like the writer to lay down the precise organizational forms by which this ideal may be realized, except that, as is apparent, the large clubs will have to utilize a larger number of regular voluntary leaders.

In laying this stress upon the human side of club life I do not wish to disparage the usual run of club activities. Whereas training in arts and crafts or in the use of leisure in general must be regarded as incidental to the main purpose of a club, nevertheless a style of fellowhip may develop around a work bench or on a playing field. Our need for good relationships has the purpose, in the evolution of the human race, of permitting people to do things together, and it can best be fulfilled through doing.

So much for the club's internal health. It remains to enquire how its scope can be widened; how, in other words, those young people who for one reason or another do not join a club or, having joined, leave within a short while, can be brought within reach of the cultural influences we wish to provide and be weaned away from those we regard as deleterious? The recent research of Mr. E. F. Piercy into the turnover of club membership suggests that about one-third leave within six months.[1] Despite the factors which make a fair degree of 'leakage' inevitable, this strikes the outsider as an astonishingly high proportion, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that many young people go away disappointed.

It would be false to conclude that the 'unclubbables' are such by nature. All adolescents, barring the inhibited and the withdrawn who seek to deny their own emotional needs, naturally form themselves into groups of two or more; it is

[1] See also similar evidence in Bryan Reed's *Eighty Thousand Adolescents*.

part of that venturing out beyond the family sphere which growing-up entails. Groups will be formed, if not within our sphere of cultural and moral influence, then without it. Usually it is a little noticed process, except when the group becomes a gang, and only very recently have psychologists and sociologists begun to study its laws.

Yet these laws constitute the sociological knowledge which alone can tell us with any certainty why clubs fail to meet the needs of such a large proportion of young people. For my theory I am indebted once again to the analysis—hitherto only privately circulated—of Mr. E. F. Piercy, who set out to discover what common features there were between the individual members of informal friendship-groups, in other words to discover the principles governing group-formation. On my own responsibility I shall interpret his findings below. The first and most obvious common factor was similarity of age; the vast majority of old club members had friends who were the same age as themselves within a year—although this may have been due largely to their having been schoolmates in the same class. Secondly, their friends tended to come from the same street or group of streets. Thirdly, they mostly shared the same recreational interests, which meant that they would probably have somewhat similar temperaments as regards degree of restlessness, need for physical activity, desire for adventure, and so on. Fourthly, there seemed to be a 'status' factor. Young people dislike associating with those who are markedly superior or inferior to themselves, whether it be in operative intelligence, social grade or achievement level. Fifthly, and most important for our enquiry, he identified what might be called a moral factor, or as the proverb runs, "Birds of a feather flock together." My own slight club experience (with delinquent boys) corroborates this finding. Those who were prone to bad or suspicious feelings towards

people in general, and towards the adult world in particular, tended to find satisfaction in each other's companionship. This class of lad, furthermore, was shunned by those with good person-attitudes, that is to say, with good moral feelings.

Here is the crux of every club leader's dilemma: the 'bad type' cannot be rejected out of hand, but his inclusion will lower the tone of the club and so drive away the better members. An unsettled lad may well be helped on his way to criminality by being excluded; for society will seem to be rejecting him, as previously he had been rejected, neglected or ignored by his family and he may be expected to reply to society by those same acts of counter-rejection and resentment that he has learned to use against unsatisfactory parents.

Can we then form special 'bad boys' clubs'? Scarcely.[1]

[1] The early pioneers formed what they called Rough Boys' Clubs. It is doubtful, however, if these were clubs of what we now call 'bad types' or whether the vast cultural gulf between the East-End youth of the 70's and the University men who worked among them did not give the latter the impression that all the local boys were 'rough'. Nevertheless their experience is interesting; of Dr. Stanfield's club Mr. Eagar writes: ". . . Slowly but perceptibly something new crept into the outlook of many Bermondsey boys. Rough-houses fell out of fashion, sport, and particularly boxing, were seen to be possible and more attractive. Club members themselves quelled riotous outsiders and brought them in. Orderliness of their own making appeared to be pleasant." This last observation may be the key to our present quandary. Self-government within the club or club-group seems to have practical advantages apart from its value as a training in democracy: it may be the only possible means of holding together boys of a certain type. The pioneers found it the easiest way of introducing order, even though success meant the continual founding of new clubs for each group of disorderly boys: "Putting the management of a Rough Boys' Club in the hands of its members invariably results in its ceasing to be a club for rough boys. The established members become self-respecting; that is as it should be. They also become exclusive, barring out new members who seem likely to discredit the Club. The manager has on occasion to be advocate for tough and unruly youngsters whose behaviour and appearance is no worse than the senior boys were when they were first admitted to membership. The Oxford House men discovered that truth for themselves." (W. McG. Eagar, *op. cit.*)

But we shall have to think very hard how we can not only avoid pushing these types into crime, but get them to accept our companionship. Here again Mr. Piercy's fifth principle is relevant: youths no more than any of us like associating with snobs and prigs. Some of the unclubbables with whom I have discussed the matter bore a positive animosity against members of a well-ordered youth club, which is sometimes reflected in a gang's molesting of club members. The latter are regarded as 'pi' or as 'sissies'. It seems evident that a club which aims at attracting the 'black sheep' will lose its clientele if any direct teaching of moral principles is attempted; they feel inferior when faced with a moral tone which they cannot themselves achieve. The higher the standard which a club sets itself, the more it will tend within its neighbourhood to make the white whiter and the black blacker. In any case principles have no effect upon the unprincipled; they can only be won over by charity (in its basic sense of having kindly feelings towards people), with little assumption of superiority, moral or otherwise.

If we set out seriously to win over the less reputable we must make a close study of their propensities and above all of the personal weaknesses which either keep them away from clubs or which render them failures within the club society. One or more of the following character-types will probably be found among club misfits. Firstly, there will be the 'bad mixers' who shrink from a crowd with the assumption of its hostility and of their own social incompetence. Once they have broken the ice they make firm friendships, and will gang up with their own type, but they will not approach a fresh social group unless introduced cautiously to it by someone they already trust. Secondly, there is the suspicious, paranoiac type who are quick to imagine that others have their knife into or are shunning them, and will answer a rebuke

by ceasing to attend the club. They are also quick to sense favouritism, failing to realize that by their unfriendliness they render themselves unattractive or that by their reticence they remain unnoticed. Even when shown kindness or attention their instinct is to discount it by the seeking of some ulterior motive, and they may test the sincerity of well-wishers by making themselves a nuisance. Only too often they succeed in getting themselves once more rejected. Thirdly, there are those in whom inferiority is the dominant trait. The most flagrant disturbers of club society, they attempt to redress their status by petty aggressiveness—interfering with other lads who want to read or play a peaceful game, indulging in pranks such as the hiding of personal belongings, retorting truculently to correction, flying into tempers, and exasperating others by their bravado and bragging. Lastly, there are the excitement seekers, who, even if they are not ill-intentioned, crave for a constant variety of activity and surroundings, yet whose restlessness debars them from any activity needing concentration or steady effort. They are always ready for 'a bit of fun' and thus susceptible to the evil suggestions of others; for the prospect of getting away with wrongdoing has the thrill of winning or losing a game.

Finally, since youthful unsettlement has a unitary basis in unhappy human experience, there will be a tendency for all of these four undesirable behaviour-patterns to be present in each club misfit. Our problem, then, resolves itself into how we can cope with each of these failings, either by overcoming them, turning them to good, or at least deflecting them, until they are outgrown, to harmless outlets. It is obvious that a club movement with these wider objectives would have to re-think hitherto accepted theory, organizational forms and strategy.

There is a large overlapping between the first two types

mentioned above, the bad mixers and the suspicious, anti-social elements. They will be awkward in a crowd, having as it were an outcast-complex. Therefore, their club group must be a small one, so small that they cannot be overlooked. It must be special and exclusive, so that they have the security and the superiority of belonging; and new members would only be admitted by general consent ceremonially given.[1]

The adult leader of this type of gang-club must of course be capable of living within the world of the members (even if he has supplementary worlds which he does not share with them). This does not mean descending to a prevailing level of uncouthness; in some respects he will have to retain a certain superiority, but if he takes an interest in his lads and puts himself out for them in small things this will have the advantage of elevating rather than belittling. Any suggestion of a reforming mission will be resented as an unjustified piece of moral bullying. Furthermore, he will have to show trust in every club member, even if he does not feel it. There is nothing which tips a lad over into dishonesty more easily than the awareness of not being trusted. On the other hand, a lad used to suspicion who suddenly finds someone trusting him completely feels enormously flattered; his natural reaction is to live up to his new-found reputation. Every person has

[1] In my evening club of approved-school boys we had an elaborate admission ritual. The candidate's name had first to come before a general assembly of members. After a month's trial membership his name would come up again for final voting in, while he waited outside. He would then be ushered into the assembly by a special officer who had previously instructed him and the other newcomers in the ceremonial. Standing in the circle of members he would be asked if he had read the club rules and would promise to keep them, after which, as the Chairman shook hands with him and gave him a club badge the assembly clapped and hailed him a member ("Good old So-and-So"—). After this he could never be expelled; he belonged. The worst that could happen was that he could be suspended for a month, or that the Club itself could fail. The 'leakage' of members was negligible.

an equipment of good and bad attitudes; the so-called training of character consists in causing the good ones, by constant operation, to work easily, while letting the bad rust and grow stiff from disuse. The good responses are evoked by the good attitudes of others, the bad by the bad. Even if a boy does not always come up to the expected standard, he will, by a simple rule of personality-arithmetic, be so much the better for being trusted.

The form of the small gang-club must depend upon local facilities and opportunity. The more romantic and esoteric its premises are the better, and they should have something of the character of a den. It is a fair assumption to make of every type of unsettled boy that he feels ill at ease within his own home—whether it be due to the awkwardness and tension that comes of estrangement and mistrust, or because some family anxiety is pressing him hard, or he feels that in his own domestic circle he does not count. So he will want to spend as much time as possible outside it. If he is of the type who feels that other members of the family are favoured before him he will probably crave some substitute domestic atmosphere and look for alternative parent-figures. All those to whom their home circle is an emotionally disturbing situation will want some other centre to which they feel they belong, whence they can repair and meet their friends when they have nothing to do, and which is sufficiently warm and comfortable for social intercourse. If such lads are unwelcome in the large official youth club, or feel themselves to be, it is understandable that they will resort to night cafés, billiard saloons and amusement arcades, where they are likely to meet other delinquent elements and be taken into the service of professional 'fences'. The vast majority of the youthful house-, shop-, office- and warehouse-breakers in any urban centre do in fact frequent such places. The answer is

not to blame or penalise those who are providing these facilities, but to see that such needs are met by people who have a better sense of social responsibility. Young people congregate round a particular coffee stall not because of the quality of the coffee, but because George and his wife who serve and chat and yarn with them are companionable people. There is no reason why the club leader of the future should not run his evening café or even refreshment stall.[1]

To keep the excitement-seeker out of mischief more enterprising types of club must be devised, which again must depend upon local facilities. Such lads, although they may not be running serious risks, like to imagine that they are. Nor is it necessary to engage them in a continuous round of adventure. Once they become keen upon some exciting pastime, the memories of past exploits and the mental rehearsing of future ones will feed their fantasies, just as the angler catches trout in his city office.

Excitement can be roughly analysed into four main categories as far as our British culture is concerned. There is the risk of being caught and punished, which accounts for the greater part of juvenile mischief, from the unauthorised knocking at front doors and running away, to breaking into premises. There is the risking of money, as in betting and gambling. There is the prospect of a game being won or lost, whether the subject is a player or a spectator. And, there is the element of danger,[2] which, however, owing to our highly developed instinct of preservation, need be only very small indeed to produce the necessary thrill. If the

[1] For a development of this idea see the memorandum entitled *A Project for Unclubbables* prepared by P. H. K. Kuenstler and obtainable from him at 22 Berkeley Square, Bristol 8.

[2] I omit that form of pseudo-excitement which consists in watching others take risks, as in bull-fighting, in circus turns such as high tight-rope walking, and to a certain extent in motor-racing.

instinct can be relied upon to produce particular and unusual physical sensations, so much the better, hence the thrills of height and speed. Excitement-seeking youths like working on roofs or tall ladders. For the many who have not such chances in their employment we might provide climbing clubs. The art of tree-climbing with irons that our fathers practised has fallen into decay, and wherever large chalk or gravel cuttings are at hand they might offer scope for a new local sport, in the same way that our forefathers devised their games from whatever facilities their surroundings provided. Speed has a sure appeal. Before the war a youth could amuse himself, even if he annoyed the public, with a £5 motor cycle. Perhaps it would be provoking the gods to pray for such times back; the obvious alternative is to make dirt-track riding much more a national sport than it is at present, and to have junior sections attached to each track. A further advantage of this sport is that, giving such scope to the practising amateur, it does not lend itself to serious betting. Other forms of sport which might be brought within the reach of working class youth are parachute-jumping, ice-hockey and swimming.[1]

Lastly, we come to the fourth category of unclubbable, the inferiority-compensator who asserts himself by nuisance and bravado. My experience of his type is that despite their recklessness they are not brave people, and that, freed from the taunts and the challenge of their mates, they would seek fulfilment in more cautious hobbies. To provide this type with the opportunity for more bravado only strains his nerves, increases his sense of inner cowardice and, until he cracks up, provokes yet more foolhardiness. All one can say in principle

[1] Our open-air baths are mostly too expensive, too few in number and too small, and there is a lack of instructors to teach diving, water-polo, etc.

of the inferiority type is that he must be given a chance to redress his status by desirable methods and be discouraged from the easy pseudo-compensations which will be offered him. The remedy for each individual depends largely upon his intellectual level, his skill in drama, music or art, his craftsmanship or his athletic prowess. But he must be kept away from those who would dare him into delinquent and other foolhardy acts. I believe that this type more than any can benefit by the insight into their foolishness that the friendly guidance of some senior person can give. Again the answer is a small group under the guidance of an 'instructor' who is also a friend and adviser. (It would perhaps be too iconoclastic to hint that the arts, literature and other 'higher things' are not repositories of Value in themselves but only in so far as they offer topics for friendship or heighten self-feeling without lowering it elsewhere—in short that they subserve a human end).

It was a great surprise to me to find what emphasis some of the 19th century club pioneers laid upon self government as the most sensible way of running a club in which they had no formal means of discipline. It is a characteristic of the inferior-feeling youth that he cannot brook the taking of orders. A discipline imposed from the outside is in itself a challenge to truculence and opposition. If, however, he is himself part of the governing body his reaction is quite different, for he does not feel his status impaired. I do not know to what extent the general run of youth clubs are self-governing to-day, but from conversations with youth leaders I have gained the impression that the principle is less in vogue than formerly. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for our failure to attract a wider clientèle. Even where a club has a democratic constitution it all too often only provides for periodic, perhaps annual, election of club officers and committee. But

a year is a very long time in an adolescent's life. If he has joined since the last election he may feel that the established officers are outsiders 'bossing him about' just as much as if they had been nominated by authority. A committee can also assume the position of a ruling oligarchy over whom the ordinary member feels he has little control. If, on the other hand, the club is small enough to be governed by a weekly assembly of the whole membership, with powers to curb or dismiss any officer, there will be self-government in effect. Nor does this mean that the club leader or adult helper abrogates his influence. Where he does not impose himself and respects the democratic constitution, his superiority of judgment and experience will be accepted all the more readily.

Our net may not even now be cast wide enough to bring in large numbers of the hitherto un-clubbed. It will be recalled that Mr. Piercy, in his analysis quoted above, remarked upon the tendency of knots of friends to come from the same street or group of streets. The preponderant reason for this, I believe, is that they knew each other during their childhood from having played and gone to school together, and that when one of them joined a youth club the others would pluck up the courage to do so as well. It is a remarkable, but hitherto little-noticed fact that children are seldom willing to enter a new human milieu, such as a Sunday School or dancing class, unless they know a child already there. Furthermore, as Piercy also found, if their friends leave, they drift away also. It seems to me, therefore, that were this tendency to a locality-friendship grouping recognized by forming 'sub-clans' within the large club, many shy and insecure boys and girls could be brought in. Far from being lonely and ignored in a crowd of unknown faces, they would be received into a familiar circle. Because they lived

within the 'sub-clan's' territory like the others, they would feel that they had a right to belong, which for the insecure is tremendously important. And their tie of friendship to the club would not depend upon the continued attendance of one or two companions, but upon membership of an intimacy-group of a dozen or so.

To the above I venture to add another observation: it is possible that the majority of the close friendships of adulthood are first formed during childhood or adolescence. Admittedly this is only one of those tentative suggestions which our young science of human relations will be able to verify or otherwise only by specific enquiry. If it is well founded, it means, firstly, that our club movement plays, or could play, a much greater part in our contemporary social patterning than is at present realized; it not only provides the framework for a broadening out in the abstract, it helps to shape those permanent constellations of people which are the cells of 'public opinion', and the ultimate basis of democracy and of popular resistance to dictatorship. Furthermore, if we utilize this locality-grouping to bring additional young people into club life, we are helping to attach to lasting friendship groups those people who would otherwise remain friendless or would associate with demoralized elements (having become demoralized ourselves). To carry this theme to its logical conclusion, there is no reason why the group within the club should ever be disbanded. Even though in adulthood interests would diverge and some of its members would move to other parts, it should be possible by periodic reunions to keep in touch with one another, quite apart from the lifelong family friendships which would probably in many cases result. Also, I think that the knowledge among any contemporary group of young people that their 'sub-clan' would never completely spring apart would make each one of

them treat his own membership as something above the whims and changes by which an adolescent feels his way in the world. An earlier theme may be pertinently recalled, that the rapid industrializing and urbanizing of our country has broken down the old forms of social coherence, that in consequence it is in the large towns that people find it most difficult to make friends, and that cut off from their families and other people with whom they were intimate they have a smaller incentive to maintain their standards. An amorphous community is likely to be a demoralized one. A club movement of a sufficiently wide and varied character may be as good a means as any of social re-integration.

So much for analysis and broad principle; when it comes to our programme it is encouraging to note that both in this country and in the United States a new pioneer movement is beginning to be formed analogous to that which established the first boys' clubs (reading Eagar's manuscript has made my eye historical, and keen to discern what promises future history). These developments stress the need, in the first place, to make contact with the more or less organized gangs of adolescent hobbledehoys which seem to be becoming a feature of big city life.

By far the best study which has come my way of the art of making contact and winning confidence is the account of the Harlem Street Clubs Project.[1] Unfortunately the authors, probably because of the absolute lack of regular clubs in the Central Harlem area, make little direct mention of what should constitute the second part of our programme—the preparation of 'unclubbables' for useful membership of the ordinary club. Their report is nevertheless indirectly helpful by the remarkable insight it gives us into the motives and emotional needs

[1] *Working with Teen-Age Gangs.* (Welfare Council of New York City, 1950).

of these juvenile gangsters. Most interesting of all, they show how the dominant pose of bravado, toughness and hostility was felt to be a strain by the lads themselves which, given a face-saving way of doing so, they were only too willing to abandon. The words of our popular song about Three Juvenile Delinquents "happy as can be" represents really only an outsider's view. How else explain the success of a group of social practitioners, even allowing for the understanding with which they set about their work, in converting four highly organized and extremely self-conscious juvenile gangs into fairly respectable street-clubs? The encouragement we can draw therefrom is that the fruit is ripe for the picking; psychologically speaking, the objective conditions are favourable for the general adoption of a policy of practical social therapy upon the 'unclubbables'.

The Los Angeles Youth Project[1] presents a contrast to the Harlem one in that an explicit policy was followed of contacting badly behaved groups with the object of passing them on, after a period of preparation, to regular clubs. A Special Service Unit was set up for this purpose, but one gets the impression that they aimed at too rapid a hand-over and that this was treated more as a piece of organization than as a carefully handled social experiment. If, for example, any gang did not seem promising material it was abandoned in favour of a more amenable one. A unit worker sometimes accepted failure under the formula that it was "not possible to organize a group from the individuals he had been working with, or that the group cannot be reached with a group work program". In other cases the group faded away soon after the transfer because the atmosphere of the regular club was so different from the 'nursery' facilities provided by the

[1] *Chance to Belong;* by Duane Robinson. (Women's Press, New York, 1949).

Special Service Unit. The need for more attention to the techniques of preparation and transfer, including that of welcome into the receiving club, came to be recognized.

There is no need to deal at length here with the 'Barge', our most outstanding British experiment with unclubbables, as a separate account of it will soon be published. It was founded with the express object of preparing a disreputable gang for club membership. After two years of work with them the gang in question has actually been 'handed over' and the great majority seem to have been assimilated uneventfully. Just as this is going to press an account has appeared in *Probation*[1] of a 'waiting room' club formed by a probation officer, again with the aim "to get the unclubbable lad, who forms the majority of my cases, interested in club life". That it became a genuine club was shown by the probationers often staying the whole evening, coming on nights when they had no obligation to report, and continuing to come after their probation had expired. The article concludes:

> "An interesting point was that there were no known offences committed by my lads 'getting their heads together in the Probation Office'. I am happy to say, too, that I have not had a further offence committed by any of them this last winter. I found the behaviour of these 'breakers' and 'convicted thieves' extremely good. They appeared to develop as a group a sense of pride and responsibility, which seemed to lift the doubtful ones up to an encouraging higher standard of behaviour. I think they were all a little proud of 'their club'."

The above suggests that there are fewer real unclubbables than the actual number outside the regular club movement might lead us to suppose. My experience with delinquent

[1] *Club Training—An Experiment;* by D. S. MacLean. Nov.–Dec. 1951.

youths is that they are not temperamentally unsuited to club life in an absolute sense, but that some false personal attitude into which they have worked themselves prevents them joining, or remaining in, a club. They are like the imperfect pennies which the slot machine rejects, but pennies nevertheless.

The guiding principle of their reformation—to be repeated, perhaps *ad nauseam,* throughout this essay but which the traditional clinician often still persists in ignoring—is that the attitudes of people, and of young people especially, are conditioned by the attitudes of others towards them. Work among 'unclubbables' with the object of making them suitable for regular club membership would therefore proceed by instilling into them a confidence in the good faith of the adult world. The pessimist who avers that 'you can't change human nature' is stating the position wrongly: it *is* possible to turn the penny over—to bring good attitudes, previously hidden, uppermost. What really matters about a person is not which attitudes lie in his storehouse but which of them is in active use. The Harlem workers, by this consistent offer of friendship and by abstaining from moral bullying, found that the gang members became, practically speaking, different people.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BREAKDOWN-FAMILY

"Tis'n them as 'as munny as breāks into 'ouses an' steāls,
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taākes their regular meäls.
Noā, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad.
Tāke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad."
TENNYSON, *Northern Farmer, new style.*

MORE than one recent study has drawn attention to the disastrous effects that demoralization of the home-life can have upon the personality and mentality of the children. Consequently there is no need for me to stress that 'break-down' families are breeding-grounds of delinquency and prostitution, that they keep our children's institutions as well as our prisons full, and that our social welfare services, with their present methods, regularly fail with them.[1]

If that excellent and finely written book, *Problem Families,* by Tom Stephens, were still in print there would be little that I could usefully add here, for the author makes a penetrating analysis not only of the human but also of the sociological aspects of family failure. It is necessary to understand both in the framing of any policy of rehabilitation.

The first thing which strikes the investigator is the disgusting material conditions in which such families live—the over-crowding, the defective sanitation and the lack of the barest essentials of furniture and bed linen. It is also apparent, however, that the people themselves contribute some element of demoralization over and above their material condition to such an extent that, as Collis and Poole note, the same tenement may contain spick-and-span apartments

[1] cf. A. Collis and V. E. Poole, *These Our Children.*

alongside the filthiest dens. Because the overcrowding, the dilapidation and lack of recreation space are so striking to the eyes there has been a tendency to find in them the major reason for the undoubtedly high delinquency-rate associated with these areas. However, the process of cause and effect is complicated, consisting not of one but of several vicious circles. Inevitably, I think, one must presuppose serious personality weaknesses in the parents of the potential slum family. They are not far from breakdown point when they encounter the adverse circumstances such as unemployment, illness or similar crisis to which they succumb. As suggested earlier, a family surrounded by its 'sub-clan' of relatives and close friends will not lack support and encouragement at times of hardship. But if they are a scruffy, undisciplined, happy-go-lucky lot, they will be shunned and allowed to 'stew in their own juice'. Not only will they be deprived of the more material aids, such as the temporary minding of the children, helping with the sick or the fetching in of provisions; they will miss the friendly chats and the incentive to keep up appearances. This is the first vicious circle: partial abandonment of standards means being avoided by people who could help and encourage, and so standards fall further.

One of the first commitments which goes by the board under a multiplicity of financial pressures is the rent. Owing to mounting arrears the family are either evicted or seize some opportunity to move their quarters. Since they can provide no references which would enable them to obtain decent alternative accommodation (even were it available) they are thrown upon the mercies of a special type of landlord or superior tenant which an ominous gap in our housing legislation and services still allows to exist. I refer to the practice of letting off largish, old-fashioned houses in certain streets by floors or even by single rooms without separate water

and sanitation. The large profits which can be made out of this letting of part-houses compensates for the irregularity of rent-receipts; and each tenant can repeat the game of sub-letting a room or two, until the typical slum standard of one-family-one-room is reached. Slums are not the result of a mere arithmetical deficiency of housing accommodation, although this aggravates the problem. For the creation of a slum two conditions are needed: the existence of a number of low-standard families liable to break down when they meet some special strain, and the acquiescence of the authorities in the practice of subletting without proper conversion. Until our housing policy is altered to make this type of petty profiteering impossible the clearance of one slum-street merely means that the next most eligible street takes its place, even though structurally it may be not in the least dilapidated. Any housing programme must therefore be many-sided, involving not only the provision of sufficient new houses to make the overcrowding unnecessary, but also the enforcement of slum-prevention regulations designed at stopping structurally sound urban areas from 'coming down in the world'.

The next vicious circle brings us to the personality aspect of the problem. Those who drift to the undesirable quarters of a town for the above reasons have already begun to 'let things go'; they are accommodating themselves to low standards. 'Not caring' becomes their habitual response to life; it is the emotional technique by which they meet all the additional hardships and frustrations of having to live under slum conditions. The outsider is astonished at their lack of any will to pull themselves out of their demoralization, and at their acquiescence in their worse than animal-like existence. For the alternative, however, they have not the nervous resources; they can no more afford to be distressed at their condition than the unwanted step-child can remain in

a state of active soul-tearing anxiety. The apathy of the slum-dweller is analogous to the withdrawal of the affectionally discouraged, or for that matter to the feeling of depression which prevents us overdoing things after we have had 'flu. Their way of saving their sanity is to make terms with squalor. As in the case of withdrawal, however, though the immediate effect of alleviating strain is achieved, the final result, if the false life-pattern becomes established, is utter personal and social failure. The slum-dweller becomes a neglectful and emotionally unsatisfactory parent (even though a desperate yet ineffective affection persist) of the type that produces delinquent, mentally retarded and physically ailing children.

The third vicious circle consists in the stone-walling which the problem-family uses against the social workers—the school welfare officer, the school nurse, probation officer, children's visitor, the N.S.P.C.C. inspector—with whom it has dealings. Each of these is viewed as a routine addition to daily worries. They deal with them as they deal with every other worry—by the easiest minute-to-minute makeshift. If a promise will remove one of them from the doorstep, then a promise it will be, and a different, just as easily forgotten promise for the next one. Little wonder that such families alienate sympathy and bring official retribution upon themselves. Housing Committees have continually to face the dilemma of the wayward family with several children which is 'given a fresh start' by being placed in a council house. But the parents, having other views as to how they should spend their earnings, get into serious arrears with their rent, just as they have been doing all their married life. The tenant knows that, evicted, he has a considerable nuisance-value, and is prepared to lodge his family in the workhouse, as no doubt he has done before. Yet the council cannot tolerate a position

where one of their tenants lives virtually rent free and may incite others to attempt similar tactics. Eventually the family is evicted, and is either dispersed among various public institutions or reverts to even worse slum quarters than those from which it came. Justice has been done, the family get what they deserve; even among the Council tenants they receive little sympathy. Society has done nothing to rehabilitate them, the children have been penalised and the solution is an expensive one.

The social dilemma which such families represent is illustrated by the case of a family of eight children which recently came to my notice. They had been twice evicted, once from requisitioned property and once from where they were squatting. Being refused further Council accommodation, the mother, father and four younger children were given shelter in the front room of a cottage, about 12 feet by 10 feet, in which they lived, slept and cooked. Their only sanitation was the public conveniences. These conditions killed the sick mother, whereupon the four children were taken into institutions, one of them being later committed to an approved school. With an elder son already in one, and an elder daughter in a moral welfare home with her illegitimate child, there were seven of the family in public care. Reckoning the cost of maintaining the two boys in their approved schools at £6 a week each, and that of the four others in their various homes at £4 10s., they were costing the community some £30 a week. This would have paid the salaries of two social therapists!

The father had been to prison for refusing to pay the approved school maintenance order, so that society had again involved itself in expense to no avail. He was, incidentally, a sincerely affectionate man and an excellent worker who had been with the same firm for years, but was a heavy drinker. (It

was said that he would try to get put on the 2–10 p.m. shift so that he should not be tempted). I think it possible that if the family had been placed in a Council house, with the understanding that they would have been helped rather than penalized—that is to say, if they could have been persuaded of the good intentions of society towards them—the father would have agreed to his rent being stopped at his place of work, and the family could have been rehabilitated. It is remarkable that despite the desperate living conditions and the chronic ill-health of the mother, the N.S.P.C.C. inspector could report: "I can verify that the children are well-nourished, well-clothed and to me are always respectful." There was here surely something to work upon. In other cases, unfortunately, there is not, and the mental unbalance or depravity of the parents demand that the children should be taken into other care. In any case each breakdown family should be treated as needing careful diagnosis and planned therapy. Those who cannot be convinced of this by any human appeal must surely concur on the grounds of sound administration and finance. It is cheaper in the long run to give a mother a spell in a convalescent home, to provide her with domestic help or to let the family live at an agreed reduced rent than to break up families or to imprison people for failure to pay maintenance orders. (Approved-school maintenance orders are so great a hindrance to social therapy, by the ill-will they create, and make such a paltry contribution to the public funds, that they might well be discontinued). If eventually a point is reached with any family where all other means short of compulsion have failed, I feel it would be preferable, rather than resort to the socially inept device of imprisonment, to have some legislative provision by which a court could declare the head of the family incompetent in certain named respects. For example, powers might be given to

a Local Authority to receive rent as a direct payment from the place of work. Dr. C. Fraser Brockington[1] suggests a system of "family probation" that would do away with such current anomalies as that children have to be abandoned to a phase of ill-treatment or a young girl made into a prostitute before the law can intervene. Nevertheless the current trend of opinion is that only in the case of the most complete depravity and refusal to co-operate on the part of the parent should compulsory powers be sought. It will probably always be necessary, in rare instances, to take immediate steps to rescue the child from a vicious parent. But it is doubtful if compulsion pays in any other contingency. The trouble is that the type of parent in question can always call the bluff of authority. Some of them even perversely enjoy the battle as providing an outlet for their underdog's rancour, and 'refusing to pay' becomes a point of honour for which prison and workhouse are braved with the same spirit as that with which the hero of classical tragedy flouted death.

The major disadvantage of compulsion, however, is that it exacerbates that distrust and resentment which it is the main task of the social therapist to overcome. So long as he or she is regarded as just one other official to be fobbed off, or even as a charity dispenser to be tricked and exploited, there can be no question of rehabilitation. Whoever works with a problem-family must convince them that he is on their side. That seems to be the secret of the success of the Family Service Units. In his account of their work Tom Stephens insists that only genuinely being on their side will carry conviction: "the visitor with a mask of assumed fellowship will be 'rumbled' in less time than he will take to find the flaws in his client's character." But sympathy, however sincerely felt, is not enough: the cynicism and distrust of the outcast-

[1] *Problem Families,* (British Social Hygiene Council).

family can only be overcome by the practice of friendship. The Unit workers decided to become the neighbours of the problem-families that they set out to help. Not only have they established their headquarters (including their own living accommodation) within the district concerned, but they have supplied all those neighbourly services which an ordinary family would get when in difficulties from relatives and friends. "The visitor brings not only material things that are needed, but the strength and encouragement that a friend can provide. Practical jobs which are undertaken—and often domestic help is the greatest need—have a value in themselves but are also a testimony of support and understanding. The advice the visitor can give is not limited to technical matters; he becomes the family confidant and offers a trustworthy alternative to the reckless and superstitious advice about family affairs which their neighbours are so prone to give.

"Work with these families is naturally a constant commitment, since their difficulties cannot entirely be removed. The amount of help that is given is varied according to the urgency of the situation, but constant contact, amounting to at least a weekly visit must be maintained. Often the most effective form of help would be regular daily domestic work, but obviously a social worker cannot provide this. The visitor does what he can whenever he visits, and in a case of illness or confinement the Unit makes an effort to provide all the help possible.

"Watching the health and morale of the mother is a most important duty. It is not often possible to send a mother away for a holiday but it has been done, and when she is ill the Unit has sometimes been able to persuade her to go to hospital when the doctor has failed, largely because she knew that the Unit would see to the welfare of the children in her absence. In some instances outpatient treatment for a mother has been made

possible by the Unit having the children to their hostel while she attended."[1]

The original workers had little technical knowledge of social welfare. "Conscious of their inexperience, they began by offering the humblest services and attempting to find a sound basis for their relationship to the families they met. Cleaning, decorating, removing, repairing and disinfesting were the first forms of service, and on this basis the rest was built. Friendship was made the foundation of the work; a friendship without condescension or professional aloofness; not forced or superficial, but a relationship of mutual trust and respect as between equals."[2] In the course of their work they consciously educated themselves in whatever legal and administrative lore they required; they afforded indeed a telling demonstration of the superiority of correct social principles over mere *expertise*. (It makes a romantic high-spot of social history that some of them had to serve terms of imprisonment, as Quaker pacifists, for their insistence upon continuing with their mission rather than be directed to work of national importance!)

This is not to say that they were sentimentalists. When they provided new furniture, bed linen and clothing it was with the understanding that the family in their turn made some effort to better their standards. And the family visitor made sure each week that the blankets provided did not find their way to the pawn-shop. Perhaps the most convincing demonstration of the relationship they established with the families was that the housewife often voluntarily made the case-worker her banker and her financial adviser in the outlay of the weekly income. The rent or sums in repayment of debts would be handed over for settlement. And the worker would

[1] *Problem Families*, pp. 17–18.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 46.

act as intermediary between the family and the various representatives of the local authority—to the relief no doubt of both sides.

The technique which the Unit workers adopted to combat demoralization was a masterpiece of psychological realism. The first objective was to become not only a neighbourly visitor but "an influential part of the family life for the time being". Just as the wise housemaster aims at getting his approved-school protégé to accept his influence because he values his friendship, so the Unit worker would use the family's need for neighbourliness to insist upon their raising themselves to civilised living standards. "It is vital," Tom Stephens writes, "that visiting should not . . . become a habit which the family accept without recognizing that anything is expected of them." The struggle against the passive acceptance of demoralized living proved in effect to be a far longer one than that against suspicion and cynicism.

One difficulty which the Family Service Units frankly recognize is that, the root of the demoralisation being in the personalities of the parents, it is over-optimistic to expect that a planned course of social therapy, however intensive, will make these people strong enough to manage without guidance or render them immune against relapse. What the Units do, in socio-anthropological terms, is to provide the breakdown-family with fresh community-ties; they are integrated into their own sub-clan. But the cessation of the visits means that contact with the sub-clan is broken—the family is once more socially unintegrated. To band such families together in community-units of their own also has its dangers, for they are as likely to re-infect each other as to give mutual support. Possibly the culmination of this experiment will be the finding of means of making the rehabilitated family emotionally independent of the Unit's influence by fitting it into a natural

community-group. Such an ideal may only be realizable when the social awareness of the nation as a whole is raised, so that the emotional support for a demoralized family is forthcoming not only from a few individuals inspired by a special doctrine but as a matter of common neighbourliness from ordinary folk. And this ideal, natural solution will be brought nearer if we can prevent breakdown families from segregating themselves in those quarters of a town in which they can degenerate without other people seeing or caring.

Because the Family Service Units have not yet (through no fault of their own) arrived at a perfected technique of rehabilitation, this does not mean that their present work is merely palliative. The state of breakdown in a family is a special and definite one, like the feverish phase of an illness or the personality-breakdown of persistent delinquency or neurosis. Tom Stephens observes that surrounding a family in this state of helpless collapse there are dozens of others who are just managing to keep their heads above water but who might become submerged at any time if they have a run of bad luck. Something is achieved if a family can be lifted back to the low-culture standard from which they have fallen; even though they remain liable to renewed breakdown they are no worse off than the remainder of their cultural group, Again the sceptic may doubt the value of this achievement. But there is an important qualitative difference between breakdown and the low-standard culture of the 'poor quarter'; the tendency of the one is to go downwards, of the other to go upwards. The problem-family breeds delinquents and prostitutes, but a large proportion of the children of the low-standard, non-breakdown family have sufficient emotional stability and ambition for improvement to enable them to move to a higher cultural level. From a local inhabitant I heard about the family-upbringing of the drunkard-father

mentioned above whose family were such an expense on the rates. His mother and father were just like him, I was informed, without however reaching that stage where their family-life broke up. Of their numerous children all the rest had managed to 'pull themselves out of it' and were now respected people in the locality, so much so indeed that they would not have anything to do with their wayward brother and his brood!

One might say that the demoralized family is danger-spot number one from the point of view of the nation's emotional health. Each generation of unstable children make in their turn unsatisfactory husbands, wives and parents and produce equally unstable offspring. In this way the quality of the population can cumulatively deteriorate. Herein probably lies the factual basis of our eugenists' worries; but with our recent discoveries, hitherto unsuspected, about the influence of the human environment in the determination of personality the problem is now seen to be one rather of education than of biological selection. It may pertinently be asked—since the eugenic alarmist's bluff has been called—whether we are not just substituting another scare. Why with all this fuss about emotional health has not the psychopathic snowball already overrun us? Even the most cursory reading in social history makes it apparent that previous generations (since the beginning of the industrial revolution at any rate) have produced equally large crops of criminals and ne'er-do-wells. Certainly we are afflicted with a lesser proportion even than were Hogarth's or Boswell's generations. But we no longer hang them or transport them or let them succumb to disease and malnutrition on the high seas. And the enormous disease and infantile mortality rates which prevailed up to the 1880's meant that demoralization was much more detrimental to survival than nowadays. From

the point of view of race-genetics our present policy of keeping the problem-family alive without doing anything more about it is illogical. We are faced with the alternatives of extermination, which our forefathers practised from social intuition and which Hitler proposed to re-introduce in cold blood, or a policy aimed at exterminating, not the people, but the causes of family failure.

The methods of the Family Service Units seem to me the only possible way of achieving the humanitarian alternative; there is no other means of overcoming the distrust and the apathy of the problem-family than by the patient offer of neighbourly help, without the condescension and formality of officialdom. But the movement is as yet a small voluntary one supported by people with a special philosophy of life. The same was true of the pioneers of the Boys' Club movement: as the importance of their work became recognized and the youth movement was assimilated into our national culture, something of its pioneering quality was lost; but Boys' Clubs became generally available. The question is how the pioneering example of the Family Service Units can be made the standard means of dealing with family-breakdown. The very independence of a Unit operating from their own quarters has the advantage of differentiating them from 'the Council'. On the other hand Unit-trained workers have entered the service of a few Local Authorities and have been able to repeat their successes, albeit by dint of much unpaid spare-time work which it would not be fair to demand of public employees in general. Thus in the First Annual Report of Miss B. J. Langridge, as Children's Officer for Dudley, there is the following account:

> "For the eight children their mother's imprisonment and their subsequent adoption by the Local Authority has provided an opportunity to give them better care

than they had had before. Visits to the home and investigation of the family history showed this to be a typical 'problem family'. The house was bare and cheerless, with no floor coverings, very little food, deplorable sleeping conditions, lack of clothing, dirt and slovenliness generally. The action which the Children's Committee took was in the nature of an experiment. Lack of accommodation in Children's Homes made it impossible for the children to be accommodated all together, and it was felt in any case that separation from each other and from their parents would cause them unnecessary emotional suffering because, in spite of bad material conditions, the family relationships including the marital relationship, were good. The children were, therefore, returned to their parents under supervision. Adoption of parental rights enabled the Children's Committee in these circumstances to exercise the closest supervision and if the experiment did not show some measure of success to remove the children from their home.

"The methods of dealing with problem families already developed with good results by the Family Service Units were adopted; i.e. some material assistance was given; the mother was encouraged by escorted visits to take advantage of available social and health services for the children and herself; the family budget has been supervised, in particular to see that the rent and hire purchase arrears were paid, and the father was encouraged to try to brighten his own home. It was unfortunate that at the very beginning of the experiment two of the boys in the family appeared before the juvenile court for offences with other boys and might, but for the magistrates' understanding and sympathy, have been committed to an

approved school. The magistrates, however, permitted them to remain in the care of the Local Authority, and thus provided the opportunity for them to be reunited with the family at an early date, when the progress of the family warrants this. In co-operation with the Housing Department it is hoped to rehouse the family, which is at present severely overcrowded, in a different area of the town, when the boys at present in a local children's home will then be able to make a fresh start. The attitude of the magistrates and the support in court of the Children's Department made a great impression on the parents' minds and since that date their co-operation in their own rehabilitation has been much greater. A real friendship has grown between the family and the worker who has been helping them and this in itself has been one of the most positive factors in their progress."

The Report goes on to point out that in 18 months £800 to £1,000 had been saved by keeping the family intact rather than dispersing it (probably for good) in various institutions—quite apart from the personality-wounds entailed in the indefinite separation of the children from their parents. The above-mentioned sum would have paid the salary for a social therapist, even if he or she had only worked upon one family. Actually the Family Service Units reckon that an experienced worker can cope with about twelve. Some Local Authorities are already beginning to make modest contributions to Units within their areas, and an immediate enonomy in the local rates and in Exchequer contributions would be realized if more money were spent in this way. For example the London County Council could effect a considerable saving by the re-uniting of the numerous problem-families at present dispersed among its institutions and their placement in council houses under the tutelage of a Service Unit. The bottle-neck, if the

F.S.U. approach were to be generally adopted, would be in the supply of trained and suitable personnel, but this could gradually be overcome by the present Units extending their training facilities. With a Unit functioning within a Local Authority's area any family with whom the regular welfare officers were unable to make progress could be classified (behind closed doors) as a Family Needing Special Help. It would then be handed over to the Unit workers, who would act as intermediaries between them and the official agencies. (One of the disadvantages of having several different people visiting a family is that each may queer the other's pitch in the same way as, in an approved school where there are divergent ideas about the handling of a boy, one member of the staff may conscientiously undo the good which another one is doing).

CHAPTER SIX

THE DEPRIVED CHILD

"Now I am far from saying that children universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of, who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *Foundation* should be there twelve years: he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but *that* it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs."

DE QUINCEY, *Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow.*

IF the breakdown family is danger-spot number one, the institution-reared child may be described as danger-spot number two. Despite the tremendous advances in the administration of Child Care which have been made since the Denis O'Neill case[1] we are still, out of ignorance and lack of human imagination, manufacturing uncountable numbers of maladjusted, 'backward' and delinquent children. The Curtis Committee heralded a revolution in institutional methods because it discovered backwaters of inhumanity which were survivals of the 19th century Poor Law mentality. But it was itself limited by the knowledge and ideals of twenty-five years back. Considering the conditions they found it was of course understandable that they should speak chiefly of the lack of material amenities—the overcrowded

[1] The foster-child who died as a result of illtreatment in 1945.

living and sleeping quarters and absence of playing space, the dilapidation, dreariness and drudgery of many institutions. And their Report contains pertinent remarks betraying a vague feeling that here or there something in the human atmosphere was producing a certain strangeness in the character of the children. But of the emotional needs of the developing child in the fullest sense there was insufficient realization.

We do not yet know in detail and with proven finality what the effects are of wrenching a child away from its mother and making it share with a flock of other children in a general mother-figure; or of repeatedly removing a child from a familiar human setting, in which it has begun to establish affectional relationships, to completely strange environments. Only of very recent years indeed have we begun to face the fact that children have needs over and above those of physical care. / Because the educated classes have tended to hand their child over to nurses,| the study of childhood remained for thousands of years outside the narrow orbit of traditional learning. From Plato's writings on education we get no picture of the nature or aptitudes of children, nor indeed was Plato himself interested in the question: the child just had to fit itself to his theories, and moreover he disapproved of any kind of observation on principle. For centuries, also, learning was not only a monopoly of the male, but mostly of the unmarried male; so that few people were in a position to point out with any authority that children had emotional rights of their own besides evil propensities to be curbed and minds to be moulded. "Children are always cruel", opined Samuel Johnson before the young Boswell. But one of his guests "who is exceedingly fond of his children and imagines them possessed of all human virtues as soon as they are born," was much shocked at this statement and picked him up on it.

Even nowadays people are inclined to express the most divergent and outrageous views about child-nature coloured by their own like or dislike of children, just as children, from Shaw downwards, variously generalize about parents according to their several experiences. And whereas there exist abundant case-records of how abnormal children behave, we have few discerning studies of what the ordinary, secure, well-loved infant brought up in its own family-group may be expected to be like.

One such study, however—that which Mr. H. H. Stern made of his child[1]—has been of special interest to me for two reasons. The first was its very typicality: it answered completely to what I remembered of my own children and what some of my friends remembered of theirs. The second was that Stern studied just that aspect of child-behaviour we want to know about, that is to say, the developing relationships with other people and *the extent of the child's need for these relationships*. The value of this study of ordinary babyhood to those who have to take decisions about the care of children deprived of normal family-life is that it serves as a norm, a backcloth of fact against which we can see in proper contrast the difference between fullness and barrenness of emotional experience. I shall therefore ask the reader to allow me to guide his eye over parts of this backcloth.

There is an entry in the diary of when the infant was $2\frac{1}{2}$ months old:—

> "He generally now cries when he is being placed in his cot after a feed, even when there does not seem to be any physical discomfort. This is most probably social crying. For he was quite happy when handled, and only starts crying as soon as he feels he is being placed into the cot."

[1] *The Social Development of a Child from Birth to Eighteen Months*, by H. H. Stern. Unpublished thesis in the University of London Library.

And at 3 months, 21 days:—

> "His eyes shift from object to object. His most intense looks are reserved for faces, to which he sometimes gives very prolonged attention."

At 5 months, 8 days:—

> "He tried to elicit attention by looking at his father's face and making pleading sounds."

And a few days later:

> "Sitting propped up in his basket, he made sounds of anger at his mother, smiled however as she turned and looked at him."

At 5½ months:—

> "He may whimper, being left alone, when from the corner of his eye he spies a familiar person coming downstairs. His whimper is carried on softly in suspense. When the familiar face passes by without stopping at his pram, his cry starts up again with increased vigour."

For the rest we can use the author's own synopsis of the diary. Of his son, between 8 and 12 months he writes:

"The child achieves greater awareness of belonging to a group and of his relationship towards its individual members. He begins to understand his own position as 'one of the family', which shows itself in the following features:

1. Trying to attract attention by sounds or pulling at people's clothes; interrupting conversation.
2. Prolonged distress at being left by one of the family and joy at reunion; taking pleasure in the mere presence of a familiar person.
3. First signs of tenderness showing itself in a desire to be close to a person, approaching with face or hands, touching, 'kissing' and exploring mainly face or hair of people close to him.

4. Observing with interest and delight an adult's activities: e.g. washing up, digging, tidying room, etc.
5. Interest in speech; understanding of simple speech patterns ("Where is Daddy?" "Tea". "Dinner".) Imitation of some sounds and speech movements.

In the present stage he becomes integrated into his family group.

At 15 months:—

> "He may try to coax or force a contact at any price or by carrying out a prohibited action. Any contact, even an unfriendly one, is better than none. In seeking contact, the child chooses a particular person; if he receives no response he may turn to someone else. Indulgent adults are quickly picked out and 'monopolized'.

Of between 16 to 18 months:—

> "Towards the end of this period the infant reaches a critical stage in his relations with adults. He demands excessive attention, craves for affection and is very distressed when alone. To overcome indifference or to have an unheeded demand fulfilled, he sometimes applies new and drastic methods, such as exaggerated crying, demands for the chamber, pretending to have hurt himself."

It is apparent that getting the attention of an adult was one of the dominant motives of this child's life. How, one may ask, if he had been made to do without it, would he have been able to adapt himself to the frustration? Would it be any less serious an ill-treatment that the sysematic thwarting of an adult in his dearest aspirations? If a man can become soured and embittered by failure, it is reasonable to assume that a child can too. In fact, as will be shown below, we do find even very young children with warped, discouraged, embittered personalities. There is, however, yet a little more we can cull from the Stern diary which will help us to appraise our methods of institutional care. Even before the infant

is three months old: "He looks with an expression of surprise at strangers; while he smiles, laughs or 'talks' to familiar persons as his mother, father or grandmother." Stern quotes a similar observation[1] of another infant just two months old:—

> "He showed that he distinguished between a familiar and an unfamiliar face by smiling at the former and regarding the latter seriously, with the pursed lips characteristic of attention."

The child regards it as important, not only to enjoy the fond homage of an adult but of the right, familiar adult. During the early toddler stage this attachment to its own parent-figure—the running behind its mother's skirts on the approach of a stranger, the suspicion with which a newcomer is inspected—is too commonplace to need exemplification. The remarkable thing is how early the diary shows this discrimination to take place. People notice most what concerns them deepest; being attended to and cared for by its *own* adult or adult-group is therefore of great concern to the child. To have a number of unfamiliar ones as its minders must produce bewilderment and insecurity.

Nor does the companionship of other toddlers fill the emotional gap; at the age of 1 year 21 days the diary has an entry:—

> "Having observed the two infants together for a few days, it still cannot be said that a definite social relationship exists between them. There are occasional moments of giving objects to each other, watching each other play or eat, but this mutual observation is detached and unemotional. There is no persistent friendliness or hostility, no appeal to the other for a response or any marks of

[1] Moore, K. C. *The Mental Development of a Child,* Monograph Supplement, The Psychological Review, Oct. 1896.

competition or jealousy. In fact there does not seem to be the awareness of dealing with another human being in the same way as in their relationship to an adult."

The conclusion we must draw is that the child itself considers it highly important to have a secure position within a family-group; a large part of its waking day is spent in making sure that it can command the attention of the familiar adult or adults. Furthermore this insistent childish urge is an unlearnt one—part of its biological make-up which in the course of the evolution of our species has by its universality proved itself necessary for our survival. This does not mean that, deprived of a mother-figure, the individual child will not survive, although the research of René Spitz among the infants in a Latin American foundling home demonstrates how dependent is even physical growth and health upon mother-love. Living things can survive for a time under highly adverse conditions; a dandelion can even force its way up through an asphalt path, but at the cost of barely being a dandelion any longer.

Let us compare the above picture of natural, demanding infanthood with the children of a British residential Nursery, that is to say, an Institution where babies up to one or two years are cared for. I recall a fine modern building which is the pride of a Local Authority. In one of its large light rooms a dozen or so one-year olds are dotted about over the floor. Not one of them is taking any notice of the young woman who is on duty with them, although she is giving them all her attention and is available should any of them decide to come to her to be loved. During the 20 minutes or so in which I am in the room none of them do. Already at one year they are a different sort of children: they have become impersonal; they have learned to do without a mother-figure. Twelve to one makes the situation hopeless, it is less painful

to give up the competition for mothering. Spitz observed that the children of the foundling home went through a phase of active distress during the month after they were separated from their mothers (corresponding to the demonstrative reaction which I have noted among approved-school boys) but thereafter they settled down to distraction and bewilderment, until finally the emotional withdrawal, even in one-year-old children, would resemble schizophrenia. It is not a question in our Residential Nurseries of staffing ratios. In the one described above there was a member of the staff for every two babies, but spread out over day and night shifts and making allowances for holidays and days off this proportion meant, in terms of actual contact with the children, several babies to one adult. One is forced to wonder, as Dr. Bowlby[1] points out, whether with such a high staff-child ratio it would not be simpler to let the staff or other suitable women look after a couple of babies each in private homes. Stern notes that when his child was 4 months old its handling and feeding took $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day "due to the fact that his mother usually plays with him when she dresses him or when he lies on her knee." That is what the institution-reared child misses. And apart from the actual time during which the mother is actually engaged with her child she often works in the same room or takes it in the pram when she does her shopping, so that, as the Stern diary shows, the child is reassured by her presence and gets the feeling of belonging to one mother. The institution baby has a different mother on each shift, and as the staff change their jobs or the child itself

[1] *Maternal Care and Mental Health* (World Health Organisation). This book gives a synopsis of research relevant to the care of deprived children. It appeared too late for fuller mention in this chapter, but should be consulted by all who wish to study more comprehensively the issues I raise. In so far as conclusions can be drawn from research which it reports, they point strongly to the paramount influence of a stable mother-relationship upon every aspect of a child's development.

is moved from institution to institution,[1] so mothers come and go.

Is it little wonder that children treated thus become suspicious of the affection and loyalty of the adult world, and retreat into emotional and mental dullness. The Matron of a Toddler's Home (who took in children both from private families and from Nursery Institutions) describes the effects thus: "Nursery children are altogether different from other children, they are always on the defensive; they never give, they take. It is a long time before they will play properly with other children, they are more self-contained. It takes a long time to get underneath a Nursery child, they don't trust you." Furthermore they always told lies, were the worst bed-wetters, tended to be afraid of the dark and of the unknown, and had smaller vocabularies. She assured me that these observations applied to such children from whichever of a large number of Nursery Institutions they came.

Among those responsible for the care of deprived children there is no lack of determination to do what is best, only a lack of that systematic and ineluctable knowledge of personality-development which it will be the task of the trained research worker to provide. Meanwhile instinctive feeling for the welfare of the child is not always strong enough to stand up to the exigencies of administration and finance. For example, if a child proves a failure in its foster-home and has to be returned to an institution, the chances are that its place in the one where it had settled down is already taken, and it has to be squeezed in elsewhere, to make yet another fresh start

[1] For administrative convenience many Authorities have separate institutions for each age-group of the younger children. A typical arrangement is, those from 0–2 years are accommodated in a Nursery, those of 2–5 in a Toddlers' Home, and from 5 on in a Home for children of school age. The Homes may be in different parts of a County, so that the human ties are completely broken.

amongst strangers. Foster-mothers naturally find insecure and suspicious children the most difficult to deal with, so that it is the type of child most needing planned care and treatment who tends to be administratively shuffled about in this way. Naturally the child interprets each removal as a further act of rejection and responds by increasing distrust. The very kindness it may receive in its temporary sojourns here and there has the effect of making it discount all future kindness as equally transient and hypocritical. Every time a child, after settling down with and learning to rely upon the affection of an adult, is wrenched away, relinquished or passed on, there is left an emotional wound. Such children can be picked out, for they become the anti-social ones, defective in moral feeling and sometimes verging on insanity. The greater the number of rejections and the more poignant they have been, the greater perseverance and loyalty will be needed for the recall of human feeling. Their personality-type varies from that of the loquacious, scheming confidence-trickster to that of the continuously sullen, listless dreamer who cannot laugh or play and who ignores other children except to attack them dangerously when he is provoked.

I have been able to obtain a number of 'personality-profiles' of institution-children.[1] It is almost uncanny to note how closely they conform to a few well-defined patterns of behaviour, examples of which can be found in practically any group of institutional children. Here is an example of the pattern of withdrawal following repeated rejection:

> 'Refuses affection, avoids any intimacy; unresponsive; quiet; on the defensive.

[1] These 'profiles' were made by the underlining of items on a Child-Personality Guide drawn up for the study of institution children. None of those quoted in the following pages were made by me. They are a sample drawn from a pilot-study of children in small institutions of the more enlightened type.

Avoids helping, shirking. Sulks; depressions and bad moods; sullen; suspicious of people's good intentions towards him.

Runs away from people; responds to correction by sullen resentment.

Does things purposely wrong; is independent about getting attention from adults.

Solitary, and is ignored by the other children, but fights viciously; boasts; breaks off or upsets a game when losing. Restless; lacks concentration; only likes doing what he can achieve easily, and is only concerned with the interest of the moment.

Afraid of the dark, scared of being left alone. His speech is thick and indistinct, his eyes are dull and turn away from people, his movements sluggish, and he has a worried expression.'

The house-mother reports that this boy had been twice rejected by foster-mothers, by the second after a year when she unexpectedly had a child of her own. "There was no room for me after the baby came," he was heard to remark. He had grown fond of a previous house-mother, but she left, again after a year, which he construed as an additional rejection and refused to accept her successor. "From being sprightly he walked with a shuffling gait"; and his I.Q. dropped from 110 to 90.

If this child suffers further rebuffs he is likely to complete the withdrawal from humanity and become insane. Already at 7 years he has the personality of the worst type of 'morally defective' delinquent. This is not to say that he is beyond hope; but his emotional recovery will require a long spell in a stable human environment during which he can gradually gain confidence in just one or two people. It will be a matter of luck whether he gets this or not. If, while he is learning

to accept his new substitute-parent, the latter moves elsewhere, he will relapse to a yet more stubborn and patent withdrawal. It would have been easier to have used a little science in the first place by way of prevention.

This boy was not so attractive as most other children, so that in the course of his institutionalized life it was not before him that the lady visitor would stop and exclaim: "What a bonny little boy". Probably he often heard it said of the child next to him. It was not he who was made a special fuss of by members of the institution-staff. Just now and then an unattractive child, by its very loneliness, will be mothered by an understanding helper; but in general the attractive children get much more than their share of the fussing. And thus, becoming discouraged, sluggish, morose and resentful, the less attractive grow even less so; and the favoured ones learn to exploit their looks. By glancing through the behaviour profile one can nearly always say in advance whether a child will be described as physically attractive or not.

Let us take an example of the good-looking rejected child, the 'profile' of a boy of nearly 14. He also 'avoids any intimacy'—'you don't know how to take him'—'He takes things for granted'. But he is 'talkative', in fact he 'tires people with constant chatter'. In the Home he avoids helping, is lazy, cannot be relied on. Only once in two years has he ever brought a gift to an adult. Like his ugly duckling counterpart he also is 'suspicious of other people's intentions towards him', sulks if he cannot get his way, is indifferent as to whether he is pleasing adults and therefore can flout mild correction. He is a bragger, likes to be thought a tough guy; towards other children he is scheming and sometimes cruel, but manages to keep on the right side of them. Like practically every emotionally thwarted child he is restless and lacks concentration. He had an I.Q. of 119, but 'missed a scholar-

ship through idleness'. Evidently he was one of those children who, having no desire to please grown-ups, do not respond to the exhortations of the teacher. Of all the indicators perhaps the eye-behaviour is the most tell-tale: this boy 'turns his eyes away', 'never looks at people'. It is easy to see in him the shifty, facile, loquacious, callous 'cad' type, or as our generation says, the spiv. He is an illegitimate boy in that dangerous position—and herein lies the rejection element—of having a neglectful relative. The latter is actually an elder sister, who has paid him but a single visit in two years. The section on 'Relatives' in the Personality-Guide contains the following about her:

Does she ever fail to turn up when expected?	*Yes.*
Does she remember birthdays, Christmas, and bring presents, etc. regularly? . . .	*No.*
Does she write regularly? . . .	*Most inadequately.*
Do letters contain insincere promises? .	*Yes, definitely.*
Does she talk irresponsibly of having child home again?	*Yes.*

How central in the boy's life is this fear of rejection is shown by his inability to accommodate himself to his sister's neglect; he makes excuses for her, never ceases to look forward to possible future visits and is very proud of any presents received. And lest we in our turn be tempted to give him and his sort up as a bad job it is well to realize that he has become what he is as a defence against unhappiness; on the surface he does not show it except for his worried expression; but—a significant detail—he is a restless sleeper who makes his bedclothes untidy and buries his head.

The two boys just described are maladjusted in the strict sense of the word—that is, they have made a definite, if not

quite irrevocable, choice of a false life-habit; the bones of their personality are becoming set in deformity. They are spurning rather than competing for that human fellowship which is one of the vitamins of emotional health. Their delinquent potentialities have already been noted. Next to them on the scale of maladjustment are those children who possess two quite distinct patterns of behaviour. They are not at all sure where their next emotional meal is coming from; and so they are gluttonous of affection and will exploit to the uttermost any interest which is shown in them. But they can stand rebuff or uncertainty even less than the withdrawn type, for they have not yet become ascetics. A prey to active affectional anxieties, they are prone to imagine unfriendliness just as the hypochondriac senses the symptoms of dire disease. Unless, consequently, things go their way with friendship flowing easily, and unless thay are privileged with more than their share of it, they will have none at all and revert to a pattern of overdone hostility. Among approved-school boys this all-or-nothing attitude is common, and it is even found complete in every detail in quite young children. I have before me the 'profiles' of a girl of 9 and a boy of 8 which are practically identical as regards their main behaviour-reactions. At first it looks as if the observer has just been perverse in repeatedly underlining opposite traits—until it is realized that children of this type do veer between the extreme of asking for too much and that of refusing to ask at all. The boy of 8 is at one time 'demonstrative (all over people)', at another he 'pretends indifference or independence'. He is both 'friendly' and 'cannot show appreciation'; 'talkative' and 'quiet'; 'willing to help' and 'avoids helping'; he sulks, has depressions and bad moods, and yet can also be 'overcheerful, irresponsible, boisterous'. His attitudes to other children show the same double-pattern. While liking company and being exceedingly friendly he

sometimes indulges in cold-blooded bullying and cruelty, likes getting other children into trouble and resents the interest of adults in anyone but himself. He also shows off in front of his fellows, and gets up to mischievous and daring pranks. And needless to say he has all the overactivity, the lack of concentration and the irrational fears of the highly insecure child. "He talked quite often at bed-time about dying or being hurt and not being loved if one is naughty". It would not be accurate, however, to call such a child maladjusted: he has got a bad reaction-pattern all ready to whip out of his pocket, but he only uses it when in a tight corner; on the whole he is still trying and trying very hard.

The institution-child conforms to no single character-type. Not only do the institutions themselves vary enormously, but the children are subjected to the most diverse personality-forming influences before coming into public care (only a small proportion having been reared in institutions entirely). For this reason, also, a study of institution-children in comparison with a sample of children reared in their own homes gives us little real information unless the type of institution and the backgrounds and outside connections of the children are fully described. Nevertheless, in addition to the withdrawn and moody-demonstrative types described above I believe there is a still more widespread personality-pattern discernible. It attracts less attention because it is a chronic rather than an acute state, which does not drive the staff to despair to the extent that they are driven to seek a pronouncement of maladjustment or mental subnormality. And it is so common that it becomes almost the norm, in the better type of institution, against which maladjustment is judged. The more discerning House-parents, however, confided in me their feeling that few of their children were really normal, without being able to describe any classifiable abnormality. But by the technique

of discussing for a whole afternoon each single child in turn, the pattern began to emerge. One might describe it as an affectional under-nutrition. A recent American study of secondary school children[1] impressed upon me the value of recognizing an intermediate category between maladjustment and adjustment which the authors aptly called *unadjustment*, and this seems to describe the emotional state of the great majority of institution children. Let us study a typical picture of an 'unadjusted' boy of 14½. I do not know him personally (his 'profile' has been sent to me by an observer), but evidently he is a pleasant enough lad, accepting and giving affection, friendly and natural, easy and forward in conversation; he is helpful and does his jobs conscientiously (but without being completely reliable); he is described as honest, yet has been known to pilfer sweets (perhaps normal enough!), and will only lie to get himself out of a scrape (normal also). He has nice ways with other children and is in turn liked by them. So far so good; but with an I.Q. of 137 he "does very poorly at school due to lack of concentration and ambition", coming in fact 27th in a class of 32. He is a restless boy who is fond of active, moving-about games (without being good at them) and likes making a noise, being prone to boisterous, high-spirited outbursts. The overriding characteristic of children of his type is that they live emotionally from minute to minute; every satisfaction must be both immediate and certain. This boy 'likes easy achievement, shirks difficulties'. The fact that he has very high test-intelligence is beside the point: the long-distance fulfilments which study might afford him have no attraction. He is under the pressure of anxieties which prevent him from calmly taking stock of life. What the precise nature of his anxieties may be could

[1] Havighurst and Taba, *Adolescent Character and Personality*, (Wiley, N.Y.)

only be diagnosed by careful investigation—but there is a note on the form that his mother has been divorced and that his father no longer visits him regularly because he has other feminine attachments.[1]

Even where there is no definite rejection practically all institution-children suffer anxieties about their families; they sense the danger of losing touch or being forgotten. The very fact that they are in public care indicates that their family background is unstable. And it is this undercurrent of anxiety which is mainly responsible for the insecurity, or unadjustment as we have called it. The other contributory factor, of course, is that within the institution, whatever general solicitude and group good-feeling may exist, no child can feel that it *belongs* in any special way to one adult. In the better type of small Home, where there are two or three 'house-parents' to 15 or 16 children, the amount of adult-interest available is sufficient to encourage the children to snatch at whatever affection comes their way. They are just kept going at unadjustment level, without being able to progress beyond it. This means that, irrespective of their intellectual potentialities, they seldom achieve even a good-average scholastic performance. They are even too restless and scatterbrain and immediately-demanding in their emotional needs to develop skill in games, and the analogous type in the approved-school lacks the determination and the patience to become a craftsman. One might say of them that they become low-grade personalities who with reasonable luck will establish satisfactory relationships in later life; but they will be much at the mercy of circumstances, and having no emotional reserves will be liable to break down if they strike a bad patch or choose an unsuitable marriage-

[1] Furthermore the lad 'hero-worships' the father, which to the clinically experienced suggests a desperate clinging to the only available but none too reliable parent.

partner. They make a considerable contribution to our approved-school and apparently also to our prison population,[1] but considering the vast output of such personalities throughout the community at large, the proportion of breakdowns among them must be small. They are not certainly destined for mental or delinquent breakdown or to be infection points of unhappiness such as one feels that the withdrawn or moody-rejecting types must be. This does not mean, however, that we should be satisfied with the achievement among our institution-children of this standard of bare emotional literacy.

There are some who argue that any institutional environment is a highly unsatisfactory one from the point of view of personality-development. Whether this will finally be proved to be the case or not we cannot dispense with institutions under our present social conditions. The more constructive approach would be to accept this fact for the time being and to mitigate the disadvantages of institutional life. One has to have been in first-hand contact with the work of a Children's Department to appreciate the complications of the 'deprived child' problem. Probably in no other sphere of public administration do day-to-day decisions involve the balancing of such difficult *pro's* and *con's* and so intimate a knowledge of human situations, with so much hanging upon each issue. The function of the outsider, therefore, is not to be administratively dogmatic but to make available the special knowledge upon which sound practice can be based.

Around each child in a Local Authority's Home there tend to be a number of variable factors, none of which may be neglected. Perhaps only 10% are children who have been in public care from birth with no known relatives. At the other

[1] See the quotation from Dr. Roper's article on the character of the inmates of Wakefield Prison.

extreme of the scale are the minority who are being looked after for only a few weeks during their mother's illness or child-bearing. The great majority have relations who show widely varying degrees of interest in them. Quite a number of these are, quite rightly, unwilling to let anything break the primary bond of affection which keeps their children their own. They resist the idea of boarding-out because they fear that the foster-mother will 'take the children away from them'. And for their part most foster-mothers like to feel that they can have the foster-child emotionally if not legally as their own, and so resent the competition of the true parent. In my study of delinquents I have shown the disastrous effects of such divided loyalties. Consequently there seems little doubt that, where the relatives are doing their best to keep the child 'one of the family' or where they can be persuaded and helped to do so, such children are best retained in a homely type of small institution.

The institution is also needed for children classified as 'unsuitable for boarding out' because of inconvenient habits such as bedwetting, because their public mischievousness would give the foster-mother too many headaches, or because of their deep, near-psychotic maladjustment. Again it is easy to be dogmatic by saying that no child should be thus classified and so deprived of the opportunity of growing up in a home-circle; but under present conditions this is a necessity, and will be for so long as we have not at hand an ample supply of skilled foster-mothers who have been trained in the handling of behaviour-problems. Until indeed there is a radical change of policy on foster-mothering such a supply is never likely to be available. I have also had an opportunity of studying the progress of a few near-psychotic children within ordinary Cottage Homes under the care of kindly house-parents. Their history was one of slow but definite emergence

from a dangerous state of withdrawal. The improvement, for example, in the following case of a boy of 12½ over a period of two years in a very good institution was most marked. "When he first came here he never smiled," the house-mother reports, "Now he is much more normal and will come for a kiss and occasionally call me Mummy. . . . When he began to smile he was very, very slow." "He used to get very aggressive with other boys; it was always the nearest boy he would vent his feelings on. He would attack with anything that came to hand. He still has tempers but not so bad. . . . It seems sometimes that he wants to annoy us, but doesn't want to lose the good relationship; he giggles when he refuses to do things."

"He could not converse when he came here, now he will carry on a conversation. He could not even talk with other boys and was hostile to them. The only way he would converse with others was 'you have that and it belongs to me', and it would probably lead to a quarrel . . . He plays all right with other boys now. He used to tell lies and go on lying, but now he will admit his lie. But he has convinced me with lies in the past, until I had other evidence afterwards."

"When he first came here he always wanted to be active in some way, but by himself. He could not settle down and concentrate on anything; but he will now, he will do a jig-saw puzzle for an hour or two."

"He had night-terrors, and would come downstairs in the night. He does not do that now, but 18 months ago started bed-wetting."

In this report the steady growth of confidence in human relationships and the fading into the background of the near-psychotic hostility can be gauged in terms of actual behaviour. Even the onset of bed-wetting, in a child of his type, is a good sign: it is characteristic of the period of anxiety during

which a state of settled withdrawal is gradually abandoned. As one reviews his emotional progress it is undeniable that his two years in the small Children's Home had represented a steady advance from extreme maladjustment. No doubt a highly skilled foster-mother of good personality could have achieved a little more, but such people are not always available.

While, however, we have to face the fact that we must have institutions for children who under present circumstances, either because of their primary ties with their own parents or because of their maladjustment, cannot be boarded out, there is everything to be said for mitigating the outstanding and essential drawback of the institutional setting. This consists in its failure to fit the child into a permanent belonging-group, and for the young child in particular the lack of its own, individual mother-figure.

The effect upon an institutionalized child of being rejected or neglected by its parents has been demonstrated by the cases quoted above. Judging by these and a number of similar ones I think it probable that where a child knows it has, somewhere or other, a family, the attention it receives from the latter is one of the major determining factors for good or ill in its personality development. Once a boy loses faith in a parent he is in special danger of becoming a disloyal, callous, unfeeling person himself. This in short is the way rogues are made. Perhaps the parent is not purposely neglectful, but just does not understand the need for special reassurance which every child absent from home requires, or—perhaps most often of all—the parent is of the well-meaning but shiftless type who lacks the powers of self-organization needed for the regular visiting and writing of letters. Affection which cannot express itself in deeds is, as far as the would-be recipient is concerned, a lack of affection, and the child of such parents suffers unsettling anxieties.

Wherever, consequently, relatives are known to exist, they should be encouraged and exhorted, unless actively pernicious or hopelessly unreliable, to keep in the closest possible contact with the child. Naturally this would involve a good deal of time in explaining matters and in keeping backsliders up to the mark. But we should thereby perform a greater service to the children in our care than by looking after their teeth; the latter they will be able to replace in later life, but their personalities they will have for good. (Not that I deprecate dental treatment; it is rather a question of first things first!) I do not know whether any Authority has already undertaken as part of its work the improvement of the relationships between the children in its institutions and their relatives. (In criticising it is well to bear in mind that separate Children's Departments have only been in existence a very few years and already their achievements are enormous). In the cases—mostly of the less adjusted children—which I studied personally I heard frequent mention of an aunt here or a grandmother there who had visited once or twice, or of parents who announce their intention of visiting and fail to turn up, or wonderings as to whether a certain child's mother will remember his birthday this time. But there matters are allowed to rest, possibly with the remark that relatives are a nuisance. So they are, if they put in an appearance just often enough to remind the child of their existence—and of their lack of real concern for him. By keeping the memory of a rejection alive, by not letting him forget that whereas he is dumped in an institution his sister is living at home, they hinder his acceptance of other adults; by the casualness of their interest they imbue him with inferiority-feelings, which means that he becomes a show-off and a general nuisance. How worthwhile it would be to build up feelings of trust and warm affection between the child and the parents,

and how much easier the eventual reuniting of the family! Possibly much more evidence than I have adduced here will be needed before people are convinced that these causes and effects are the really operative and inevitable ones. I do not think anyone in day-to-day touch with deprived children would question the extent to which parents or other relatives are focal points of anxiety. But the evidence needs to be presented systematically and ineluctably by formal research. The general knowledge that milk was good for children could be evaded; only when a group supplied with milk grew taller than a group not so supplied, was free milk issued to school-children.

The family-less child is free of these specific anxieties and uncertainties about the loyalty and interest of relatives. Its plight however is worse: the fear that other children have of being left alone in the world has become an actuality; its loneliness is a fact. Even an adult, to remain emotionally healthy, must have human attachments, that is to say, a family or some other permanent belonging-group. It is not so much a question of actually residing within one's own circle so much as knowing that it is there, a support in emergency where mutual service and loyalty and disinterestedness are taken for granted, and a reference-point of standards and incentives. For a youngster to be no one's special concern, to have no guidance or support before an unknown world, is to be a speck that does not count; such a child has no one to work for, no incentive to make good in any loved one's estimation, no feeling that anyone needs him. In short, the conditions for its healthy social development are absent. There is a growing movement to find 'aunts and uncles' for institution-children without any family, but here again the absolute necessity of some such provision is not yet recognized. Rather it depends upon the initiative of individuals who have enough human

imagination to appreciate the need and who are lucky enough to come across suitable local people. When outside interest in the 'Homes children' is sporadically aroused it all too often takes the form of providing a series of outings or tea-parties—until the craze wanes. House-parents seem unanimously of the opinion that such largesse only does harm.

What is required is that carefully selected people, who realize the responsibility they are undertaking, should become the unofficial guardians or near-parents to one or two children *as a life-arrangement.* That such people are difficult to find goes without saying, and to an overworked Children's Department such a suggestion might seem utopian. How, it may be asked, if a welfare staff cannot keep abreast of even routine boarding-out, will it have time to attend to such details as providing each institution-child with an 'uncle' or 'aunt'? The answer is a socio-political one. To the official bounded by traditional administrative isolationism, who views himself as the provider of services to a passive public, most things are impracticable and utopian, and his very ineffectiveness makes him a defeatist and a cynic. The school meals he provides are likely to be served cold. One of the recurrent themes of this essay as a whole is that of community-integration. This means not only knitting the family and the individual into the social fabric, but seeking the active co-operation of the administered for the fulfilment of our social purposes, inviting rather than discouraging public interest and participation. Nowhere does success or frustration depend more upon an ability to draw upon the help of the community at large than in child-care work, and yet, no doubt owing to the Poor Law tradition, no department of public administration is more isolated (although in primitive communities the care of deprived children is handled entirely by spontaneous voluntary effort). Few Children's

Homes have any community-contacts. The only visitors whom their staff receive are for the most part their superiors within the administrative scheme or their employers in the shape of 'members of the Committee'. The same tends to be true, of course, of the day-school without active Parent-Teacher co-operation, except that the individual parent makes occasional contact with the class- or head-teacher. But a Children's Home can be like a walled-off cyst within the communal body. Or the only sign of its presence may be irritation: the local head-teacher is sometimes uncharitably inclined towards the institution-children, with the problems of behaviour and backwardness which they present. (I remember as a teacher being warned against this child or that by my colleagues as belonging to a nearby institution). Or the local villagers may resent the fact the 'Home children' get better food and clothing than they can afford for their own. There are in fact many difficulties, besides that of ensuring a supply of uncles and aunts, that properly organized community-ties would solve. Just as a school may have a Parents' Association, a Home might have an Uncles' and Aunts' Association or a Circle of Friends, whose duties would be of active neighbourliness without condescension. And the existence of such a body attached to each Home would afford the best possible security against the exposure of the children to undesirable persons (one of the justifiable fears of those with responsibility), for local people know each other better than a welfare officer coming into the district from outside can hope to do. Good neighbourly relationships with the local community would also mean that the family-less child acquires not only a belonging-group but a home town or a home village; it has a chance of settling down within a 'sub-clan'.

In another important respect the essential disadvantages of

institutional life can be mitigated. Administrative tidiness has hitherto demanded that children should be segregated according to sex and age. The homogeneity of the typical Home gives one the feeling of being in a kind of child-farm rather than in a natural human group. A boy of nine is much less an individual and more one of a crowd if he is constantly handled in company with 15 other boys of school age than if there are elder sisters, and a baby or two in the 'family'. What the actual effects are in terms of personality-development of the mixing of ages and sexes will have to be discovered by observation and experiment, but one may guess from such indications as we have that they would be considerable. One mixed Home of some 15 children which I visited had a toddler in a cot in one corner of the common room, and it had been in the Home from the age of a few months. It looked a normal enough child, and apparently got far more individual attention than a baby in a private family has a right to expect. It was not only the older girls who made a fuss of it, the boys liked playing with it as well. Most significant of all, the House Mother remarked that since its coming the latter had been quite different—better behaved and less rowdy. In our psychological parlance they lost at least part of their 'unadjustment'. If other instances confirm this effect, then the admitted complications of having all ages of children together in one Home would well be worth while. There would be the additional advantages that brothers and sisters could always be kept together, and the shifting of children from one Home to another upon their reaching certain ages—a monstrous inhumanity for the family-less child of which we should be ashamed—could be altogether obviated.

Being alone in the world is poignantly borne in upon the institution-boy when at 15 years he has not only to find a job but has to be put out into lodgings or hostel. Not

many parents would agree to leave a son of theirs in such a position among strangers with neither effective discipline or guidance nor affectional ties. He has not even a family circle to which to return of a week-end, at Christmas or for his holidays. There is in addition a fair chance that the lad who reaches 15 without being boarded out is somewhat unstable; he is thus emotionally less well equipped than the normal boy simultaneously to face new human situations in his employment and in his domestic life. This is in fact a period of tremendous difficulty, when many break down. Even during the year previous to leaving the Home a boy is apt to show symptoms of anxiety in the form of unrest and even delinquency. He worries about a future which is a blank unknown. If the staff have succeeded to some extent in taking the place of parents to him, he faces the prospect of being administratively wafted away from them in a manner that no one would think of separating a boy from his own parents. True, he can visit the House Father and Mother on occasions (if they have a spare bed) but he knows that they will have their hands full with a fresh set of younger children.

The dangers attached to casting 15-year old children out into the world are of course appreciated by those engaged in Child Care work, and once again one hears here and there of happy solutions, such as allowing them to remain in the Home after they start work, with no 'throwing out' age. Since they have to be partly maintained even if they go into lodgings or a hostel, and they do not need the same attention as younger children, the extra expense of accommodating them in a separate wing of their own Home need not be prohibitive. In any case, since most institution-children either return to parents or other relatives at 15 or are eventually boarded out, those kept on would only be a small proportion. In a Home

of 15 there might be two or three in this position. Given special status, with the more grown-up amenities of separate bedrooms and common room, they need never represent the social problem which they do now. Their Home would indeed be a home, which they would leave naturally at the beginning of their National Service or when they are settled in employment at a less susceptible age. The chief danger of adolescence, it will later be argued, is that in terms of status and effectiveness it is a kind of interregnum: the youth has outgrown childish means of fulfilment, but has not yet the confidence to play an adult role.

The institution-reared boy has had few patterns of manhood upon which to mould his adult strivings, and so he is likely to feel this lack of confidence all the more acutely. And if it has been considered inadvisable to board him out earlier it will probably be still less advisable to do so during the adolescent years. If practical expediency demands that children be retained in an institution until the school-leaving age, then they should not suddenly be cut off from what has become to them a belonging-group and a home-base. The majority of children placed in lodgings at the age of 15 do not, it may be argued, break down under the strain. But breakdown, delinquent or otherwise, is an irrational response to a completely impossible situation. Very few people are emotionally so ill-conditioned that they find normal situations impossible (although the severely withdrawn types do). This is not to say, however, that those who evade crises have not suffered a degree of damage to their personalities which makes them unsatisfactory people and above all bad parents for the next generation. A study of the subsequent careers of a number of institution-children would tell us to what extent they become re-accepted as normal members of our culture or remain outsiders who breed further supplies of institution-children.

These suggestions as to how the drawbacks of institution-life might be mitigated are not intended as a brief for this method of child-upbringing. It is generally agreed that, except for special classes of children, alternatives which more closely resemble an ordinary family should be found. It would probably also be agreed that we should start by seeking to dispense as far as can be with the Nursery Institution. In the absence of specific research it is unwise to be too forthright, but my personal observation suggests to me that most of the severely maladjusted children are those who have been in public care from birth—which means that their early years have been spent in the 'Nursery'. If, consequently, young babies coming into care are placed with the minimum of delay with adoptive parents or with foster-mothers it is likely that one important source of supply for the Maladjusted Home will be dried up. Nor should the fear of a bad heredity deter the Authority from arranging the adoption or boarding out of an infant. The chances of a child with a known mentally defective parent also proving defective seem to be astonishingly small,[1] and I have elsewhere drawn attention to the fallacies contained in statistical studies of the inheritance of personality-deviations.[2] In any case, parents having children in the natural way cannot contract out of these risks, and there is no reason why adoptive parents should be able to do so. The popular assumptions about the inhateness of mental and emotional faults, often unfortunately

[1] cf. Shrubsall and Williams, *Mental Deficiency Practice*, p. 30: "An enquiry into the percentage of children in London Special Schools for the mentally defective showed that either father or mother was known to be mentally defective in 5% of the cases, and subnormal or unstable in another 50%; of average intelligence in about 25%, and slightly above average in nearly 10%. Investigation into the offspring of ex-pupils of special schools in Birmingham showed that rather under 5% of them appeared to be mentally defective."

[2] cf. *Delinquency and Human Nature*, p. 413.

subscribed to by professional people, are not only unfounded but are as socially harmful as earlier ideas that a child was a changeling or possessed by an evil spirit.

The alternative to the institution is of course the foster-home; and the availability of suitable foster-mothers may be described as the central problem, and the chronic headache, of child-care work. It can only be faced by a re-thinking of principles and policy, and because this is not being done Children's Departments tend to find themselves in a position of frustrated deadlock. So great are the anxieties created that it is hard to get a balanced statement of the difficulties and vagaries of the frantic foster-mother hunt. Boarding-out visitors are under constant pressure from their Committees to find new foster-homes, and on the other hand hoards of unbalanced and emotionally desperate women, visualizing the care of a child as their mental salvation, bombard the Authority with requests for victims. It can be understood that occasionally a welfare officer yields to the twofold pressure and accepts a doubtful foster-mother. Anxiety and wish-fulfilment can influence judgment in the best people and in the simplest situations. But to provide a child with a substitute-parent is never a simple procedure, nor is it one—as the effects of rejection have shown—in which we can afford to work by trial and error. Nor even by intuition! Experienced welfare workers claim with reassuring confidence to be able to appraise the personality and motives of a prospective foster-mother.[1] But intuition is no substitute for science. When

[1] But in cold figures their degree of success would probably be found very moderate. In her contribution on Child Care in *Social Case-Work in Great Britain* (ed. C. Morris, Faber) Clare Britton writes: "Some local authorities find that 60% of the children boarded out have to be moved at least once, and some even have on each case-folder a large ruled blank space headed 'Addresses of foster-homes'. This can hardly be regarded as satisfactory for each move is a serious matter for the child." (page 186).

the scientist uses intuition he does so at the frontier of his clear understanding, and as his definite knowledge expands he pushes his intuition further ahead. This is not to deny that the welfare worker does not acquire much useful knowledge about foster-mother behaviour and personality; but it is individual knowledge, laboriously built up by personal success or failure and, not being passed on to newcomers in any systematic way, has all the wastefulness and rough wisdom of a folklore. Again, most of us like to pride, and deceive, ourselves upon our ability to judge people; but even statesmen, who might be expected to have a wide experience of and a capacity in handling their fellow-men, sometimes get taken in! Naturally the woman who is subject to an active emotional distress—who is, popularly speaking, 'under the weather'—can be spotted by anyone not similarly a prey to anxiety. But not every psychopathic personality is subject to this kind of active, obvious stress, and deformity of character does not always advertise itself. The maniac-depressive type of woman probably forms the bulk of foster-mother volunteers who answer general appeals, for the reason that they feel more confident with young children (as the still less secure types only feel at ease with animals). But they cannot be constant either in affection or discipline, and as the child makes felt its own emotional demands they are likely to become antagonistic and resort to heartless rejection. Now this sort of woman, in her good phases, is a bonny, open-hearted soul radiating good feeling and love. Without some training in personality-psychology the welfare worker is bound to be deceived quite a few times by this disarming sin-

A boarding-out officer, who had been engaged on sorting out replies to a newspaper advertisement for foster-mothers, probably gave as accurate and honest a statement as one is likely to get: "There are a lot (of foster-mothers) about which you just can't say. You can find nothing definite on which to turn them down. You put a child with them and see what will happen. In many cases it just doesn't work. In others it seems to click straight away."

cerity (for sincerity it is: the heartless rejecter is a different Mrs. Smith, every trace of whom is temporarily obliterated).

The risks attached to the placing of children with foster-mothers will probably never be completely eliminated. And since foster-mothering is the best substitute for a normal family upbringing, these risks have to be taken. Our aim must therefore be their reduction to the irreducible minimum in the same way as the surgeon takes every precaution to safeguard his patient from infection. The method also must be the same, the raising of this department of social welfare work from the level of individual intuitions and experience to that of an applied science. This becomes all the more necessary as we face the task of placing out the more unsettled types of children and of discovering the warm-hearted yet sensible people fitted to the long and nerve-consuming task of making them into secure, happy adults.

Four general considerations are suggested by this review of what might be called the foster-mother crisis. The first concerns the transition from institution to foster-home.

Deprived or neglected children, owing to their early emotional hardships, tend to be more sensitive and less adaptable in their human relations. For them a change of personal environment is a much more critical matter than for the secure child. The abruptness of the transition from institution to foster-home may touch off susceptibilites, and so the change must be prepared cautiously. I am indebted to the Matron of a Children's Home for the idea that if it is a question of trying the arrangement out, the child should go and see if it likes the foster-parent rather than be made to feel that it is itself on trial. Another Matron made the pertinent observation that a week-end at the prospective home, or even a series of week-ends is of little use for getting-to-know, because during such short trial periods the child is on its best

behaviour and to the prospective foster-parents it is still a guest and a novelty. The secret would seem to be, for the unsettled child, (for the normal child it does not matter so much) to let the boarding-out arrangement develop naturally from friendship to longer and longer spells in the new home, in such a way that if at any stage it becomes apparent that the arrangement is not going to be a success, it can be discontinued without the child feeling that it has been tried and found wanting, or has been once more rejected. This is another of those problems which should yield to careful, recorded experiment. (The accumulation of mere general experience is as wasteful and haphazard as Nature's means of fertilizing. On every hand one meets happy intuitions for the solution of difficulties, which lie about unreported and untapped because they are made by people who fail to realize their general importance and who in any case lack the confidence to write articles or books.)

The second feature of the boarding-out situation is, as already hinted, the shortage of foster-parents. Quite apart from the absolute deficiency, this means that there is much less scope than there should be for the selection of the best types, and for choosing the right type for each child. Basically, this shortage of suitable types is due to our failure to recognize foster-mothering as a profession and as a valuable community-service.[1] Nurses and teachers have had to fight the idea that

[1] Since writing the above I have been pleased to see a very similar standpoint taken by Clare Britton (*op. cit.*), who has had a much closer acquaintance with Child Care work than I:—" . . . Perhaps the best attitude towards foster-parents is to think of them as men and women who are being asked to work with the boarding-out officer on behalf of the child and his parents; that they are social workers doing a job for the whole community, and that as representatives of the community the boarding-out officers are there to support and appreciate them. This seems a far sounder proposition than a more sentimental appeal would make. Not that the child's need for affection must be minimized, but surely real affection is something that springs up between

people who undertake work of social utility may be turned out to graze upon spiritual compensations. In no branch of public service, except that of foster-mothering, would the suggestion be now tolerated that adequate payment corrupts. And it would be a sad comment upon our society that we are only prepared to reward handsomely the selfish and mercenary while imposing upon and exploiting those with higher motives. The suggestion of the Curtis Committee that if foster-mothering were made remunerative it would attract the wrong types is not borne out by experience with the private foster-mother. The latter is usually paid about £2 a week per child by the parent, as against variable official rates which admittedly, for a foster-mother with high standards, may involve her in financial loss.

If there is nothing to be gained financially by foster-mothering, one may well ask what are the motives which impel women to undertake what is a long and arduous responsibility, and whether these motives are on the whole better than that of wishing to supplement one's income. For the most part we may assume that the foster-mother feels some emotional urge to have the care and to give and receive the affection of a child. Essentially this is a wholesome motive, and the one which actuates the large number of successful and happy fostering arrangements about which little is heard. A foster-mother will not be a bad one because she has an emotional need—everything we undertake is for the mitigation of some dissatisfaction. But if a person is emotionally hard-pressed he or she will be too ravenous for fulfilment. A child does not always minister to the affectional appetites of the adult;

real people and not something vague and sentimental conjured up by the picture of a child in distress. Of course, the foster-parents will, in the long run, get emotional satisfaction from the child and from helping him, and this is as it should be—there must be some real returns from a task so demanding." (page 181).

and people who demand satisfaction gluttonously all the time, and fail to get it, will swing to the opposite extreme. Above all they will lack the humour and nervous resources with which to take the minor strains of human relationships. There is also a type of person who seeks the company of others merely to have the wherewithal for domineering. Or there is the mother whose only child is proving a nuisance—probably because of her deficiency in motherly qualities; but her friends have suggested to her that her child needs a companion, and so she applies to the Local Authority to provide the required brother or sister. Another menace which is, I believe, much harder to detect than the emotional one, is the woman who takes a child to make it a Cinderella. Such people are a little more frequent than is realized, I believe; and they have an uncanny way of preventing their victims from telling tales. Last among the less honourable motives, there are probably quite a few foster-mothers among the lower income-groups who do reckon, despite the meagreness of the allowances, to increase thereby the average amount that they have to spend upon their own family. After all the labourer cannot give his wife £1 a week for each child. A case recently came to my notice of a boy being officially boarded-out with a woman living in a Council house who already had eight children of her own.

Against this mixture of motives one must weigh those of the foster-mother who admittedly undertakes foster-mothering as a job. It may be that, with one or two young children of her own, she does not want to go out to work (and there are very good reasons why she should not do so). In the case of the widow left with dependent family the taking of foster-children would seem a very sensible way of paying the rent and keeping her home intact. Nor need it be assumed that such a motive implies a deficiency of kindliness. There are

plenty of married women of a stable, sensible type, with a fund of good feeling which would naturally show itself towards any newcomer to their family, but who, not being on the lookout for additional objects of affection, do not seek unnecessarily to enlarge their responsibilities. There is even some reason for thinking that they would make the very best type of foster-mother.

Whether boarding-out allowances should be generally raised so as to include an element of remuneration is admittedly a many-sided question. No doubt a large number of our present foster-mothers would prefer to remain on the present maintenance allowance, feeling that the child is more their own that way and possibly resenting the suggestion that they are keeping it for the sake of the money. If there were an adequate supply of such women matters might be left as they are. It is really a particular case of the law of supply and demand: at a low price a small quantity is forthcoming, but the price must be raised until the supply is adequate. The recognition of foster-mothering as a useful and adequately paid profession would multiply by many times the number of suitable applicants from which a Children's Department could make its selection. No longer would the Children's Officer have to be, to use the phrase of a very candid one, a "broker in lesser evils". To raise the boarding-out allowance from £1 to £2 a week might seem at first sight to involve a considerable extra expense. But it costs about £4 10s. a week to keep a child in an institution, and many remain in such because of the shortage of suitable foster-mothers. Again, one must weigh £1 a week for a few years against the success or failure of a lifetime. Some 12% of the sample of approved-school boys previously studied had spent part of their earlier lives in Children's Homes, and they included some of the worst types. The institutionalized with-

drawn type is a well-known one in our approved schools and Borstals.[1] Possibly, if bow to economy we must, the higher remuneration and the semi-professional status might be reserved for the time being to those foster-mothers who have undergone some kind of recognized preparation or training (see below) and are prepared to take unsettled children.

The third weakness of our arrangements is the lack of systematic preparation of foster-mothers for the difficulties and crises that they may have to encounter. If naughtiness is just left as naughtiness, if a bad child is just regarded as a bad child, with an overdose of perversity or original sin, then sympathy gives place to harshness. But if the misbehaviour is understood as the result of long emotional ill-treatment or as a symptom of uncertainty, the adult in charge is in the right frame of mind for the exercise of patience and for answering gestures of rejection with constancy. This is not a new teaching, and kindly people naturally think this way, but we all need buttressing against provocation. The insecure, suspicious child cannot really believe that an offer of affection is a genuine one, and so subjects it to a testing calculated, by any normal measure of what people will put up with, to smash the good relationship. But once such a child has found an adult who passes all the loyalty-tests it is reassured for life. It is obviously easier for the adult who has to handle the insecure child if he or she understands just what is happening, and so is enabled to rise emotionally above what would

[1] Of the 196 habitual criminals about whose early lives Dr. Norval Morris was able to get information, 22 (11%) had spent the major portion of their childhood up to 10 years in institutions. It is not known what proportion of our total child-population are similarly institutionalized, but it must be only one in several thousand. The high proportion of this group of habitual criminals whose early childhoods were spent in "broken homes" of various types (nearly 70%) once more emphasises the connection between the breakdown-personality and family life. (Norval Morris, *The Habitual Criminal*).

otherwise be patience- and temper-breaking experiences. Nor do I think that these principles are beyond the understanding of ordinary folk.

In her chapter on 'The Difficulties Inherent in Foster-Home Work' Miss D. M. Dyson[1] calls attention to a number of matters upon which foster-mothers need enlightenment—the fear of adverse heredity in the foster-child (a superstition already sufficiently castigated in this essay), the lightly uttered threat to send the child away or not to love him if he is naughty, the expectation of gratitude from an inexpressive child, the need to reassure the foster-child (who may have been bungled about unceremoniously in the past) on his going into hospital that he will return to his foster-home. It is true that the boarding-out officer can prime the prospective foster-mother with all these hints. But some of it may be forgotten, the foster-mother herself will have many other things on her mind at the commencement, and a formal imparting of information or instructions is now recognized as bad pedagogic practice. The only realistic and effective form of foster-mother training would be the discussion of actual experiences. If an intending foster-mother can hear week by week of the difficulties of her colleagues and of their success in overcoming them the correct attitudes and the necessary lore will be imparted simultaneously. A woman who has attended such a series of discussions regularly, and has had her eyes opened to the difficulties, is more likely to be a success than the woman who impulsively answers a newspaper advertisement. There is the objection, of course, that foster-mothers have not the time to attend afternoon discussions. But housewives, through their Guilds, have a tradition of such meetings; and people in general are grateful for the

[1] D. M. Dyson, *The Foster Home and the Boarded Out Child,* (Allen and Unwin).

opportunity of making friends. It seems to be universally admitted that the most reliable supply of new foster-mothers is through existing ones; so that a foster-mother's guild, as a place to which the latter could bring their friends, might come to serve as a recruiting as well as a training centre. And the harassed welfare officer might find his or her time more fruitfully spent in organizing such groups than in chasing the elusive foster-mother in other quarters. Possibly, when the foster-mother receives social and financial recognition, Local Authorities may be able to conduct even more ambitious training-courses on a spare time basis, with the incentive of some formal qualification such as a diploma. All these things need to be tried out as administrative experiments and duly reported.

My fourth and last reflection on the foster-mothering issue entails the reiteration of a favourite theme—the failure of the administrator to draw upon the resources of good will lying untapped within our loosely integrated community. When the stage is reached where a family of children can no longer be looked after in their own home it is certainly now the practice to call upon any available relatives in the first place to undertake the duties of foster-parentage. Usually, of course, a family which holds a secure position in its 'sub-clan' does not have to apply to the Local Authority for its children to be taken into public care. All too often the family which has to resort to this extremity is an unsatisfactory and hence an isolated one. But this does not mean to say that the local community, provided the tradition and the organization are built up, are necessarily unwilling or unable to help. It was suggested above, in connection with the finding of 'Uncles and Aunts', that a Circle of Friends should be formed in order to bring the Children's Homes into neighbourly relationships with the locality. Similarly

it might be made the regular practice to enlist the co-operation of local organizations for the finding of foster-homes. Where a Parent-Teacher Association exists it would seem a natural thing for such a body to appeal to the parents of the other children. For a child to go to live with one of its own friends or classmates would be next best to its being placed with relatives. And yet I have never heard of a case of a school-teacher or parents' association co-operating with a Children's Department to secure such a happy arrangement. Alternatively or in addition, some kind of joint local organization might be formed from branches of the Buffaloes, Druids, Toc H, Church Fellowships, Women's Guilds and Trade Unions. In a number of cases the family of the child in need of care may actually have some contact with one of these bodies. At all events a score or so of voluntary workers are much more likely to discover potential foster-parents among their acquaintances than is a welfare officer residing outside the district or who, being of a different social class, does not mix in those circles from which foster-mothers are in the main recruited. Equally important is the consideration that the local people know each other better and can make candid enquiries more effectively than any outsider however skilled. Recently there came to my notice a report of a boy being made a drudge by an ostensibly good foster-mother. For 15 months the latter hoodwinked the boarding-out visitor and so intimidated the boy that he told no tales. Such a state of affairs would be impossible if the local people were called in on the foster-mothering problem.

There is one further aspect of the care of deprived children in general which, trivial though it may seem at first sight, may have quite unsuspected repercussions upon the personalities of some of them. In looking through the records of many young institution-children I was surprised

to see how many had been placed for more or less prolonged spells in hospitals. It has apparently been a practice to send such children away to hospital when they fall ill, even with minor ailments for which children in private families would have been nursed at home. Now all who have had to do with children know that with a young child illness is a time of emotional anxiety if not crisis. Its needs for attention and love are by instinct then much enhanced and it feels less secure than when in good health. Consequently it demands *from the adults to whom it habitually looks for these things*, especially its mother or mother-substitute, reassurances of loyalty. This is the worst possible time to whisk a child off to be tended by strangers. Admittedly it places an additional burden upon the institutional staff to nurse a child through a long illness, but their devotion in doing so may be the salvation of its character, and their abandoning it (as the child would see its removal to hospital) might confirm a tendency to withdrawal.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE IMMINENTLY DELINQUENT

"He gathered round him many of his sort
And made a gang for dancing, song and sport.
They used to make appointments where to meet
For playing dice in such and such a street,
And no apprentice had a touch so nice
As Peter when it came to casting dice.
Yet he was free with money and persisted
In being reckless rather than close-fisted.
Of this his master soon became aware;
Many a time he found the till was bare.
For when apprentices are caught in whirls
Of dancing-parties, dice and easy girls,
They cost their master's shop a pretty penny;"

CHAUCER, *The Cook's Tale*, op. cit.

HOWEVER fine the mesh of our general preventive therapy, some potential delinquents will slip through it. In not all cases do the strains reveal themselves sufficiently in advance for the forestalling of breakdown. And whether we break down hangs in no small measure upon the events we meet, just as a tree may be broken by an unseasonable fall of snow. Except for the ill-luck of a nerve-exhausting accident, such as to the head or eyes or hands, I feel sure that some delinquents would have passed their lives as respectable citizens.

We must be prepared then, to meet situations where delinquency has already occurred. This is all the more necessary since, in our present Dark Age, we have hardly any mesh at all; often we wait until a youth's character has become so soured and hardened, and until he has become so

incapable of steady work, that crime seems to him a form of self-justification and the most feasible means of livelihood. If I were a magistrate having to deal with lads of this sort, and knowing the limited means of reclamation at my disposal, I should be obsessed with a feeling of utter helplessness. Sir Leo Page's study of 23 young men criminals[1] is a catalogue of equally ineffective punishment and leniency. Perhaps he is too severe upon his brother magistrates. How could they have known what to do for the best, with neither the means of systematic and comprehensive diagnosis nor of treatment at hand? Nevertheless, delinquent lads, many of whom look like hopeless cases, will for many years be on our hands as urgent problems, and it will be someone's job to take decisions about them. Faced with a hardened young lag as an individual it avails little to theorize about the structure of communities.

I do not propose to discuss the procedure of trial, for various reasons: first, I am not qualified to do so, having little court experience or information as to the effects of different kinds of procedure and sentence; secondly, while agreeing that important issues are involved, I do not think that the form of the machinery is the central consideration *from the point of view of treatment;* and thirdly, this essay is concerned with protecting the child from delinquency-producing influences, and not with protecting society from the criminal.

There is no firm dividing line between young people who have already made a court appearance and those of unsettled habits with undesirable associates. The latter may at any time become formally delinquent, or may not yet have been found out. Always bearing in mind that the earlier the stage at which remedial measures can be taken, even if it be only

[1] *The Young Lag,* Faber & Faber, 1950.

by a few months, the better the chance of success, it seems sensible to try to discover those whose fall is imminent. Here also other important factors enter: to prevent a lad from relapsing into crime is not only a good thing in itself and a saver of his self-respect, it leaves wider means of therapy open. One of the barriers to approved-school treatment, as will be suggested later, is that it is mixed up in the boy's mind with the idea of punishment. The probation officer is also handicapped, in advising upon pre-delinquent cases, by being an officer of the court. So long as a boy has refrained from delinquency the social worker can associate with him on an equal footing and without stigma, and the public will countenance an easing of his situation which might otherwise be opposed as pandering to crime.

How then spot the imminently delinquent youth, or his undetected fellow? It is a fairly safe bet, as previously mentioned, that the housebreaker-type will frequent the local billiard saloons, night cafés and amusement arcades. (The exception is the withdrawn, solitary housebreaker who is not naturally a good mixer, or whose parents will not let him associate with dubious types or frequent low haunts). It needs little ingenuity to get to know who these lads are. In any case the police will know the names of most of them owing to their practice, in investigating an offence, of questioning suspected youths as to their associates on the previous evening. Secondly, the youth employment officer will probably be only too eager to supply the names of his 'problem' employees—those who never keep a job more than a few weeks because of their incompetence, laziness or indiscipline; who get bored with any steady work or walk out of jobs needlessly; or who truant from work, malinger and refuse suitable employment. The latter type may also hanker after a job which will remove them from

their home neighbourhood; unseamanlike, they may demand to go to sea or, unsoldierlike, to join the army. If a lad figures in both these black-lists, that is, if he frequents the above-mentioned haunts and is a bad worker, he may certainly be regarded as an actual or potential delinquent.

Then it must be borne in mind that the parents of the vast majority of delinquent youths are sincerely concerned, and even desperate, about their son's misdemeanours and the other behaviour-difficulties which accompany them. Yet they have not the confidence in general to turn for advice to a social agency, even if a suitable one exists. A few, when things get too bad, may go for advice to the probation officer. But the chances are that his case-book is already over-full, and officially he can only supervise cases referred to him by the court. In any case it is hardly advisable that the parent of the badly behaved but not yet delinquent boy should seek the guidance of the probation officer owing to the latter's known connection with the court. Of parents who have been having serious difficulties with their children there must be few who have not threatened from time to time to call in a policeman and have the child "put away". To resort to the probation officer must look like an implementation of this threat of rejection. All too often, in my experience, it is the signal for a redoubling of the misbehaviour; the home pilfering becomes reckless and indiscriminate, the boy becomes rude, runs away or commits a wanton act of delinquency which will ensure his removal—he effects, in short, an open counter-rejection. Apart from the facilities which the court offers his parents for getting rid of him, he of course associates the law with crime, and the probation officer with boys who have broken into premises. His parent is lumping him with these, he is being mistrusted, the label 'delinquent' is already round his neck—"All right,

if that's what you think of me!" one can hear him saying; and an approved-school boy is made.

We come back to the theme of the specially trained family advisers, embracing delinquency as one of the symptoms of unhappiness, but not connected in the parent's mind with 'putting away' or in the child's mind with misbehaviour. For the rescue of the imminently delinquent the same procedure for studying the human situation as that previously outlined would be set in motion. Without a precise knowledge of causes in each individual instance it is obvious that the deeper-lying family maladjustment cannot be remedied. But investigation of this sort takes time and patience, and not all the relevant facts come to light at once. Meanwhile the boy may deteriorate or even take his delinquent plunge. The problem is analogous to that of the probation officer, who has to decide whether a first offender has merely given way to a passing temptation or is beginning a round of serious crime. Something akin to First Aid measures may be required.

Here we might draw upon our study of motive. With no less than 55 of the 102 approved-school boys studied there was evidenced a desire to secure removal from a distressing home-situation. This urge is seldom fully conscious or coolly acted upon; but the boy's acts and attitudes admit of no other interpretation. If, for example, an offence is a particularly wanton or obvious one, as though the boy is 'asking to be caught'; if he takes something which is of no possible use to him, or hangs about on the scene of his crime until arrested; if he declares, even boastingly, that he did not mind being caught or sent away; or if, as a delinquent or not, he shows signs of wanting to get away from his home surroundings (sudden impulse to volunteer for the Forces, go to sea, emigrate, etc.)—then an unconscious removal-urge must

be suspected. It is largely unconscious because the boy cannot afford to face the emotional realities of his home-situation, and short of rendering him independent of it by providing him with better human experiences it will be quite hopeless by reasoning to make him face up to them. The ultimate cure will be a longish one: the bad experiences and the bad attitudes which they have generated cannot be counteracted in a few weeks or months. It seems a sensible First Aid measure, in consequence, to let the boy have his unconscious way. I do not think it rash to say that if this removal-urge can be diagnosed at an early stage and forestalled, the amount of juvenile crime may be considerably, and possibly spectacularly, reduced. Indeed with the knowledge of the prevalence of this motive we have no excuse for not acting upon it; from the moral point of view it is heinous to drive young people into crime for the lack of any reputable means of getting away from an impossible home-situation.

It is worth while, then, to consider what legitimate opportunities the youth of to-day has of saving himself from breakdown by voluntarily placing himself in new surroundings, and what new opportunities might be provided. One of the reasons why the delinquency-rate among boys is several times that among girls is no doubt the greater scope which the latter have for getting away from home.[1] There are few

[1] There are several additional reasons. Whenever a family breaks up and it is a question of relatives taking over the children there is usually little difficulty in getting the girls accepted; but uncles and aunts, possibly with no experience of children, and grandparents, who are growing old, often do not feel up to the task of coping with the boys. There are consequently many more boys than girls in public care, and many of them are in the emotionally unhealthy circumstance of knowing that their sisters were accepted but they rejected. Among the children in public care, again, it is much easier to find foster-mothers for girls than for boys. Step-mothers seem to take more kindly to girls also. With many women there is not only the question of the confidence to manage a boy, but they anticipate that a girl will be a

girls who cannot find an opening in private or institutional domestic work, in the Women's Land Army or in some grade of nursing. But every probation officer and head of approved school is despairingly aware of the difficulty of finding a suitable placing for a boy whose home influence is against him. It serves as a powerful corroboration of the wide prevalence of this removal-urge that there is a great shortage of living-in jobs for boys (at a time when there is no lack of openings in other types of work). For instance, it is extremely difficult to get a lad a job in an hotel, the Merchant Navy is swamped with applicants, the Royal Navy can pick and choose and hesitates to accept a boy who has been before the court, and below the age of 17½ the Army offers very few openings. Except for the opportunities which the Army offers for volunteering at that age the crime rate might be considerably higher. This provokes the question as to whether it is right to force a lad into a military career, for which he may not be temperamentally suited, and to deprive him of the opportunity of following the civilian trade of his choice, because it offers him the only means of getting away from home and averting demoralization.

Once again we come upon a blank in the pattern of our culture. Up till now the growing-up needs of the post-school boy and girl have been neglected compared with the provision made for the schoolchild. Only when they become delinquent is money freely spent on them, often to no effect. It is well to repeat that delinquency is only a symptom of a more general social malaise. For the one

help and a companion to them. Lastly, there are feminine sorts of breakdown which do not appear in the official delinquency statistics. Of these probably the commonest is the having of illegitimate children, which is an excellent means of spiting the parents. And in the most extreme cases prostitution offers satisfaction to the major unconscious delinquency-producing motives.

breakdown-case who forces his way into an approved school there may be perhaps ten youths who would develop into better, happier people if they were freed during two or three years of their adolescence from the strains of an anxiety-creating and emotionally narrowing home atmosphere. Well-to-do people know this well when they send their sons to boarding school. This is not the place, of course, to enter into the controversy as to whether adolescents in general are best educated away from home, but it appears urgently necessary that some should be.

Nor should the boy who seeks removal be ill-thought of on that account. A person can be unhappy, even desperate, while remaining, for a time at any rate, an essentially normal and stable person. In fact it is normal to try to remove oneself from a situation where one is unhappy or thwarted. This is why a great many, if not the majority, of approved-school boys quickly become ordinary, happy young people again once they have succeeded in removing themselves from their anxiety-creating domestic surroundings, and why so many of them unexpectedly relapse into crime soon after their return home. The removal-urge, in consequence, must be regarded as natural and justifiable. Only the failure of our society to recognize it and make legitimate provision for it forces otherwise fairly normal children to seek delinquent outlets.

The thing was once for the apprentice to leave home and live in his master's home. "It was the very practical answer made by our ancestors to the ever-present problems of technical education and the difficult 'after-school age'. Apprenticeship continued until, in the nineteenth century, the Industrial Revolution destroyed it, and substituted in the first instance, a *laissez-faire* chaos by no means to the advantage of the uncared for youth of the land. The situation so

created has scarcely yet been made good."[1] If only for the reason that production is now mainly on a factory basis, the system of living-in apprenticeship could hardly be revived. The alternative most in people's minds has been the working lad's hostel. While, however, welfare and probation officers who have boys on their hands use hostels for lack of anywhere else, few can be found to express any enthusiasm for them, and it is unlikely that a suggestion to set up large numbers of additional hostels of the traditional type will meet with public support. Their very form condemns them to two disadvantages. Firstly, they lack a tradition of place-pride, loyalty and discipline. The boys know that they are just lodged, some of them would say dumped, there. They do not expect to stay long, or to maintain any personal connections after they leave, and so they do not set about forming the kind of stable human attachments which everyone, child, adolescent or adult, requires. The second disadvantage is a more specific aspect of the first. With each one of twenty or thirty lads the warden and his wife, if he is married, must find it difficult to take the place of parents.

Boys of the unsettled sort who so often find their way into hostels need more than a twentieth or a thirtieth of a parent. Those whose need for parent-figures is greatest are usually of the type, who, amongst a crowd of boys and only one pair of adults, refuse to compete. Rebuff or failure or preference for others would be too mortal a blow to them, and so they choose a pose of slightly antagonistic independence. Or their competing may take the form of nuisance and overt jealousy, at which stage the warden usually asks for the lad in question to be removed. The latter is forced one rung further down the ladder of social rejection. It is not unfair to say that the majority of hostel superintendents do not regard it as their

[1] G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History*, p. 192.

duty to take the place of fathers in a permanent sense, or to carry out environmental therapy: a lad has either to fit in or go elsewhere. Of course there are hostels which surmount the difficulties inherent in their form and where the warden and his wife do succeed in exercising a fatherly and motherly influence. But these are exceptional people whom one cannot reckon on finding. The capacity for patient and forbearing friendship, and for fatherliness and motherliness, is hard to detect by our standard procedures for selecting staff, even if these are the qualities most sought. Some wardens who do try to fulfil the role of parent—which may mean sticking to a boy when he misbehaves—meet with opposition from committees imbued with a narrow conception of wardenship. One might say, in summary, that it is only the well-balanced boy with a sound foundation of confidence in human relations who is likely to survive the experience of living for any length of time in temporary quarters without close adult ties. All this reinforces the popular conviction that hostels, as we know them now, are not the proper place for delinquent or unsettled lads. An extraordinarily high proportion of boys placed in a hostel as a result of a court 'condition of residence' find their way within a short while to an approved school.

Such was the negative and rather unhelpful state of my thinking when I heard of 'Blighty'. A Welfare Officer of a local authority who had the after-care of institution boys told me that when one of them got kicked out of everywhere else it was to 'Pop' Yates at 'Blighty' that he took him. Here, at any rate was someone who seemed to have found a practical answer to the problem, so I went to see 'Pop' for myself. I found him an inconspicuous little man of middle age, shabbily dressed and without a necktie, all which, it became apparent, was part of his technique. There was nothing unkempt or slipshod about his premises; the seven beds, (his own in the

same room with those of three of his lads) had a spruce and comfortable look, and the sitting room was obviously his home fireside and that of his boys as well. He had begun 20 years ago by sharing his own room with two or three homeless boys, until the ambition seized him to found a permanent centre. Having no money of his own, he decided to go on the tramp, and by dint of addressing local branches of his Toc H, Buffaloes and British Legion he collected nearly £100. But the committee to whom he handed over the business side of his idea got discouraged, and returned the money to the donors! At this stage an ex-governor of Borstal who had witnessed 'Pop's' soul-healing powers, guaranteed the rent of premises, and (14 years back) the present 'Blighty' came into existence. Now, again thanks to the generosity of the Borstal governor, it is 'owner-occupied'. Mr. Yates reckoned he had had 1,107 lads, mostly between 17 and 21 years pass through his care, and had only had to write off 72 as failures. Some of this vast family—which they were in feeling if not by kinship—had only stayed with him a few nights while waiting to join the Army or the Merchant Service, while two of those I met had been in residence some four years. The room itself contained photographs and other mementoes from different parts of the world, and the 'family' corresponded not only with him but among themselves as well.

'Pop's' ways showed him to be a creative genius, an artist in social patterning. The young men he took in had nearly all come up against Authority, and so he set out to differentiate himself from anything smacking of officialdom or charity—hence his own inauspicious appearance. He had other, more important, secrets however. Every boy whom he accepted was not only made to feel immediately that he was a member of the family, but that he was a regarded, trusted member.

When I asked him what proportion of his boys had previously been in approved schools or Borstals, he replied with a touch of vehemence, "I don't know, every one of them is a gentleman until he proves himself otherwise." The exhortation to be "a young gentleman and one of the family" was in fact the keystone of his influence. "Imagine the high-hearted happiness that fills our young minds," wrote one of his 'family', "when we know we are looked upon as 'young gentlemen' and not scum! This is enough joy for any young man who has tasted the bitter dregs of life." Nor does he shirk imposing the highest of standards: there is no professional staff; he himself does the cooking and the rest do the cleaning and odd jobs (one young fellow had just painted the whole interior). Most remarkable of all, if punishment is necessary it is administered in the form of a severe slippering! When one considers that nearly all those so punished must have been bigger than he, physically more agile (he being actually an invalid from the first world war) and free to walk out of the house had they wished, it can be appreciated how much they valued the feeling of family-belonging he managed to create. Most of these lads had never known a father who was interested in them. In 'Pop' Yates they found one. What more natural than that when they were naughty they should get the slipper!

The way a homeless young man's thoughts can develop is illustrated by the following description of how one such, on army leave and broke with nowhere to go, was feeling just prior to his introduction to Blighty: "My outlook on life was very bitter. This is where youngsters like me waver, some for the moment, and some for good. The iron enters their soul and they become warped and selfish, not because they wish to be, but because they have to fight alone. They have been regimented and numbered by an all-powerful

social system. They are led by circumstances to foster evil thoughts, I am sorry to say, against the lucky ones who can claim the love and affection of their own parents and friends. They know they are forced to stand aside, and many a good lad has been turned to crime by this nightmare."

The one weakness of 'Blighty' as a social prototype is the exceptional sort of person it requires. There would be a danger of its externals being copied, and exaggerated, by un-understanding people who lack Pop Yates's fatherliness, his absolute and undivided loyalty towards his lads and his acceptance of them as a major part of *his* life. Still, 'Blighty' offers us one happy variant upon a theme which will suggest yet others. The point is that the experiment, however un-orthodox, works; while the official solutions are failing on every hand. Our present culture—perhaps too much for aesthetic continuity—has achieved an emancipation of plastic and technological design; but when it comes to administrative forms there is still found that same suspicion of novelty, amounting almost to fear and superstition, which must have dominated every aspect of the lives of our pre-historic ancestors.[1] Rather we should train ourselves to regard first the social need, then our resources, and finally to mould the administrative shape as they dictate.

To summarize this social need, we require living quarters for tens of thousands of adolescent working lads who are either homeless or so unhappy at home that they are in danger

[1] Tradition was so strong among them that their various cultures have been classified by the shapes of their pots. *In British Pre-history* Stuart Piggott illustrates this primitive conservatism with the story of the archaeologist who was learning at first hand the technique of pot-making from a woman in an Egyptian village. The archaeologist rashly invented a new shape, whereupon the offending article was angrily smashed, to the words: "There is only one way you *may* make a pot." We are just as emotionally attached to our administrative pots.

of resorting to desperate means of ensuring their removal, or who in their existing domestic surroundings run a danger of moral corruption and damage to their personalities. The substitute-home must as nearly as possible resemble the best kind of domestic circle, with a mother and a father, and no larger number of lads than they can cope with emotionally. This means in the first place, that no married couple should have more than four to six youths under their care at any one time (and only the most great-hearted as many). I have often felt, when having dealings with a family of many children, that it was not the mother's physical inability to manage so large a domestic economy which caused the strains, but that her supply of affection and interest was apt to run short. It is a temptation for the best of parents to place most love where the response is most encouraging and unconsciously to cut their emotional losses as regards the difficult child. How much greater must be this temptation for adults in charge of a large number of children not their own.

The prospect of settling down in a substitute-home of the above type must also be made attractive to the boys themselves, and they must be able to do so without any feeling of being punished, banished or otherwise humiliated. It has been already remarked that youths desiring to get away from home think first in terms of obtaining work which will both entail this removal and also provide them with living accommodation. Thus the removal-urge often takes the form of an application to join the Forces or an attempt to work for a travelling fair. If, consequently, wider opportunities are provided for working and living away from home, they are likely to be eagerly seized upon by a great many of the youths in question. Large scale training and apprenticeship schemes are in existence in many industries, and in some the main difficulty is to find a sufficient number of youths in each locality

to take advantage of them. It is not so much a question of finding suitable work away from home as of finding the accommodation. G. M. Trevelyan's reference to the sociological implications of the medieval apprenticeship provokes the suggestion that, even if the individual master is no longer there to take the apprentice into his own home, the established workers and foremen of the factory where the youths are employed may be able to do so.

A prerequisite for such a scheme's success is that its administrators should take into their confidence the working men and their wives who would form its personnel or in connection with whose factories the scheme is operated. Viewed as an urgent piece of social work, in the conduct of which local Trade Union and other bodies would have their share, a much better type of industrial foster-parent will come forward then if financial incentives alone are used.

The practical administrative difficulty would consist in securing a supply of the right type of married couple, especially as, under present conditions, sufficient foster-parents cannot even be obtained for young children. Again the fact has to be faced that this is partly a question of adequate remuneration. An allowance of, say, £1 a week over and above total outgoings in respect of each youth would represent a fairly attractive addition to the family income, with each married couple providing a home for from two to four youths (it being supposed, of course, that the husband continues in his usual employment, or, if retired, retains his full pension). Many women would prefer such a means of supplementing their income to going out to work; and it often happens that middle-aged couples, whose own children are away from home, have spare rooms which they would prefer to use in this way rather than take in a succession of adult lodgers. If their work were given the necessary public

recognition they would not lower their status by 'taking in lodgers', and many of them would prefer the quasi-parental relationship which they would have with a working lad to the strain of accepting an unknown adult, over whom they have no control, into their home. For these two reasons it was comparatively easy to persuade thousands of householders, who would never have dreamt of having lodgers, to accept child-evacuees.

Supplementary lodging-allowances are already given in respect of approved-school boys on licence whose wages are not high enough to pay the full amount themselves. But there is no broad conception behind such arrangements which would raise the status, and appeal to the social consciousness, of the foster-mother: she remains to all intents and purposes a landlady. Above all, no attempt is made to train, or even advise, her in the supremely difficult human task of mothering a lad who has probably got a bad impression of parents in general and who has broken down once already before his family strains. Not only, then, is it a question of persuading the best type of people to volunteer for this substitute-parent service, but in addition they must be given a preliminary training. With insecure or inferior-feeling people such as the unsettled lads in question are, the smallest misunderstanding or error of tactics can upset a promising relationship. I am sure, furthermore, that the art of handling these boys is not beyond the ordinary man and woman of natural good feeling and good sense, provided they are taught to look upon it objectively as a technique, and provided that their natural reactions, and our British tradition, are rectified at some of their weaker points. The instruction could be on strictly practical lines, while at the same time drawing upon the most up-to-date psychological knowledge. This is not such a contradiction in terms as it may sound; it is my con-

tention, developed later, that the principles governing human feeling and behaviour are within the mental compass and emotional experience of ordinary people. It is really a question of perfecting our folk-lore.

This training need not be a formidable or expensive undertaking. If the prospective foster-parents can be persuaded to attend a six weeks' residential course, so much the better; otherwise the training could take the form of a season's evening lectures and discussions. In any case it would be important to encourage the foster-parents of a locality to form a guild or club for which a skilled welfare officer would be available, so that they can continue to learn by exchanging their experiences and discussing their day-to-day difficulties.

Training courses also serve the purpose of selection; some candidates fail to stay the course or change their minds when they realize what the work involves, while others reveal themselves upon closer acquaintance as unsuitable. For this type of progressive selection the residential course is much superior (and there are few more tricky tasks than that of choosing parents for people). A third objective of the course (besides those of instruction and selection) would be the grading of the candidates according to their estimated capacity for handling adolescent boys and girls. Parents, and men and women in the position of parents, vary widely as to the number of young people whom they can, emotionally speaking, take under their wing. The scheme might break down if some were asked to accept more than their emotional load or if the not-so-outstanding were expected to cope with youths of the more difficult type. Here again it would be only fair to make special additional payment to those who show themselves able to reform society's tough nuts. (There are cases where such a service would be cheap at five guineas a week.) The capacity of each set of foster-parents would in the

main be shown by experience, and the supervising welfare staff would soon learn whether each foster-household should have its load lightened or increased.

In my study of boys who broke down as a result of evacuation there was repeatedly found an anxiety centring around the impermanence of the war-time foster-home. An attachment known to be temporary cannot strike deep, yet it is upon the deep and stable attachment that composed character and happiness grow. A boy lodged in a hostel must always feel himself like a bird pausing in its migration; he does not know, nor perhaps much care, whether in a few weeks' time he will still be under the same roof. It is necessary, therefore, that the industrial foster-home relationship should be presumed by both parties to be a permanent one. It should not be limited even by the term of the apprenticeship any more than a boy has a time-limit to stay in his own home.

It is not suggested that an industrial foster-parent scheme would be a universal panacea for adolescent troubles. There are in fact types of youth for whom it would be unsuitable. It presupposes, firstly, that the lad is capable of benefiting by an apprenticeship or other form of industrial training, or at least is willing to become a steady worker. (There is actually no reason why, if he is of the type, he should not become, say, a builder's labourer; the function of the training aspect of the scheme is mainly to provide the boy with a reason for his quitting home and to reconcile the parents to his departure and the loss of his earnings. But it may be that neither side needs this bait). Secondly, the boy must not be so emotionally disturbed as to be incapable of settling down in his new surroundings. In practice, this proviso would not disqualify so large a proportion as at first might be thought; the great majority of boys committed to approved schools, that is, even of those who have broken down in repeated delinquency, regain

their emotional health upon removal to a more promising human situation. And a further group do so progressively, after an initial unsettled period which may include absconding, acute homesickness and possibly further delinquency. Provided a lad is tolerable in his personal habits there is no reason why the authorities or the foster-parents should be discouraged by occasional abscondments.

How far down the scale of emotional disturbance and of so-called psychopathy we may go will have to be decided by cautious experiment, and will depend upon there being at hand individuals of exceptional emotional qualifications who are prepared to undertake the rehabilitation of what others might regard as hopeless cases. There is a tendency in psychiatric circles to be pessimistic about the possibility of successful treatment of the 'psychopath'. When, however, it becomes more widely appreciated that, whatever extraneous aggravating factors there may have been, the 'psychopath's' maladjustment is in the main due to defective human experiences, it will be realized that the most important rehabilitatory agent—the provision of counteracting good experiences in a scientific programme of treatment—has as yet hardly been tried. Until it is we have no right to give people up as hopeless.[1] But all these matters call for patient research in

[1] Since writing the above I have been privileged to see Mr. S. H. Taylor's comprehensive study (as yet unpublished) which he made over fifteen years as Headmaster of the Desford approved school, Leicester. He stresses with more effect than I have done that approved-school or any other institutional treatment is fundamentally unsuited for certain types of children, and that foster-parents with special training in the handling of difficult children is the answer for them. Coming from an experienced Head of an approved school this opinion, arrived at quite independently of mine, should be given the attention it deserves.

The truth is that our present facilities for dealing with maladjusted and delinquent children are an historical heritage, with little relevance to modern needs or modern knowledge.

human personality unhampered by a rigid classificatory outlook.

Industrial foster-parent schemes would not be rigidly applicable to every industry. They would probably work best in connection with large industrial units, where the foster-father is employed by the same firm as his protégés. It happens frequently, however, that unsettled lads crave for an open-air job, such as in road transport, at sea, in building or on the land. As regards road transport, it is doubtful whether this work is suitable for them since it neither provides a substitute home-base in itself, nor enables the lad to enjoy one elsewhere, and long-distance road haulage has its particular temptations. The Merchant Service does offer a substitute domesticity, and has been the classic sanctuary of the runaway lad for centuries. As previously mentioned it is at present chock-a-block full, and it would need special investigation to say to what extent it could continue this function on a higher, social-therapeutic level. Building and agriculture do, on the other hand, offer good openings and prospects of steady future employment, but they are both mainly industries of small employers. It is always a matter of touch-and-go whether an approved-school boy, even of good character, is going to get on well with the farmer with whom he lives as well as works. If a young lad feels that he is being unfairly treated or overworked (unsettled boys are especially prone to persecution-complexes) he is likely to become difficult in his employer's household. If he lodges independently he will have someone else to listen to and sympathize with his grievances, and a change of job will not mean a change of home. With a small firm it will be much more a matter of chance whether suitable foster-fathers are available, and if so whether they will have the accommodation in their homes and be willing to act as such. It would not be

an essential of the scheme that the lad should work in the same firm with his foster-father; but a scheme organized on this basis would make the recruitment of foster-parents easier, and the help of trade union bodies and of works committees would be more easily obtained (a valuable factor in selecting good types of foster-father). In agriculture there is the additional complication of the paucity of cottage-accommodation. It would probably be easier in the village to organize working-lad foster-parent schemes through a women's or Church Guild. However it is done it should be integrated into some community or other as a voluntary movement with public support, this being the only real guarantee that it will have behind it the social incentives to make it work on an adequate scale.

It is unwise to have all one's therapeutic eggs in one basket. Schemes for industrial foster-parentage as outlined above take time to get going, and still more time is required for such unconventional ideas to permeate circles to whom novelty brings no advantage to outweigh the possibility, however remote, of failure and criticism. It has also been admitted that many unsettled lads would be temperamentally unable to profit thereby. Many need a much closer supervision and an industrial training which is educational and rehabilitatory rather than economic in its own right. The unsettled lad is often a bad employee, and a foster-father, himself a steady worker, cannot be expected to support a youth who is continually losing jobs, giving them up without adequate reason, or who malingers or truants. Again, it is socially and morally indefensible to wait until young people of this type commit sufficient crimes to qualify them for an Approved School or a Borstal. Considering how large the desire for removal figures among the motives behind adolescent delinquency, and how many of them actually demand in

court to be sent away, it is likely that quite a number of them would agree voluntarily to go to a residential industrial training school. Just as a family advice service on a friendly and voluntary basis offers greater possibilities for therapy than compulsory probation, so the staff of an establishment to which a lad comes of his own accord would start off on a much better footing with him than if he were compulsorily committed. Whatever the legal and theoretical position may be the boy regards his committal to an approved school as a punishment. The staff of the school, at least the more old-fashioned ones, also take this view, and sometimes remind their charges of the fact that they are there because of their misbehaviour. (Perhaps it is also hypocritical for the representatives of society to deny that the motive of punishment is absent). At any rate most senior boys enter upon their approved-school careers with the idea of doing their time and obtaining their release as soon as possible.[1]

When one reflects that the good the staff of an approved school can do depends in great part upon their ability to win the confidence of the suspicious and to give good human experiences to those who have had bad ones, it is realized that they must be handicapped by an initial unwillingness on the part of their charges to accept them. In fact it is surprising how large a proportion do so, even alongside the idea of doing their time, but an important minority do not, or restrict their acceptance to a sort of *mariage de convenance*. It is also important from a tactical point of view to bear in mind that boys committed to an approved school at their first court appearance or without being convicted of any offence (as

[1] Such is the irrationality of human motive and the shortness of the emotional memory that this attitude is quite compatible with an urge to get away from home; it is characteristic of those who are uneasy in their human relationships to wish themselves anywhere except where they are.

with some 'Beyond Control' and 'Care and Protection' cases) are apt to be lastingly bitter at the supposed injustice. Their sense of grievance colours their dealings with the staff, and consequently little progress is made with them. The policy of early committal to an approved school, while tending to lessen the amount of juvenile crime within a given locality, may thus make the work of the staff harder and possibly increase the number of adult criminals.

The alternative is to persuade those of whom it is judged that they are better away from home to volunteer for a course of residential industrial training or in the case of children of school age to agree to attend a boarding school. The establishments required for the implementing of this new policy are in the main not yet in existence; but since, as it is hoped, the total and ultimate effect of our preventive measures will be that few young people will be allowed to sink to that degree of delinquency which justifies legal committal, there will be less need for approved-school training of the traditional type. In other words some of our approved schools for children under 15 would become voluntary boarding schools—let it be said in a whisper—for children who are unhappy and unsettled in their own homes, and some of those for the over 15's would become industrial training colleges.

It is hardly necessary to point out that apart from the better attitudes that voluntary enrolment would imply, many of the restrictions and aggravations of approved-school life could be dispensed with in this type of residential community. There is an immense healing value in showing trust for a person. Because some approved-school boys cannot be trusted the rest are deprived of valuable and normal opportunities for acquiring adult assurance and self-respect. If a lad of 16 or 17 is given a mere 1/– a week in pocket money, has his letters opened and read, is discouraged from correspon-

dence with his girl friend, is only allowed to walk beyond the confines of the establishment at stated intervals and with a pass, or if he may not possess so dangerous an incitement to abscondment as a bicycle, then we must not be surprised if he continues to shirk acceptance of adult standards.

I have long felt that the tensions of adolescence have only an indirect connection with physiological puberty. No doubt his sexual maturity serves to impress upon a youth that he is at the threshold of manhood; but this fact is impressed upon him more dramatically by his leaving school and the earning of his own living, for of a sudden the personal associations of his everyday life are changed and his personal status reversed. As a schoolboy, mixing chiefly with his own age-group, he could indulge in carefree, boyish patterns of self-expression and self-assertion, and could abandon himself to juvenile pastimes with the feeling that nothing more was expected of him; but as a very junior member of an industrial community he meets the challenge of adult-behaviour norms, and the mannerisms and interests of the pre-adolescent boy not only cease to satisfy, but must be abandoned, for he is "no longer a kid". He looks for the appurtenances and seeks the style of manhood. It behoves him to smoke and perhaps to drink, and to follow the other adult patterns of his community. At the same phase his sister will begin to make herself up and spend a lot of money upon dress and hair-styles. But it is not easy to forget one habit of personal effectiveness and to adopt another. Hence the self-consciousness and inhibitions of adolescence. One form which this takes is an absolute diminution in activity; club leaders sometimes despair at the apparent aimlessness and lack of spontaneity of the adolescent, and other people have remarked upon the way in which National Service lads of 18, unable to take any recreational initiative, lie around on their beds for hours just 'mooching'.

Deprived of his boyish patterns of self-realization and lacking confidence in adult ones, he is left without any daily habits or style of effectiveness at all. Consequently the needs of a great part of his personality remain unsatisfied, and this, I feel, is the essence of the emotional crisis of adolescence. In the grammar school boy, whose standards of achievement have a smooth gradation until he is 17 or 18, and who leaves his school conscious of a superiority of knowledge and assured of a certain status and the prospect of advancement, this crisis is not evident. It may, alternatively, appear during the first year of university life, which again represents a status-reversal vis-à-vis his human environment.

At the other end of the scale we find the unsettled youth, with his precarious feelings of self-worth, shirking the challenge of manhood altogether. This type, so common among our approved-school population, do not share the usual adolescent uncertainties and inhibitions because they decide to remain children. They resolutely refuse to consider the possibility that one day they will be grown-up, and may even have a mental image of themselves as much younger persons. They become what may be called 'status-neurotics'. In the routine of an approved school they may be happy to have their lives regulated for them and to be allowed to remain children. The institution becomes their refuge from adulthood, and when they are cast out into a world their impulse is to work their way into some other sort of retreat. The less severe cases embrace the behaviour-cum-status stereotype which life in the Services offers.

The moral of these reflections is that any unnecessary restrictiveness or regulation which has the effect of allowing an adolescent emotionally to perpetuate his childhood will militate against his ultimate adjustment. Of course this is widely recognized in a general way—Borstal youths no longer

wear shorts, for example—but the principle is capable of still further and more consistent application. It means that only as a very last resort should a lad of working age be put on the prison-labour and pocket-money basis which is now the rule in our approved schools and Borstals. If he is being trained in farming and is a willing worker he should receive the full agricultural rate, less a reasonable deduction for his board. Whatever course of industrial training is provided, those following it should receive the recognized trade union rates. It is true that a very large number of delinquent boys have bad employment records, but not all these are bad workers under different conditions. Often the irregular working, the refusal to remain at a job, work truancy or malingering represent a form of unconscious resentment against a parent, and when this motive is removed the lad becomes a keen worker. Yet others, who are admittedly slackers even when away from home, might respond to the incentive of being able to earn a wage. At any rate every youth, even if he has to be compulsorily removed to an institution, should be given the chance of maintaining his economic status in society.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE APPROVED SCHOOL—I. MAINLY PRINCIPLES

> "Animal etiquette forbade any sort of comment on the sudden disappearance of one's friends at any moment, for any reason or no reason whatever."
>
> KENNETH GRAHAME, *The Wind in the Willows.*

IT would be beyond the scope of this essay to make any general assessment of our approved-school practice. Methods vary so much from school to school that nothing short of a comprehensive survey would give a true picture. If one wished to be sensational it would not be hard to pick upon incidents and methods extant here and there, the publicising of which would attract public attention; but to do so would inevitably give an unfair impression of the quality of our approved schools as a whole, the staff of which continue their difficult and nerve-consuming work with little public recognition. After all it is no enviable task to have to accept boys whom parents cannot manage or whom magistrates and probation officers give up in despair, or regard as too great a menace in *their* neighbourhood. Further, it cannot be too firmly emphasized that no particular feature can be judged, as regards its psychological effect, apart from its context; a regulation which may be felt as unduly restrictive in one place may be taken as a matter of course in another. There are many different, yet equally successful, styles in the handling of young people, each one of us working out that style which answers to our own personality, and what is mistaken for one man may be correct for another. Particular abuses may be rectified as a result of spectacular exposure, but the

effect of such tactics will be that more subtle and less exposable abuses would arise in their stead. In so far as defects do exist in our approved-school system I think they are all traceable to one chief cause—the lack of any positive guiding principles. A boy or girl is committed to an approved school for a certain period; seldom is any systematic diagnosis made of the cause of the delinquency by the receiving authority, and there is no programme of therapy in any precise sense. Nor would there be even general agreement as to the form the process of rehabilitation should take.

The effect of having no explicit guiding principles is that the door is left wide open for mundane and purely personal aims to slink in. Provided that the establishment functions as smoothly as is expected of an approved school, the regulations are complied with, scandals as far as may be are avoided, certain educational courses are maintained, the boys keep normally healthy and other external appearances are preserved there is likely to be little complaint from official quarters. Yet to have no other objective than the efficient functioning of the institution represents in itself a degree of degeneration. The conflict between the aim of smooth running and that of genuine rehabilitation can bear just one illustration: if it is sensed that a boy is likely to be a nuisance, as for example by persistent absconding, the obvious thing to do if one's principles are limited by considerations of tranquillity is to get rid of him (to another approved school, to Borstal, to prison, to no matter where) at the earliest opportunity. Far be it from me to suggest that cynicism often reaches such a depth, but for the generality of men and women ideals, to be effective, must be embodied in a recognised procedure; it is given to few of us to draw guidance, in our everyday routine, direct from first principles.

Nevertheless, a vast amount of genuinely good and effec-

tive work is being done, for the reason that our human instinct prompts us, other things being equal, to provide those good human relationships which form the groundwork of all treatment. But other things are not always equal, some people attract our sympathies and some repel them, and it is the latter class of person who is in the direst need of succour. So unguided human feeling cannot be a substitute for explicit principles. It is this general need for a reformulation of the aims of approved-school training which prompts me, limited as my experience is, to make some statement which might serve as a basis for discussion.

A large part of what was written in the previous chapter about the desirability of encouraging young people to build up their feelings of self-worth and status, of removing that element of institutional routine or discipline which enables them to shirk adult responsibilities and of combating the temptation to cling to childhood is equally applicable to the approved-school life. And I think it even applies as regards a lad's economic status. Once any lad has proved his employability within the School and he is considered reliable in other repects the sensible thing would seem to be, not only to let him take a job in the locality, but also to allow him to remain in residence beyond the term of his committal if he wishes. (I think a surprising number of approved-school youths would take advantage of such an arrangement). Those who are following the more individual type of trade at the time of their committal, such as printing or cobbling, might be sent to a school where they can find outside employment in the district.

There would come a point, however, at which the employables and unemployables would have to be sorted out, and this might become one of the tasks of the classifying centres. A short period of observation in such a centre combined with

other information derived from tests and personal history should be able to establish whether a lad might be sent to a 'school' at which he would continue to be a wage-earner, either within or without its confines, or whether he would have to undergo a period of rehabilitation before he could be considered of economic value to anyone. If this were made a principle of classification, approved schools would be divided into two groups, the one for those boys who can immediately be given a chance to go on a wage-earning basis, the other for those who need a period of training, nervous recuperation or emotional adjustment before becoming wage-earners. The obvious temptation would be to have separate schools for wage-earners and others, boys being transferred to a 'wage-earning' school, or back again, according to their progress. But transfer from one school to another is likely to act against other aspects of treatment; as will be mooted below, a stability in human relationships is an essential for the reclaiming of certain types. And the prospect of being promoted to the wage-earning section of his own community, with all it means in terms of status and material amenities, is likely to prove a spur to many who, under present conditions, are not attracted by the prospect of working harder for an extra shilling or two a week. (As things are now, differences in subsidies received from parents, or a flair for trading in cigarettes, may offset the difference in the pocket money received by the good and the bad boy). For an incentive to be effective the goal must be within the achievement-span, a boy must be able to judge his chances of promotion to wage-earner status as good; and the goal must be prominently before him—he must be able to see other boys achieving the status. It is well to remember of any kind of neurotic, whether his neurosis be in achievement or in fellowship, that if he be given sufficient confidence he will drop his

inhibitions and make a fresh bid for life's fulfilments. In summary, then, it is suggested that the first degree of classification should be the decision whether a lad should go to a 'wage-earning' school or to one where he can win promotion to wage-earning status. Such a proposal entails, of course, a reorganization of our approved-school system. But the decision to set up classifying schools must be taken to imply such a reorganization once the centres have had time to develop the principles of classification. To classify boys without having different types of treatment for them would of course be nonsensical as a permanent arrangement.

With classifying centres already in existence and able men and women giving their full time to the question, it would be presumptuous of me to venture further detailed suggestions. It does seem, however, that the theme which I have tried to develop throughout this discussion of the handling of unsettled youth might be accepted as the general aim of classification. That is to say, that we cream off the successive layers of unsettlement, not subjecting any class of boy or girl to a greater deprivation of liberty or loss of status than is absolutely necessary for his or her rehabilitation or, in some cases, the protection of the public. At one end of the scale would be the voluntary residential school for the under 15's and training centre for those past the leaving-age, which, while not really approved schools at all, would probably net an important proportion of the present approved-school intake. At the other end would be special types of school for those boys and girls who are obviously irresponsible.

Before, however, specific suggestions are discussed, it may be well to enquire into the success of our present methods; it may then the better be judged whether any more explicit principles, or reforms in our practice, are needed. It is a curious thing that nothing authoritative has been published about the

success or failure of approved-school or Borstal training. Such estimates as have been bandied about have been unsupported by any statement of how they were arrived at, and may indeed have been the result of very rough counts. Also, no simple criterion of success or failure can be applied to approved schools as a whole, so that without definition and qualification the figures have very little meaning. Is success, for example, to be reckoned by the proportion of boys who keep out of court for a certain time after licence, or should it include an improvement in personal conduct and a greater reliability in employment? Nor can the proportion of junior approved-school successes be compared with that of the senior school. The former has a much longer period in which to re-shape a child's character, and it commences the process at an age when the response to a good human environment takes place more quickly. (It is noticeable, for example, that the junior and intermediate schools have a relatively larger number of children in the demonstrative stage of protest, while the senior school has more sullen, highly withdrawn types). In addition, the Borstals and approved schools who handle the higher age-groups receive the failures from the more junior types of school. There are also minor technical points involved, such as whether a boy who gets committed to Borstal or transferred to another school in the early stages of his approved-school career is to be reckoned as a failure or just not counted.

For what it is worth, and for lack of a more comprehensive research, I give an analysis of the progress of the 101[1] senior approved-school lads whose cases I have reported upon and have since been able to follow up. It will be realized that the figures and percentages refer to a particular set of senior boys (aged 15–18) in one approved school at a particular

[1] One of the original 102 died before he was licensed.

phase of its existence. For example, the head-master had only occupied his post for a year or so when the enquiry started, and in the three Boarding Houses there were during the time that the 'sample' passed through the school four changes of housemaster. Each such change represented a break in the boys' emotional re-education, and tended to be accompanied by an unsettled phase within the House concerned. When, furthermore, one has lived in an institution of this type one is struck by the alternation of phases in which everything goes right with phases in which everything goes wrong, so that findings based on a small sample will be affected by where the count begins.

As soon as I began to survey the post-approved-school careers of the 101 boys it became clear to me that success or failure must be judged by wider criteria than merely delinquency or non-delinquency. Several boys evidently turned from crime to less indictable means of annoyance or failure, such as deserting from the Forces, being a nuisance at home or being unsatisfactory in their employment. One might say of them that their approved-school experiences had not so much improved their basic attitudes as taught them to be more careful and subtle. It is remarkable, also, that although their behaviour- and employment-failures were reckoned on different events, the two varieties of unsatisfactoriness went together.[1] In other words, all the bad employees also misbehaved themselves at home and elsewhere.

Even if renewed delinquency be taken as the sole criterion of success, no percentage has any meaning except with precise definition. The most evident complication is that some boys abscond so repeatedly during their early weeks in the

[1] Bad behaviour and employment-failure were only taken into account when serious enough to be brought to the attention of the Welfare Officer or other authority. It was not expected that each boy should be impeccable.

approved school that they are sent to Borstal. It has to be decided whether these are to be classed as 'failures'. From the broad social point of view I think this is unavoidable: no one can deny that the attempt to rehabilitate them by approved-school training proved unsuccessful. There were seven in this category, that is, who did not stay long enough at the school for me to investigate the causes of their delinquency or for the school training to have any effect upon them. A further 15 of the 102 went to Borstal later in, or near the end of, their time at the approved school.

In addition, five were transferred to other schools because it was felt that they were making no progress with us. Whereas they must be reckoned as failures from the standpoint of the school which applies for their transfer, they are not necessarily failures of the approved-school system as a whole, and so they are excluded from the estimate. Of the resultant total of 103 (101+7−5) boys who were committed to this senior approved school, 64 (or 62%) were not charged with any further offence during the year following their licence. If one is more generous, and excludes the 7 who owing to their short stay received no 'training', the 64 non-delinquents would represent a 67% success. The most severe measure of success would be a combination of non-delinquency and of satisfactoriness in conduct and employment. 41 (or 40%) of the 103 fulfilled these criteria. This would mean that less than half of this group of senior approved-school boys gave promise, within the first year of their freedom, of settling down to be reasonably satisfactory citizens.[1]

[1] Mr. S. H. Taylor has recently made available to me the results of his follow-up study of the 631 boys who left the Desford junior approved school during the years 1938–47. The following short summary of his findings does not do his enquiry justice in that he works out his criteria of success and failure more thoroughly than

However unrepresentative these percentages may be, they raise the query whether, by better methods of treatment, our approved schools can rescue more boys and girls than they do at present. The question is really if any boy or girl between 15 and 18 years must be written off as a completely hopeless case. When we consider what failure means there should be no reason for satisfaction with anything less than 100% success, for with our present knowledge of how the criminal is made we are beginning to reach a stage when the existence of a criminal section of the community need no longer be regarded as inevitable.

This ideal implies a definite programme of treatment for each type of delinquent. It has to be admitted that we have as yet no such programme, but with the consciousness of the need for it, and the determined application of such knowledge as we have, there is no reason why our present aimlessness should last much longer. Someone, moreover, has got to be rash enough to make a beginning in the explicit formulation of therapeutic aims, and it is rather by way of opening a debate than in laying down the law that the following is written.

The principle underlying treatment is that delinquency

I do, but it will serve to show that the above figures must not be regarded as exceptional. Of his 631 boys, 303 (48%) were recharged in a police court during the three years of their supervision after leaving the school. But there was a big bulge of 'failures' by this criterion in 1940–43, which were 'bad years' for delinquency, (reaching 64% in 1942). In the 'good years' the failures seem to fluctuate around the 40% level. Of the 303 who reappeared in court, however, 78 eventually made good after the initial bad start, which gives 225, or 36%, definite relapses into recidivism.

Unfortunately 'bad years' are not, as was hoped, a wartime phenomenon. The sharp rises and falls in the relapse-percentage in response to changes in social and political conditions which Mr. Taylor's figures reveal is of great interest. It supports the view that there is a large 'reserve' of near-delinquents who break down when external factors make things harder for them.

or any kind of false adjustment to life, is the result of an emotional malnutrition. Our objective, in consequence, is to 'build up' the patient's personality in the same way as the body has to be built up after physical malnutrition. As I have argued at greater length elsewhere, I believe that the oustandingly important emotional needs, whose starvation is likely to lead to personality-failure, are twofold: we all require, firstly, to be aware of ourselves as effective, functioning organisms, that is to say, as having a certain mastery over at least some aspects of our environment, and as being heeded and acknowledged and taken account of by our human associates; and secondly that we must have secure membership of a small belonging-group, within which we are cherished, and where trust and loyalty and mutual service are implicit. As the natural growth of this second need, we desire to establish good relationships in wider circles, or with all with whom we have to mix or perform tasks in common; and the experience of a child within its family-group determines the confidence with which it establishes this wider fellowship. These are fundamental demands, inseparable from life; they are what most of us call life in the higher sense. The human being must feel himself in this composite position of effectiveness and sociability not just now and again, but continuously. This does not mean that the strivings for effectiveness and human contact are mechanical and ceaseless like breathing, but there must be a continuous confidence in the ability to achieve these relationships with the outside world. Once a person loses this confidence, or 'feels insecure' as we say, he normally does something to re-establish himself in whichever respect—in status or in fellow-feeling—he senses the lack. If the deficiency is a serious one, he gets into a state of anxiety or even panic. The first reaction of those who are emotionally deprived is to demand an immediate and hectic satisfaction.

It is commonly observed about criminals that, like children, they live emotionally from moment to moment, and their petty vanities and irrelevant resentments are usually their undoing. For our therapeutic purpose, the point to note is that it is not enough for a delinquent lad to feel pleased with himself for one day in the week, or to bask in an occasional gesture of fellowship; his whole waking existence must minister to these needs. Only when he has gained confidence in his own worth and wantedness will he have the emotional stamina to face temporary slights and reverses. This is not to say that all delinquent youths answer to a pattern of emotional desperation. Some, perhaps the majority of our approved-school population, have been subjected to intense anxiety of not very long standing, so that, although they have broken down under the strain, their vicissitudes have not eaten deep into their characters. (And there are also many non-delinquent people who live emotionally from minute-to-minute, but they are lucky in that their life-situation enables them to do so without breakdown). By and large, however, it must be reckoned that the delinquent lad is in a greater or less state of anxiety. This means that he will probably have no long-distance interests and his sources of fulfilment will be easy ones which may act to his later detriment. For example his feelings of his own worth may be so precarious that he cannot help showing off at every opportunity or indulging in silly pranks regardless of the consequences; and his need for sociability may be so insistent that he dares not refuse any delinquent invitation lest he fall out of favour with his companions.

This view of delinquency as an emotional malady has two far-reaching implications. The first is that 'treatment' must consist in a readjustment of the whole life-situation in such a manner that these two major psychic needs find satisfaction.

It must cover the whole waking life and touch every detail of existence, even having a bearing, as will be later suggested, upon the number of boys who ought to sleep together in one dormitory, or eat at one table. The weakness of the conventional clinical treatment, with its hour or two of interview-time per week, is that it tends to leave all the other hours of the week—when the major good or harm is done—untouched.

The second implication is that the emotional progress of each boy must be studied individually and systematically. And there is really no other way of ensuring that the whole staff understand each boy's emotional state and pursue an integrated policy with regard to him except by periodic case-conferences and collective decision. In no sphere of life can the execution of policy be left to the general understanding of those who have to carry it out, for all sorts of personal attitudes creep in and obscure the communal purpose. Above all our handling of people—even though they be approved-school boys—contains so many personal undercurrents that it can never be allowed to take care of itself. It must be disciplined by a ritual, or in our modern prosaic terminology, a procedure and a technique. Already, of course, the observant member of the staff of an approved school senses when a boy is 'under the weather', and experience tells him that it is worth while to administer an emotional tonic by way of interest or encouragement or to provide him with some new opportunity for fulfilment. I have in mind the case of a dull and discouraged boy who made no progress—but he used to watch the housemaster tend his bees. When the latter went on holiday, there was no one to do the job, all the boys being afraid of getting stung except this particular boy, who took the lead at the critical time like the traditional 'worm' of the school story. From then on he ceased to be

a person of no consequence and could look back upon an event in which his effectiveness and his superiority had been demonstrated beyond question and in public. It provided him with a concrete symbol upon which his self-respect could fix itself and be re-built. Probably everyone who has been engaged in approved-school work could match this incident with similar instances of a dramatic improvement dating from some quite fortuitous event. It is as if the boy is just waiting for the excuse to have another try at life. But why, it will be asked, should we wait for something to happen by chance? Rather let us train ourselves to organize dramatic situations which will offer decisive proof of the confidence and interest of others, and of the boy's own worth. A headmaster recently suggested to me that he proposed to cast standard rôles for the personality-drama of his school's life: he was to be the stern representative of authority and discipline while the housemasters' function was to intercede on behalf of an offender.

It is encouraging to discover that in many different quarters an approach aimed at fulfilling the needs of the personality similar to that I am now attempting to outline is already being worked out administratively. The re-establishment of self-respect, for example, has for a long time been accepted intuitively as one of the aims of 'training'. It is now universally appreciated that sameness in dress, or anything which gives a penal or reformatory atmosphere, operates against this aim. The next step is to promote it from the sphere of intuition to the rank of an established principle covering every aspect of the daily routine. It would then be noticed that in dozens of petty ways the self-esteem of the approved-school boy is depressed by his environment. People do not naturally congregate in inauspicious surroundings or walk in mean side-streets. Crowds of Londoners parade the West

End thoroughfares on a Sunday evening, purely from the elevation they feel from the contiguity of fine buildings and fashionable shops; and yet many of our school living quarters are drab and bear the stigma of the institution. It may be objected that growing lads pay no attention to their surroundings or to the finer points of existence. When I started my case-work I used to ask boys what they thought of their school; they had only one, and nearly universal, grumble—their potatoes were not peeled. This they took as a personal insult. I think also, that deep down, material neglects and discomforts are similarly construed; a lack of firing, unnecessary waiting and queuing, unceremonious serving of food, impersonal ordering of individuals about, inconvenience caused by arbitrary changes of routine—all these unconsidered details build up a composite impression in those who are subjected to them of not counting for much, and so militate against the success of treatment. It may be objected that the average approved-school youth shows no sign of being adversely affected, that he does not mind having no heels to his socks; but if he does not mind, so much the worse, for not minding a situation in which one is patently of no importance represents a neurotic withdrawal from life, of which the 'dull, heavy', unkempt and uncouth type of lad offers not an uncommon example. Such indifference is a defence against the strain of hopeless struggle and protest, and is best seen in the apathy of the slum family. The human personality does not realise itself in the main by the attainment of long-distance goals, but in countless daily dealings with things and people. Continuous defeat in petty issues leaves its unconscious impress, that is to say, can be felt without being mentally attended to. None of us in effect can afford to let petty reverses rankle, but then we can switch our attention to situations in which we are confident of keeping our

heads above water. Those in process of being submerged by their total life-situation become apathetic and lose self-respect. People reduced to this state are easier to govern; and to awaken a zest for life (as the autocratically minded complain) may prompt inconvenient demands. Demoralized people, however, are not good for democracy. It is ultimately a question of what kind of a society we want.

In any general review of approved-school practice, the need for different sorts of treatment can hardly be avoided. And in coming, as we have now to do, to discuss the maldevelopment associated with the second of those emotional needs with which we are concerned, other references to classification will have to be made. The need in question, it will be recalled, is that of sociability, or more precisely that of being on good terms with people in general and of enjoying secure membership of a belonging-group.

Every personality-need—whether it be for status, fellowship, or even sex or food—is attended by similar executive-reactions. That is to say, they all become adjusted to the chances of satisfaction in a very similar manner. The reason for this is that no need can be allowed to remain active if there is no possibility of its being satisfied, otherwise the distress and nervous strain would wreak havoc on the personality. The mechanism of inhibiting, or denying, a personality-need is termed withdrawal, and all withdrawal-processes follow the same pattern. Prudery, for example, is one of the mechanisms of sex-withdrawal. The more naturally insistent is a need the more vehement must be its denial, situations which might stimulate the need are hated and avoided, and every precaution is taken against an offer of indulgence.

The affection-shy seek to keep goodwill at a distance by making themselves aloof, unattractive, or openly disagreeable. Fundamentally, however, their hostility, and even their lack

of finer feelings and their immorality (which is part of the machinery of inhibition) is forced. It has been adopted as a form of fellowship-prudery in a prolonged unfavourable situation; but it only drugs the anxiety and produces a deeper malaise. It affords less satisfaction than the genuine enjoyment of fellowship. This gives the therapist a great advantage, for he is offering something real in place of a substitute. One can in fact watch a withdrawn child very slowly and hesitatingly allowing a bond of affection to develop—but always ready, if he senses rejection or insincerity, to revert to the earlier antagonistic phase. A girl of 14 was reported to me as saying: "If I think anyone doesn't like me, or is trying to get one over me, I like to get in first to show I don't care anyway." She was summing up the reaction of withdrawal: it was less painful for her to take the initiative in rejection than to be herself rebuffed.

It is inevitable, also, that such affectionally discouraged types will distrust good-will. They just cannot believe in it, and search for some ulterior motive for it in order to strengthen their disbelief. Mercy and pity are likely to be construed as weakness, or the interest of a member of the staff discounted as just part of his job. Nevertheless, despite their discounting of kindness, some little part of it sticks. When they are beginning thus to soften, withdrawn children enter a phase of anxiety which, if misunderstood and wrongly handled, will mean failure or perhaps worse, for the child will be one stage further back than before. His suspicions make him test out an offer of friendship beyond the point at which the other person may be expected to lose patience. He demands double the reassurance that he really requires, just as an engineer builds a bridge to stand double the load it will ever have to take. Once, however, the test is passed, the need for a good relationship gets the upper hand, and real progress

begins. For a period, however, it looks as if there is no progress or even regression. A housemaster may spend months in building up a good relationship with a boy. Everything seems to be going well and the boy seems to be responding, when he wantonly commits come theft or absconds. Often the crime is directed against the person who has shown most interest in him. The housemaster feels he has been 'let down'. If at this stage he yields to the natural impulse of throwing the lad over in disgust, the latter will have the morbid satisfaction of feeling his suspicions justified; he will settle down into a more hardened cynicism, and it will take still longer next time to convince him of anyone's sincerity.[1]

How then, are such boys to be handled? The biggest difficulty is that they cannot understand punishment as the normal consequence of wrongdoing. In their own eyes, whatever harm they do to others, they always hold themselves justified. It is part of their withdrawal from sociability

[1] May I quote the observations of Dr. W. F. Roper, Medical Officer at Wakefield Prison, about a type of young criminal who is quite evidently the sort of approved-school boy we have in mind at a later stage of his degeneration: "The number of Borstal and Approved School failures at Dartmoor is large, but there are few at Wakefield. When they occur they are likely to stick out like sore thumbs at Wakefield because of their perversity of reaction. They have become, as it were, immunized against kindness, which they tend to treat as weakness and exploit as such. Their handling has to be carefully judged in order to prevent this, since obviously no good is being done if they continue to treat sympathy as weakness. It is possible to get the right balance of firmness and kindness but it is a delicate one and takes much trouble. These difficult cases show that it is of major importance that every effort should be made to make initial treatment effective in order to prevent this immunization. What happens is that the man who fails rationalizes his failure and is forced into cynicism; he develops, so to speak, antibodies against the treatment given him and is so much the better prepared to resist any further treatment of the same kind. Approved School and Borstal failure is always apt to be a serious matter." *British Journal of Delinquency*, July, 1950.

that they lack imagination for the rights and feelings of others, and the self-justificatory illusion is fostered in order to provide them, as it were, with a *casus belli*. Thus formal punishment merely deepens their resentments. Out of fear or self-interest they may decide upon compliance, but they become imbued with a more bitter grudge against mankind and develop a greater capacity for future crime. I am quite sure that, upon their sort, formal canings have this effect. Such boys have no tradition which enables then to accept this form of punishment. To them a caning is an act of violence committed against their person; it absolves them from any compunction they may have had about doing violence to others. An approved-school discipline which relies on fear is piling up trouble for the community.

Are we then completely nonplussed? Do we give up punishment and discipline? By the old mechanical view of punishment and deterrence this would seem to be so. But material sanctions are only the small change of discipline. The major fund at our disposal must be reckoned in the coinage of the underlying human relationships. It is a commonplace that if the spirit of an establishment is one of mutual dislike, repressive measures only serve to amalgamate a large number of petty explosions into an eventual major one. This, however, is but a particular illustration of the general principle underlying punishment. All who have had dealings with young, normal children are struck by the fact that the actual act of punishment is incidental to the parental displeasure of which it is the symbol. The child is distressed out of all proportion to its material severity, and is unhappy until by forgiveness the loving relationship is restored. The true effectiveness of punishment, therefore, lies in a temporary and symbolical lessening of good feeling; and this is why, incidentally, parents who themselves cannot

bear, from their own affectional insecurity, temporarily to worsen a relationship cannot exert discipline.[1]

It also follows that the effectiveness of discipline depends upon the child's having the normal desire for adult affection. If this desire has already been inhibited the child has nothing to lose, and punishment means no more than physical inconvenience or discomfort, which, for reasons of obstinacy or pride, may be borne without distress. A child who has no anxiety to please becomes unamenable to discipline. If with this type punishment is intensified to such a degree that it can no longer be brushed aside as an inconvenience, it breeds a vicious resentment which completely inhibits human feeling and so, in a crisis, stops short at nothing; this is the ultimate social criterion of insanity. Actually, such children are rare. It is not uncommon to find that relations with one adult have deteriorated to the degree of utter mutual rejection, but usually the child, so strong is its natural prompting to sociability, will be prepared to make a fresh start with another adult. Or even if the whole adult world is temporarily written off, the anxiety for the companionship of other children may be all the greater. Where a child shows no eagerness to please, or to get on with, any sort of person, discipline is admittedly impossible for the time being. But such a child is on the verge of insanity, and should not be in an approved school.

The strength of the adult's influence, then, depends upon the desire for a good relationship which he or she succeeds in building up in the child. Good behaviour must be made the condition for the maintenance of this relationship. Parents instinctively act upon this principle, but those who are emotionally uncertain themselves do so clumsily; they try to play a tune with only two notes, that of overfondness and

[1] For a further note on discipline see the fourth section of Appendix I.

that of complete rejection. The essence of effective discipline is to judge aright the point of forgiveness. And this must be estimated according to the capacity of each individual child to bear the loss of good feeling. The special difficulty in the handling of many approved-school children is that this capacity in them is very small. Rather than respond by trying to make good the threatened relationship they answer by rejection or, in ordinary language, they take punishment badly. Above all, they answer any threat of rejection, even though a light-hearted one, by making it the signal for the breaking off of the relationship. This is why the very natural warning which well-meaning approved-school people are inclined to give, that if the boy absconds again, or causes other trouble, he will have to go to Borstal or to another approved school, so often has the reverse of the intended effect. The boy, who is only too ready to relapse into a state of distrust, and to whom the anxieties attendant upon a growing friendship are almost more than he can bear, will act in such a way as to make sure that the threat, as he construes it, has to be carried out. Whatever punishment is resorted to, this impulse to counter-rejection must be forestalled. It is well to give the reassurance: "Whatever you do I am not going to pass you on to anyone else." One might say that however angry one has to get with an offender, the tap of good feeling should never be turned off completely.

I believe, also, that useful experiment might be carried out in the dramatic enactment of reassurance. When a youth has absconded and has committed further offences while at large, magistrates are often dubious about merely ordering his return to the approved school, and consider re-committing him to another or sending him to Borstal. The boy does not anticipate, dares not hope, that the headmaster

will demand to have him back again. Yet such a request might well mark the re-birth of confidence and the beginning of real treatment. If it did not amount to a contempt of the law to make the suggestion, it might be arranged beforehand with the Chairman of the Bench that he put up a show of mock insistence that the boy should be sent elsewhere, in order that the latter might have the opportunity of witnessing the reassuring spectacle of someone fighting hard to get him back. As things are, the law often unwittingly provides the stage for assays of who wants whom. Many a lad commits offences to see if his father will stand up for him in court.[1] Why should we not learn to adapt this particular bit of the world's stage to our legitimate, if illicit, techniques of practical therapy?

[1] cf. References under the heading 'Delinquent Attention' in *Delinquency and Human Nature*.

CHAPTER NINE

THE APPROVED SCHOOL—II. MAINLY PROPOSALS

> "If we can find but one to whom we can speak out our heart freely, with whom we can walk in love and simplicity without dissimulation, we have no ground of quarrel with the world or God".
>
> R. L. STEVENSON.

THERE is, unfortunately, one type of approved-school boy whose defences seem to be beating us. As soon as he realises that he is letting himself slip into an acceptance of a good relationship he fights shy of it—by absconding.[1] And this becomes the pattern of his existence, which, under present conditions, he repeats throughout his long approved-school career. His type is usually fairly easily recognized not only by the periodic absconding but also by his refusal to confide in any member of the staff. (The persistent absconder of the impulsive type is often only too willing to discuss his troubles). Such boys are not numerous, perhaps only about 2% of our approved-school intake, but left to their own devices their future will be criminalism, insanity or at best vagabondage. One is very reluctant to recommend a 'closed' institution as a means of ensuring some continuation of therapy. Yet it may be asked how it is possible to undertake a necessarily long and carefully designed treatment if the patient refuses to stay on the premises. Not only that, but the cycle of running away, being hunted, captured and punished is calculated rather to reinforce the sullen enmity which these boys have. I feel also that it is kinder to remove the feasibility of running away, for then the challenge of it is dismissed and one cause of tension

[1] cf. the cases of Weston and Batchelor, *op. cit.*

alleviated. Furthermore, if one has to stay in one place and associate with the same people, there is no alternative but to make the best of it and get along with them. The impulse to shirk any kind of human attachment can become a life-crippling proclivity; it is one of those responses which can acquire persistence because of the momentary easing of tension they offer, and as with drug-addiction continued indulgence only makes the case more desperate.

There is, I think, only one other sort of approved-school absconder for whom a 'closed' establishment is required. This is the again comparatively small 'social danger' class of lad who commit such nuisance while on the run that for the public's peace of mind they must be restrained. Since, under present practice, they are usually sent to prison, where there is little possibility of suitable environmental treatment and where they are subjected to the routine and conditions of the adult prisoners, a type of closed institution which caters for their special needs would be a step forward.

It will be convenient, then, to discuss at this point what might be the nature of the closed approved school. What it should not be (and yet what it might become) is a punitive establishment. If it is allowed to contain a vestige of retribution it will only succeed in boiling our 'bad eggs' a little harder. Any 'closed' institution, furthermore, which emphasises the restriction of liberty by prisonlike walls or wire is at a therapeutic disadvantage; a person confined within a small area cannot help being impressed by his ineffectiveness, and it needs a stable personality to survive psychic adversity of this kind. If, for a person without moral reserves, struggle or escape is impossible, the lethargy and listlessness of the long-term prisoner is the only alternative. And finally we must examine our own motives as thoughts turn to closed institutions, and ask whether our aim is not merely the shortsighted

one of diminishing nuisance-value by putting our undesirables out of harm's way.

No society can afford to abandon the general principle that every citizen be held responsible for his acts. But quite an important minority of approved-school entrants are at least temporarily in a state of *de facto* irresponsibility, even though they do not answer to the classic types of insanity; and nothing is gained by a punitiveness directed against those who are beyond punishment. The really important thing to recognize with these types is that unless some kind of rehabilitation is effected during their formative years they are going to become lifelong nuisances and sources of expense. If the rescue of each one of them were to cost as much as £1,000 a year for some three years it should still receive the blessing of the Royal Committee on Estimates; a life of imprisonment and preventive detention is going to cost much more than that. Their treatment *must* be more expensive, because they cannot be treated in the mass. Whatever variety of character malformation they suffer from, it comes down fundamentally to the fact that they are deeply discouraged and cynical in their human relationships. For them only one cure is possible: they must be induced to build up a secure understanding and friendship with at least one adult. This does not mean, of course, that the time of one man or woman would be wholly taken up with a single boy, but the kind of concentrated personal interest which is required demands just a few boys per adult. Merely living together or being in the same institution together is not enough. With the distrustful above all, good relationships are best built up incidentally by doing something in common, so that the fellowship-shy can be taken unawares.

It is well, also, to recall an earlier dictum, that every human being requires to be a member of a permanent belonging-

group. The greater the instability of character the more narrowly and literally is this true. The difficult type of approved-school boy we are discussing can endure far less than the normal youth any break with a friendly environment. His treatment must be continuous, that is to say, there must be no moment when he is without his human anchorage. The ideal would be for his supervised existence to merge insensibly into self-supporting life. It is a heartrending commonplace how many youths thrive emotionally while at a school or Borstal, only to break down within a few months of their leaving. The boy whose case I reported under the name of Hill did excellently at Borstal, and became a house-captain and a reliable and loyal young man. Within a year or so of licence he was not only in prison, but had been convicted to eight years' penal servitude for assaulting a warder with a lead pipe. Somehow or other we must contrive to launch the unstable young person without inviting such disastrous failure. And this means retaining a continuity of his human associations and providing him with a belonging-group. As we reflect thus it becomes increasingly evident that only something much nearer to life than our present formal kind of institution will answer the purpose.

Without walls, and yet 'closed' in the sense that escape is not practicable; the re-joining of the threads of human feeling; attachment to a community by integration into a small group; the revival of self-respect with the aim of independent citizenship; rescue rather than detention. That is the riddle. Perhaps it were better, rather than tread further, that I remain an enunciator of principles and leave the answer to some administrative Gabriel. Specific proposals have the weakness that each demands a detailed examination of actualities, and this I have been unable to make. In reply those who are standing ready to paste the label 'impracticable' over any new proposal

it can at least be said, however, that nothing could fail worse, and more expensively, than our present handling of this hardest of hard cores, and that only a positive and adventurous policy will succeed. In the search for a solution one would naturally look to those communities whose trades compel them to work as self-contained and isolated units. Getting away to sea in the old days had the advantage, besides offering a means of removal, of planting the runaway in a small and intimate community from which further running away was impossible for a considerable period. I do not know enough about modern trampers and whaling fleets to be able to say whether Neptune could be persuaded to resume his therapeutic rôle.

The most feasible suggestion I can at present make is that the plans to afforest the Highlands be adapted for our purpose. The work has to be carried out in lonely regions, where absconding, though easy, would be comparatively harmless and the absconder have little chance of getting far. There would be a variety of employment, mostly of the open-air, 'tough' character which restless lads like, with the alternative of cooking and domesticity for the important minority of lads who are only happy in the stuffiness of some substitute-home, and with a certain amount of surveying and botanical work for the few of high intelligence. There would also be opportunities for individual lads to work alongside experienced men, in a way that good human experiences would come unawares. The employment could be paid for at a reasonable wage and, most important of all, those who settled down to a life of this sort would never have to be rudely uprooted from a corner of the world in which they had found peace; they could become forestry-keepers for life, and possibly in their turn befriend an unwanted boy or two.

Any solution, because it cannot be a mass solution, will

be administratively difficult and untidy. But fundamentally there is only one guiding principle for the administrator: his job is to find a way of doing what society wants done without transgressing against other social values and aims. There are no pre-ordained forms, there is no reason why a thing should not be both one thing and another, or serve diverse social aims at the same time, why a whaler should not also be an approved school, or the mate of a tramp steamer a psycho-therapist. The medieval parish church was at once a warehouse and a community centre; the Pharaohs probably built their pyramids during the slack agricultural season when their slaves would otherwise have got into mischief. Such combining of social purpose and elasticity of institutional shape also entails, as with the industrial foster-parent proposals outlined above, breaking down the traditional barrier between the administrator and the administrated. This means, on the one hand, that the ordinary man and woman must be educated to understand problems like delinquency and to co-operate in their solution, and on the other that the administrator learn to enlist their help. The latter then ceases to be merely a controller of staff and institutions, and becomes the organizer of our social purposes. The interest of the public in delinquency and our growing open-mindedness should facilitate less orthodox administrative techniques; and considering the unorthodox things that were organized during the war it is surely not too optimistic to think that we can find people who are good at buying up old schooners and at persuading fishermen, merchant seamen and foresters to take short courses in approved-school work.

These very specialized and individual types of environment would only be required, I believe, for the two very small classes of approved-school entrant mentioned above (p. 160–1). Of course we are failing with many others besides these, but with

less excuse—the reason being that we have by no means yet exhausted the possibilities of treatment within our existing approved schools. This applies even to the persistent absconders. These do not all conform to a single type, and the motives behind an abscondment can only be discerned by a knowledge of the individual boy. Of practically all absconders, however, three things may be said. None of the orthodox means of deterrence such as caning are of any avail; in fact the greater concern that the staff betray, by punishments indicative of panic or defeat, the greater in general is the amount of absconding. An abscondment, like a suicide, is nearly always undertaken for the emotional effect it will have on someone else. If those in charge of an approved school, who often have to bear the brunt of transferred parent-resentments, oblige by demonstrating their anxiety, absconding becomes worth while. On the other hand the time-honoured device of offering a boy who threatens to abscond a shilling to help him on his way, or to express surprise a little later that he has not gone, seldom fails to prick the balloon.

Unfortunately, however, those who are bent on running away seldom announce their intention of doing so, and this brings me to my second point: it is of the compulsive absconder above all true that he can only be understood, and cured, if we have knowledge of his earlier history and of his present human anxieties. The diagnosis of the causes of his unsettled state has a special importance in our handling of him; for not only can his bad attitudes be traced *in general* to the circumstances of his upbringing, and, when he had lived with them, to his relationships with his parents, but he is likely to be dominated by what might be described as a lively emotional memory of his home situation. This emotional memory may so colour his general person-attitudes that he is comparatively unconcerned about his relationships with other human

beings. Until, therefore, we bring the history of his home relationships to a happy solution, or at least until we make the memory of them bearable so that he can write them off and make a fresh start, we find it impossible to get him to treat us seriously; we cannot touch him, or get underneath his skin, as it is sometimes put. His anxieties being entirely centred around his parents, we are to him as if in another world. The desperate attachment which some boys have to thoroughly bad and neglectful parents is well known. The worse the parents in fact the greater emotional fixation the boy seems to have upon them. And often the mere disappointment over a letter, or the news of illness at home, causes the boy to throw away his progress and good resolutions by absconding. Or we have a well-known type of lad, in the senior approved school at any rate, whose sole interest in life is to indulge in a delinquent substitute for suicide. He is under a compulsion to work out his resentment upon a father who has thrown him over and to make his own plight desperate enough to excite the most hard-hearted parent to remorse; he shows an utter determination to go to the bad, he absconds time and again, commits fresh offences while he is out, never content till he has got himself to Borstal—as if he were saying to his father all the time: "Look what you've driven me to!" When a lad is in such a frame of mind the staff of the approved school are just nobodies, his emotions are directed entirely by a crippling parent-centred conflict.

This does not mean, however, that we are powerless. Whenever we see a boy under such a fixation upon his home anxieties, our practice should be to size up the situation in human terms as quickly as we can, and to deal with the real issues involved. This may mean visiting the antagonistic father, smoothing him down, explaining to him that his son's dramatic misbehaviour represents a rebound from a desperate

anxiety for paternal interest and affection, and having won him over plan our tactics with his co-operation. It is possible that the father is equally anxious for a reconciliation, but his pride prevents him, or else he is of the type who answers rejection by still greater antagonism. Naturally we shall sometimes fail in this Family Repair Service, but even if our efforts break down in the end, we shall have gained time for passions to have cooled off, for the boy to accommodate himself to the state of affairs, and above all time in which he can learn to accept new human relationships within the school. Our very efforts on his behalf, unexpected as they are, act as a reassurance and a budding point of new confidence.

My third point is that boys of the persistent-absconder type, who show their distress openly, are not usually deeply callous and immoral; their protest is still at the demonstrative stage which *precedes* the renunciation of human feeling. Consequently with them rapid progress is to be expected once their anxieties are resolved or become less insistent. They accept, as well as reject, demonstratively.

It is not too much to say that this technique of family therapy must be applied to every boy. If persistent delinquency is the outcome of an unfavourable human situation, commonsense and economy demand that everything possible be done to better that situation. How this can be done need not be detailed here, for the discovery of the causes in each individual case of breakdown will suggest the line of attack. For example, a boy's principal anxiety may be, not that he is estranged from his parents (whom he may have rejected emotionally from early childhood), but that he has lost touch with his favourite relatives, a foster-mother or other substitute-parents—in which case a little humane detective work and his restoration to them may right matters. And, as has been repeated elsewhere, our British tradition of emotional

understatement often reinforces misunderstandings; one finds many sincerely worried parents who have for years been plugging away on the wrong lines, dutifully creating anxieties.

The essential importance of this policy of the direct readjustment of family relationships is that if one is worsted in any situation it rankles. It rankles more than the issues themselves are sometimes worth. If a man diddles me of 2*s*. 6d. it does not settle my grievance for someone else to reimburse the amount. This is a hundred times more true of the antagonism between a boy and his parents. Their affection for him in his childhood has been the world's affection; their interest in him has been the world's interest. His view of the world's humanity and his sense of his own worth are thus derived from their affection and interest. Making his peace with them is consequently symbolic of his making his peace with the world. This duty of reconciling the unsettled boy with his parents while he is at the approved school, neglected though it now be, is thus a primary one. It is a serious thing for a young fellow to be permanently estranged from his family. He may not be lucky enough to find an alternative anchorage, and a person without an anchorage in life is a menace to himself and to society.

A yet further argument for an individual diagnosis of the family situation is found in our methods of licence. At present a lad is licensed either automatically when he reaches the end of his term, or by some measure of his good conduct within the school. We try to decide, mainly on the basis of his school behaviour, whether he is fit for licence. All too often we return a boy to a situation which has caused his breakdown once already without doing anything to remedy that situation. Many families, when things have come to a crisis, spontaneously realize their mistakes, but others blindly repeat them, or the emotional situation at home may be beyond repair.

Approved-school people are continually perplexed by the lad whose conduct while in the school has been exemplary and of whom everyone is confident that he will make good—only to hear within a few weeks of his licence that he is in trouble again. It is not because the school has failed in his training, but simply that it throws him back into surroundings which reawaken bad attitudes, or into a situation which would be impossible for any human being. Furthermore, without a close and knowing examination of the family relationships the fatal defects may be quite invisible; I have heard more than one untrained home-visitor declare that all was well, just because he did not know what signs to look for and was deceived by the natural reticence that people have in speaking of their intimate affairs.

It seems to me an enormous waste of public money that we undertake years of expensive rehabilitation, only at the end of it to expose a lad to the same deleterious influences as have brought him to us. This is surely spoiling the ship for a ha'-porth of tar. And yet we cannot just prevent every boy going back home to his parents; blood is thicker than water, and we should be making more trouble than we save. And, as I have indicated, it is important that a lad should make it up with his family, for alone in the world he is likely to be a public danger. My plea is that the emotional atmosphere of his home, which amounts to saying the causes of his break-down, be carefully assessed. Thereupon we should make an intensive effort to rectify the essential, delinquency-producing fault; but be prepared, if we judge it an impossible one, to find the boy a good placing, and if possible parent-substitutes, elsewhere.

This brings us to the question of what we should do about the family-less boy. Somehow or other, if we are to have any confidence in his future, he must be provided with a permanent

personal tie. This is a matter of simple emotional arithmetic, not one of these good, permissive things but an essential part of the routine of rehabilitation. Once again, enterprising individuals have sensed this need and have developed what is called the Sponsoring System, which is analogous to the 'uncle and aunt' idea for institutional children. Only those who have witnessed the pathetic importance which family-less children attach to the personal interest of some outside person can fully appreciate what a hidden yearning for family-membership they must have. Many such boys come to regard their approved school as their life's base, and become devoted to a member of the staff, but except where one of them has been virtually adopted, or 'sponsored', by someone within the school this represents only the shadow of the solution. G. Howland Shaw, in an excellent article[1] describing his experience of the sponsoring system, puts it thus: "The boy is used to people who claim to be interested in him and who wish to help him but who are paid for what they do. He is totally unprepared for somebody who evidently likes him and who does things for him but who is not paid for it, and such an experience . . . has a very definite therapeutic value." The difficulty will always be to find the right sort of man or woman for the task. As with the Children's Institution this is a question of the School being part of a local community (such, unfortunately, as few at present are). So long as precautions are taken against the volunteer who turns up from nowhere and we work through recognized community bodies, the risks involved would be negligible and the response from the locality might be found surprisingly great. Fundamentally our delinquency-problem can only be solved when treated as a community responsibility.

[1] Reprinted in the *Howard Journal* of 1949–50 from the *Prison Journal* of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, October, 1949.

Lip service has often been paid to the principle of treating every boy as an individual. But to many the kind of individual case-work which these recommendations involve will have come as a shock and a surprise. It is universally recognized that a certain number of boys need psychological care, but an attempt is made to delimit this group and to differentiate it sharply from the so-called normal majority. Against this procedure there are two objections: no such water-tight compartments exist in actual life (which means that the approach is unrealistic), and those who would be classed as normal often prove failures no less than the 'abnormal' group. It all comes down to our conception of normality. The obviously 'queer' boy, who commits irrational acts apart from his delinquency, who suffers from grotesque facial contortions or who has fits, is easily put in the 'psychological' class. But what about the bedwetter or the sleepwalker or a boy with an obsessional fear of the dark? In effect, this attempt to make a sharp division between the normals and the abnormals really amounts to a fear of psychology. No objection is made to referring the obviously emotionally disturbed boy to the psychiatrist. The latter can be kept in his place, he will not interfere with the routine of the school. But the psychological assessment of the cause of the delinquency of every boy, a psychologist having a say in how each one should be handled, or in matters of home-leave or licence, would entail a considerable readjustment of the personal relationships of the staff within the more traditional school. Some might prefer to stick to their 40%, or whatever they are, of failures! No such attitude would be tolerated in a hospital for the treatment of physical diseases, for the reason, of course, that the medical profession are recognised as the most competent people to advise upon matters of bodily health. The psychologist has yet to convince the public and the official world that

he is the most competent person to advise upon matters of emotional health. The difficulty of planting a psychologist within each school in order to advise upon matters which had formerly been the headmaster's sole province is a real one. In effect, it can hardly arise for the great majority of schools because there are not enough psychologists available. I believe, furthermore, that both the difficulty of confidence in psychology and that of the human relationship can be circumvented by the grafting of the above proposals for individual treatment on to our existing approved-school system. The major qualification for any person who is going to do the psychological work—if the kind of commonsense enquiry and advice which I have in mind can be thus labelled—is that he or she should have demonstrated an ability to fit into the approved-school pattern of life. The principles of our modern personality-psychology, moreover, require neither occult powers, techniques of hypnosis or 'deep analysis', a statistical mentality, nor even a training in the giving of tests of intelligence. If I had to state the best qualifications required, I should opt, apart from the overriding one of being a competent member of the approved-school team, for that sensitivity which enables people to appreciate good literature; more arts graduates might be encouraged to join approved-school staffs with the prospect of their later receiving some psychological training. Probably the best way to ensure that the psychological work is in the right hands is to start with small beginnings by the seconding of selected members of approved-school staffs for what might be termed 'emergency training'. Even a course of six weeks or so, combined with a year's reading, would be of great value for men and women with some years of approved-school experience behind them, and such a scheme has an analogy in the month's residential course for experienced graduate teachers who wish to take the Oxford Diploma in

Education. Newcomers to approved-school work might be advised to serve for two or three years as a teaching member of a staff and then devote a year to psychological studies. If the Head of a school volunteered to attend one of the short courses, this would automatically solve the personal difficulty referred to above; in any case the defining and execution of a programme of treatment for each boy is only possible by 'round-table' conferences in which the Head would be in the chair and have ultimate responsibility. To advise members of staffs with this 'emergency training' in dealing with very difficult or exceptional cases, fully trained psychologists might be appointed on a regional basis. They could also perform the extremely necessary function of collating and disseminating experience in what is after all a new field of knowledge. This work of 'on the job' practical research and systematic accumulation of experience is already being started by the classifying approved schools.

There are yet a few other considerations which ought to be mentioned in any discussion of approved-school policy. The first is that we should cast the same therapeutic eye over the mixings of the boys among themselves as over their relationships with the adult world. It would be trite to say that young people adjust themselves to the world by learning to understand and get on with each other; yet this is often forgotten in approved-school circles. One hears of places where boys are forbidden to associate in small groups, and where recreation is organized so as to keep them on the move in accordance with the prison tradition. The fervent inter-boy friendships and loyalties which grow up, and the pathetic attachments that one finds towards brothers and sisters among those who have learnt not to rely on parental affection make us realize how fundamental is the need for intimate human companionship. If we try to thwart it, we only succeed in

directing the loyalty against ourselves. There are indeed important reasons why friendships should be encouraged. The near-psychotic boy tends continuously to be on bad terms with his fellows, and the first sign of improvement in him is that he makes a friend. The immoral, callous type estranges one would-be friend after another by his scheming and his 'doing the dirty' on them. He can only be made to understand loyalty by practising it. It is a question, therefore, of developing and directing boy-friendships as part of our programme of moral re-education. If no attempt to do this is made, then, as every approved-school person knows, the 'bad 'uns', i.e. those who are suspicious of, and band together against, the world of adulthood and authority, will soon form their set.

There are in fact many reasons why some boys fail to make friends, and if they are thrown into a large group they may be still less likely to do so. It is easier to maintain a defence of general aloofness or antagonism when mixing loosely with a number of people than when thrown into intimate association with two or three, and similarly the shy, inferior-feeling boy gets discouraged in a crowd. A large dormitory, for example, can be a hell to the boy who tends to be a butt, and is a paradise for the bully. Boys do not naturally form cliques of more than three or four, so that there remains plenty of scope for the exercise of that extra-group callousness which is so common among delinquents. On the other hand, very different types of people thrown together in small groups learn to value each other. It may seem pettifogging to demand that the large-dormitory system be abolished in favour of rooms of four to six beds, but those who have experienced both arrangements appreciate the advantages of the latter. To what extent a material circumstance may set a pattern upon the all-important personal relationships will be realized if one pictures the

different ways in which a housemaster can say good-night to a group of four boys, with the opportunities for small chats and friendly exchanges of conversation which he then has, compared with the necessarily formal turning-out of lights in a twenty-strong dormitory. (Or at least the only alternative is the obvious picking out of a few boys for individual notice, with consequent jealousy among others). The same applies in lesser degree to small and large dining tables. When boys associate for eating, sleeping and working in small units the staff have the means of re-assorting friendships where they feel it advisable to do so.

A second point which is overlooked, I believe, in all but a very few schools, is the fact that the ordinary person in the normal course of his life has a part of each day when he can be, if not alone, at least unbothered and unnoticed. Active dealings with people inevitably entail a certain strain, a minding of one's step, a tolerance, a refraining from doing exactly as one wants and a constraint in doing what one does not want. Among the timid and uncertain these normal strains are many times magnified by their anxiety about fitting in and by their need to show off or otherwise to make sure of their place in the group. Depression, furthermore, positively demands a letting-alone to allow the natural recuperation to take place, in the same way as the stomach requires a rest when one has indigestion. Retirement is a time-honoured device for the restoration of nervous resources. When one considers that many of the occupants of our approved schools are there because they have found the strains of their previous surroundings too much for them, it is to be expected that they should show indications of nervous exhaustion. I believe that a large amount of their characteristic lethargy at work, their bodging of jobs and their touchiness can be thus accounted for. More directly, it is not

uncommon for boys just to hide away—under beds, in sheds, or technically to abscond by roaming the countryside for a few hours. One such lad of my acquaintance hid himself for weeks during the evening in a games store; he told me that he found the presence of other lads so irritating that he could hardly refrain from hitting them, and being a powerful fellow this caused him acute distress. In my evening club I often observed that boys would sometimes relax by themselves in a quiet corner for a whole evening, and during the fine light summer evenings when it was assumed that all of them would want to play games out-of-doors the sombre, unorganized quiet of the club-room seemed as attractive as ever. I always avoided any club activity which required universal participation, or which molested the quiet of non-participants, and even for this reason contrived never to introduce table tennis, with its balls which every few seconds fly into some reader's face or across his book, or have to be fished out from beneath his chair. In the common rooms, large dormitories, eating halls, workshops, playing fields of our approved schools there is in general no quiet place of refuge or privacy to which the boy can have a breathing space from the strains of human society. Moods and depressions are far more common in, at any rate, senior approved-school youths than among other young people of their age. And the best therapy for depression is not to try to jerk the sufferer out of it, but to let him indulge undisturbed until, with the recuperation of his nervous resources the natural urge to sociability reasserts itself. I have a feeling that were this recognized as a regular part of our therapy many a crisis and an abscondment would be averted, and many a young person rescued who is now hustled from one place of detention to another. This is not to advocate solitary retirement; such might be open to abuse and even misrepresentation. Experiment will show what

is the best form for the refuge to take. I do not think it necessary for a boy to be absolutely solitary, and there are even certain arguments against this apart from the traditional fear of masturbation. Possibly the best solution would be a room where unmolested relaxation is guaranteed, but where those relaxing have a certain amount of movement around them to occupy their thoughts, with the awareness of the presence of others to provide the passive comfort of gregariousness, and where those whose sociability is re-awakening can join in activities or not just as they feel inclined—in other words a large, warm club-room in which everyone can be king, if he likes, in his own corner. One thing, however, I feel to be essential about any quiet room: it should be voluntary, and not appear in any way to entail a restriction of liberty.

My other considerations encroach upon difficult ground, that of the personal relationships between staff and boys. In such matters there can be no pre-ordained patterns, for every man or woman has his or her own style, and boys and girls respond to varied handlings. In our general quest for principles, however, I think we may even here discern one or two. The first is the principle of trust. I know that the vast majority of the inmates of a boys' approved school are there because of their repeated stealing, and some of them find the habit difficult to shake off. The best way, however, to ensure that the habit is never shaken off is to assume that a boy is a thief and that whenever he has the chance he will steal. A lack of trust is a certain mark of a bad relationship. Approved-school boys, like the rest of mankind, refrain from stealing from people whom they regard as their friends.[1] They have developed a lack of compunction about stealing from other

[1] The exception is the dramatic testing-out provocation referred to earlier in this chapter.

people, and often choose this as a means of resentment or retaliation. So the assumption that they will steal invites this particular kind of response. At some stage, consequently, if they are ever to be weaned of the habit, someone has got to earn his place within their fellowship-circle by assuming that there will be no stealing. Trust also flatters; the pride and gratitude of an untrusted boy when unexpectedly trusted is sometimes sufficient to raise him to an entirely new level of self-esteem. Doubly then, distrust depresses, and trust elevates. When I ran my evening club and decided to break the black market in cigarettes by selling all I could get at shop price, I began by leaving a box for the money beside the packets. I never counted the proceeds to see if they were correct, and the boys knew I did not. Always there was a substantial amount of money there, although no doubt a boy now and then gave himself the benefit of a sixpence. But the procedure amply repaid itself as symbolizing the principle of trust upon which I wished the club to be run. It happened now and then, also, when a boy took my supply of cigarettes from me to sell, that he found himself a small amount short. Although perhaps admonishing him about how careful one must be with money, I never made as if to doubt his integrity; and the result *was* greater care. Similarly, when anything went wrong, I always insisted that every boy's story be believed—unless there was evidence to the contrary—and I am sure there was more truth in the end. There are people one lies to, just as there are people one cheats, and there are people with whom one does neither. Of course we shall be let down occasionally, but some lads will find a means of circumventing the closest precautions; and I am quite sure that the total amount of dishonesty is greater in an atmosphere of suspicion and the crimes when committed are more serious. This, after all, is to be expected, for by suspicion one creates

powerful incentives to dishonesty; it becomes a point of pride, and loyalty to one's mates, to "do the Old Man down". While I think even the smartest Alick feels a twinge of shame in being trusted and being believed. In summary, one may say that dishonesty and distrust form a vicious circle; and in beginning to unwind it we have occasionally to let ourselves be fooled.

All this must sound very risky to many readers. It is not good for a youngster, it will be objected, to let him get away with dishonesty. Of course it is not; to create for him an artificial world where wrongdoing is condoned would be preparing him ill for the impact of the real world. My point is that we must not provoke wrongdoing. Where there is evidence of dishonesty there is nothing to be gained by shutting one's eyes to it, and the transgressor must be made to bear the consequences in as far as he is emotionally in a fit state to do so.

We thus find ourselves brought face to face with the general problems of discipline and punishment. Earlier it was pointed out that, straightforward as may be the principles underlying the latter with ordinary children in an ordinary family or school, it offers quite peculiar difficulties with certain types of maladjusted children and approved-school boys. However material the form it might take, punishment was seen as the symbol of disapproval, only effective if the punished values a good relationship with the punisher. Where no such exists, the child is unpunishable—he can only be ill-treated. Many a parent has said to me: "It was no use hitting him, it only made him worse." And it is difficult for those schooled upon the idea that Man is a rational creature to understand that certain types of people respond to punishment by more desperate or more subtle wrongdoing.

The traditional philosophy of punishment was based upon

the concept of Original Sin, it being assumed that as every child was to some degree 'born bad' badness could only be eliminated by the refining process of chastisement. The harm that this doctrine of innate sinfulness is doing as a popular superstition has already been emphasized. The more modern view is that children are born good, and only become bad by emotional ill-treatment. This statement, however, needs qualification: it is not meant to imply that the well and securely loved child will never be naughty. Man is an assertive creature as well as a sociable one. From a surprisingly early age, the human infant begins to explore every available channel of assertion, and invariably it discovers the tremendous psychic dividend to be derived from forcing its will upon the adult world. Before a child can talk it tumbles to the idea of interrupting adult conversation and of throwing spoons and toys down for the pleasure of having someone stoop to pick them up. The toddler who wants to play with daddy's cigarettes takes the prohibition as a personal insult. The young boy will, like the puppy and the young of many animals, exploit physical methods of assertion, by jumping on to the backs of his elders, smacking and hitting them not out of malice but just for fun, restricting the movements of adults by standing in their path or by clinging on to arms, legs or clothes, or demonstrating his power over the material world by smashing or pulling to pieces, again purely for the self-enhancement that comes of it. Especially when having to suffer the belittlement of correction, children will retort by verbal assertiveness, that is by being cheeky or truculent. Above all, they have to learn to accommodate themselves to the ineffectiveness and lack of standing implicit in being told to do, or not to do, certain things. This long and intricate process of accommodating assertiveness to the convenience of other people goes against the grain, and in

any normal child will evoke protest. It is not too much, I think, to say that a struggle for hegemony must be expected; only the extremely insecure child, whose anxiety about being loved is an overriding one, will never dare to practise assertion and so becomes unnaturally good and submissive. The function of correction and punishment, therefore, is to seal off the undesirable channels of assertiveness. And because being corrected or punished, besides implying a bad human relationship, also involves a loss of face, the ordinary child very quickly learns to avoid the 'dangerous' situations and seeks out whatever legitimate means of fulfilment are available. There are occasions, of course, especially where a child has been allowed to impose upon adults, when he or she will put up a determined struggle to maintain disagreeable habits of assertiveness. Approved-school boys of this type take some time to learn that they cannot 'get away with things' as they have been used to do at home with parents who have been afraid to exert discipline.

In summary, it may be said that normal naughtiness, if such a term may be used, distinguishes itself from the badness arising from resentment and from the inhibition of the desire to please in two respects: its amenability to correction and its lack of malice.

The staff of an approved school, however, are in the special position of having continuously to bear the brunt of other people's failures. Approved-school boys are not merely naturally assertive, some are also resentful. While, essentially, the discipline of the school must rely upon a mutual regard and good feeling, it takes time to build up such a basis with each newcomer. This difficulty is naturally most acute in a remand home or a classifying school, where the children only stay a short while. In these circumstances one cannot be dogmatic or doctrinaire: it may be necessary, right

at the beginning, to ensure compliance and respect by fear. The important thing is for those in authority to be aware of what they are doing, that is, they should work upon principles of treatment rather than upon just picking up the art. The truth is that the two do sometimes conflict: there are all kinds of disciplinary know-hows which, harmful though they be in their long-term effects, are in the immediate situation devilishly effective. The commonest of these—resorted to by all but the wisest and greatest of heart—is that of communal punishment for the undetected crime, which never fails to generate ill-feeling. The wickedest, and most devilishly effective of all, is the penalisation of a group for the offence of a known individual. With the callousness and brutality which approved-school boys, given the opportunity to exercise it, can muster, the result of the withdrawal of a group-privilege or even the forfeiture of points in a competition is that the offender is ostracised or set upon by the others. Even more heinous is the practice, fortunately going out of fashion if it has not already disappeared, of 'turning the blind eye' while, say, an absconder is left to the mercies of the rest of the school for half-an-hour in the gymnasium. So dreadful is the fear inculcated by the resulting orgy of brutality that, it has been boasted, absconding becomes a rare occurrence, and no boy ever absconds twice. Effective discipline, in short, is not necessarily good discipline.

Probably the biggest danger, however, is from the other extreme of opinion. The propaganda against discipline has made such headway that progressively-minded people have begun to feel that any assumption of authority by an adult must be repressive. Taking an order from someone necessarily implies a position of inferior status; but to do so is not necessarily belittling. It is only such if the order comes from someone not recognized as a superior, or who has no

right to give it. Consequently, to render the inferiority of status tolerable, people tend to 'build up' their superiors; they try to make them as superior as possible. We simply cannot accommodate ourselves to being ordered about by a person whom we do not respect, and so we are forced at times to go to considerable lengths of self-delusion in order to see greatness where none exists. If our bosses are worthless, we are worse than worthless; if they are sublime plenty of headroom is left for our own dignity. If an adult in charge of boys tries to come down to their level, while still expecting an occasional obedience, then indeed he belittles them and they resent it.

There is another no less powerful reason why boys, especially delinquent ones, prefer to be able to look up to, instead of down on or along at, the men around them. They need a father-figure; and it is an essential part of their growing-up that they should have this experience. Depriving them of it will not teach them to be more independent, but will just mean that they will spend a large part of their later lives in the quest, just as men who have never experienced true mother-love tend to make their wives into mother-substitutes. Among boys who cannot, owing to their earlier deprivation, ask for it openly, this need for a father sometimes takes the pathological form of going out of their way to get punished. They express regret that they did not have more whackings when they were young, and whackings and cuffings come to symbolize parental interest. Consequently, punishment affords them a morbid, substitute-satisfaction. This is not an argument for refusing to punish at all, as David Wills would have it; but it is an argument for providing in abundance the better attributes of fatherliness as the British working-class lad understands them. And the quality most sought for is fatherly authority. Just as the young Boswell revered and magnified

Samuel Johnson's greatness in order the better to enjoy the interest the latter took in him, so the approved-school boy feels honoured by association with a man whom he can respect.

There is one further comment upon discipline to be made, unpopular though it may be in approved-school circles. It is a general practice to delegate disciplinary powers to 'prefects' or 'house leaders'. Now as every public-school housemaster knows, this is a tremendous trouble-saver, and the easier the housemaster's conscience the more trouble he is saved. Even in the public school the delegation of power to immature youths lends itself to abuse; in the approved school there are few boys of sufficient balance of character to exercise authority justly, and at worst it legalizes the bullying of the more immoral types. A generation back, in the school with which I am most acquainted, it was the recognized thing to put the toughest lad in charge of the others, just as the best-fighting Husky is made the leader of the dog-team. Even if this does not happen anywhere to-day, the very system demands that the leader must be a strong lad, otherwise he will be 'beaten-up' if he attempts to order others about, so it comes to very much the same thing. Again, working class boys come to the school without any tradition of being ordered about by their age-equals, and so they feel belittlement and resentment.

The other side of the question is that the personal direction of all the petty duties by the housemaster or whoever is in charge would be an excessive strain and involve much petty nagging. I think that here there is room for cautious experiment. Because on my club premises I had no official powers of discipline, i.e. if I gave an order and it were defied there was nothing I could do about it, I resolved never formally to give an order. Instead the discipline of the Club was maintained by elected officials supported by a weekly general

club assembly. While an official could, in an extremity, bring a complaint to the meeting if a Club member defied his authority, anyone had the right to complain of the unreasonableness of an official. In fact, it was exceedingly rare for either to happen; for the very reason that the mutual safeguards existed there was little need to resort to them. And the Club members felt no difficulty in being called upon to tidy up the room or to go at closing time when they knew that they were being directed by their own appointed officers for their own immediate good. I am aware that such a constitution is much easier to work in a club, the purpose of which is recreation, than in a boarding house. The obvious objection is that the boys, in the latter case, would elect as leaders those who would be easy with them and allow them to shirk the less attractive side of their daily tasks. This may possibly occur at first, but I think they would discover by experiment the advantage of a leadership which was fair and efficient, and which could be respected. Success would also depend upon the relationship which the housemaster was able to establish with the boys in general, and with the elected leaders in particular. There is no reason why the individual need of most boys for a father-figure should not be turned into a collective eagerness to please. In any case, as has been earlier argued, effective discipline must be founded upon a desire for good human relationships. It was also suggested above that the development of true companionship among the boys themselves is a valuable instrument for their social adjustment. We should, then, mobilize every form of community-approval and not only the approval of the adult in charge. Among themselves, boys achieve a kind of rough-and-ready group good-feeling and group discipline. If we can organize this by means of an official constitution we have the best possible setting for a group therapy. Every boy

would have the greatest incentive to adapt himself to the community, and far from discipline and treatment getting in each other's way, as can happen with autocratic methods, they become part and parcel of each other.[1]

[1] Dr. A. G. Hughes's recently published book, *Education and the Democratic Ideal* (Longmans) contains a refreshing re-statement of the democratic principle in education. The keynote of this, to use his own phrase, is respect for personality. Success in approved-school work also depends upon the value which is attached to every young person as a human being, and the extent to which each one feels himself valued. The democratic principle must find its first exercise in the dealings of the staff with one another. Quite apart from the obvious administrative and therapeutic advantages of round-table consultation, authoritarianism can never be efficient from the human point of view. The frustration and 'old soldier' attitudes it breeds in the staff render them less capable of respecting the personalities of those over whom they in turn have authority. This book might well form the basis of discussion among approved-school people and the Home Office inspectorate.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

> "Learn therefrom, O superficial Wang Yu, that wisdom lies in an intelligent perception of great principles, and not in a slavish imitation of details which are, for the most part, beyond your simple and unsufficient understanding."
>
> ERNEST BRAMAH, *The Wallet of Kai Lung.*

The Concept of Breakdown

PEOPLE are sometimes heard to say 'We are all delinquent really', or 'We are all maladjusted'. What they mean is that every human being who studies his emotional processes is aware of impulses and attitudes which, if they ever got the upper hand, would cause him to resort to a delinquent or other undesirable course of action. The important thing, however, is that the vast majority of us do not, much as we sometimes feel the inclination thereto, overstep the fatal threshold. We remain normal, not because we have no maladjusted feelings, but because we commit no (or few) maladjusted acts. Indeed the terms 'maladjusted' and 'delinquent' have no sense except in terms of behaviour.

Nor can delinquency be defined except in terms of actual lawbreaking. Some would object that this is a superficial definition of a sociologically important category of behaviour, making it depend as it does upon the fortuitous laws of a particular culture. In a sense this is correct; but it is not the sociologist's fault. It is due to our legal and moral emphasis which, albeit rightly and inevitably, causes the delinquent symptoms to get picked out for special treatment. Acquaintance with delinquents in the flesh, however, reveals that

they do not conform to any clearly defined type. Delinquency is just one sort of personality-failure, which can mask as great a variety of dys-function as can a high temperature. Furthermore one discovers the same individual varying his pattern of breakdown to include delinquent symptoms at one time and 'maladjusted' symptoms at another, or both at once.

The fundamental concept for our purpose is that of breakdown—a bursting out from an unbearable situation irrespective of any wider effect either upon oneself or others. It is analogous to that state in which a physical pain seems suddenly to get the better of a person, dominating his consciousness and driving him to demand immediate relief. In a minor and temporary way we suffer breakdown when we lose our tempers or even get irritable. At such times we commit ill-considered acts and utter words which we afterwards regret, possibly thereby sacrificing a pawn or two in life's game. But we manage to retain a sense of the relative importance of things and so set bounds to the breakdown, which distinguishes our tempers from the insane outbreak or the life-wrecking criminal act. In a major personality-failure people sacrifice the larger pieces on the chessboard, and often end by throwing away the game altogether. Whether it is a rook or queen which is sacrificed may depend upon the state of the game and of the player's mind at the time—upon, that is, the particular circumstances of the case.

It is only a lack of understanding of this concept of the breakdown threshold which causes people still to wonder why, within a given family, one child becomes delinquent or another not, or why one family produces a neurotic and another a criminal, or why yet another family, exposed to similar strains, produces neither. When a house is bombed, some people may be killed, others injured and yet others be unscathed;

in an epidemic certain people succumb and others resist infection. These are not questions of pure chance, but their explanation involves the study not only of wide predisposing factors but of exact circumstances. The architect of hypotheses, in his task of explanation, often has to examine situations in which minute variations produce spectacular changes. This means that he can afford no faults in his building; unlike the statistician, he has to work to an exact fit: every detail of his structure has to be accommodated within the whole. If he leaves anything out he must modify his tenets until they are brought once more into conformity with the facts. The panoramic view of the statistician may fail to detect the small but critical differences. A cistern may be 99.99% perfect, yet contain a pin-hole which prevents it holding water. The concept of breakdown has this quality of absoluteness: so long as one rational means of escape from an unbearable situation remains, the individual will not incur its penalties. Compare, for example the quarrelsome home-situation in D. H. Lawrence's auto-biographical novel, *Sons and Lovers,* with the state of affairs in those delinquents' families which I have described in the group 'Parental Quarrels'.[1] In Lawrence's account we find the symptoms of mother-anxiety together with the avoidance-excitement true to pattern. But there is this difference: his mother, *alias* Mrs. Morel, with all her affectional selfishness and lack of imagination for the feelings of others, never for a moment entertained the abandonment of her family as a personal solution to her difficulties. But every one of the delinquents' mothers had herself in a sense broken down; some had actually deserted their homes for periods, others had continually threatened to do so, and some of them consorted with other men and lost interest in their children. The families them-

[1] *Delinquency and Human Nature,* Chapter IV.

selves had either broken up, or were in imminent danger of doing so. The worst that could have happened in the Morel family was that the father would walk out—which merely, in this case, meant the loss of the wage-earner; with the mother remaining firm and imparting stability to the family-group the question of delinquency, despite the anxieties created by the quarrelling, simply did not arise. Even the rejected son, Arthur, removed himself by the comparatively respectable expedient of the king's shilling.

Alternative forms of Breakdown

If an element of breakdown there must be, if something must be sacrificed, then the least damaging alternative is chosen. This indeed, is where moral teaching comes in: it serves to heighten the wall against the all-too-easy *delinquent* breakdown.[1] In families where standards are lax, where

[1] At a superficial view this statement may appear disparaging of the rôle of moral teaching. But the fact is that all cultures, both primitive and advanced, share in this emphasis against the infringement of a code of behaviour. Our socio-biological approach, then, compels us to ask why this should be. The reasons, as I see them, are threefold. Firstly, as indicated above, a delinquent solution (in the sense here of committing a hostile, harmful, illegal act) is temptingly easy; after all it is not very difficult to kill or to steal, and the impulse to retaliate against whoever annoys, belittles or interferes is, in addition, instinctive. Secondly, the effects of such acts are hard to repair; while other forms of breakdown allow time for the situation to take a turn for the better. Thirdly, committed as they mostly are under the stress of a blinding or distorting emotion, they must be countered by evoking emotions of fear which are still more powerful; hence the emphasis.

Compared with delinquency other forms of breakdown exert themselves more upon the individual than upon his associates (although this is only relatively and generally the case). At any rate the neurotic whose unconscious wish is to impose upon other people can only do so at considerable sacrifice to himself. Where there is no important element of hostility in the motivation, and yet the individual is subjected to temporarily unbearable strains, breakdown is more likely to assume the form of depression, anxiety-neurosis or some form of psychosomatic exhaustion-illness. Even in depression, however, when the nervous resources are at a very low ebb, we are tempted to react to

a certain class of the community or a certain class of article is regarded as fair game, boys will tend to allay their enxieties by the excitements of housebreaking, exercise an anti-paternal grudge by stealing a car, or secure removal from home by a succession of wanton and obvious thefts. In their part-conscious reckoning such lads know that they will attain their objective with the minimum of sacrifice, for they still leave open the possibility of reconciliation with their parents, or may even know that their crimes will be made light of as youngsters' pranks. If, on the other hand, the family's moral code is severe, to steal would represent a quite unnecessary sacrifice of parental regard and of individual self-respect—provided the same result can be achieved by neurotic or hysterical incapacity. Suppose, however, that the hysteria is clumsily handled and the sufferer is stigmatized as a shammer and a malingerer, the effect will be to signalize his lapse from the family's character-standard—a standard become synonymous with personal worth—so that failure means utter disgrace. The reaction to exposure and humiliation is on the one hand resentment, and on the other an impulse to deny the finality of the family *mores*. The way is opened to a delinquent solution. In fact one does often find a sudden reversion to stealing following some such loss of face. If, alternatively, the inculcation of formal moral principles has been so effective as to amount to an absolute conditioning, then disgrace may find no answer except in suicide. This is not to say that it will, or that suicide is generally associated with high standards; it merely illustrates how one form of breakdown may, with a change in the life-situation, be displaced by another. Generally speaking, it can be said that the

frustration or interference by hostility. Broadly, society says to each individual through its moral-legal code: 'Whatever your strains or provocations are, you have no excuse for harm-dealing outbreaks.' This might be called a social axiom of universal validity.

more well-to-do or powerful the individual the greater number of outlets are open to him and the fewer sacrifices he will have to make. I have elsewhere instanced the case of Lord Byron, in whose personality there was accumulated a rare combination of false adjustments and bad attitudes to his fellow men. Throughout his life he was continually on the verge of criminal, neurotic, depressive, insane, suicidal or epileptic breakdowns; yet partly by luck and partly by the compensations which his position and wealth afforded him he was never finally forced into any.[1] The exact determinants of the various breakdown types need further study; for our present purpose we must content ourselves with reflecting that the kind and time thereof are often settled by incidental factors of the contemporary life-situation. It is a matter of what is commonly called chance, if a person is careless in crossing roads, just when and where and how he will be knocked down, or whether he will be knocked down at all. The important thing is his susceptibility, that is to say, his carelessness. Similarly, when we come to examine the basic factors underlying delinquency with a view to its prevention we have to widen our purview to include the general causes of every form of personality-failure.

Summary of Preventive Measures

Delinquency, however has got the publicity, and if thi serves to direct attention to the wider question of emotional health, so much the better. A crime-rate, especially among youth, serves also as a thermometer recording the general stability of a civilization. This is why specific measures aimed at the

[1]The fates overtook him at a period when for the first time in his life he had settled down in a family-group and was developing a certain composure of character. But with his personality-habit of cutting a grand figure he could not back out of the invitation to go to Greece, and once there became intoxicated by the fantasy of winning a crown. His failure and consequent depression prepared the way for his physical collapse and death.

symptoms are just as pointless as an effort to reduce a patient's temperature irrespective of his disease. It is also for this reason inevitable that the remedies proposed should involve basic changes to the pattern of our culture. As we have seen, the tracing of causes through the mental and emotional processes of individual delinquents brought us in the end to consider the relationship of the individual and his family to society. One might say that the ultimate determinants are sociological.

For the holding of these remedies in mind I find it useful to divide them into short-, middle- and long-term ones, although—such is their interaction—it is not feasible to expound them in these neat categories. Those of short-term comprise the discovery of the imminently or actually delinquent and their rehabilitation, and the provision of socially admissible safety-valves, so that fewer boys and girls find themselves in the complete emotional impasse which spells breakdown. Attention was drawn to the anachronism of forcing young people into crime as their only means of securing removal from an unhappy home-life. It was suggested that if a boy is happier, and it is thought that he will become a better person, away from home, there should be residential schools or training centres to which he could go voluntarily, without stigma and before he has had time to explore criminal outlets. Since, however, for long to come we shall not be able to dispense with the approved school in its present form, I have sketched out some broad principles of corrective training—suggesting that the last remaining vestiges of punitiveness be removed in practice, as they have been officially removed in theory; that a positive policy be followed of building up self-respect and encouraging normal entry into manhood, rather than the perpetuation of that immaturity and shirking of life which all too

often accompany institutional treatment; and that with the aid of our modern personality-psychology we aim both at lessening the stresses within each child's family-life which have driven him to delinquency and also at providing him with a human environment which will develop the better part of his nature.

The use of this personality-psychology in a preventive family therapy would be the pivot of our middle-term programme. Here the emphasis was upon spotting the unhappy, and potentially delinquent or maladjusted child at that stage where he is still protesting against the emotional ill-treatment. The teacher, school welfare officer, health visitor and family doctor were seen to be in a position of vantage for this early diagnosis; and it was mooted that everyone who comes professionally into contact with children should be trained to think in emotional terms and be in a position to give, in the form of commonsense yet knowledgeable advice, what was called a psychological First Aid.

The second part of the middle-term programme would consist in an attack upon the specific danger-points within our social structure. The central theoretical postulate, as far as the individual's emotional health is concerned, was that every person, and most particularly every child, needs to feel secure in its membership of a belonging-group. Not to be so means distress, and eventually personality-aberration and/or breakdown. The first principle, therefore, of a preventive therapy is never to allow a child to remain thus parlously unattached for longer than can possibly be helped. If this vital principle is ignored—as unfortunately it now often is—every other device of treatment, discipline or punishment remains irrelevant, or at best merely palliative. In development of this theme it was suggested that help of a neighbourly kind should be given to the demoralized

'problem' family in order that it might both be kept intact and by the same agency restored to self-respect; and that in the care of deprived children their human relationships should be supervised with the same routine certainty as they are at present given medical examinations. It was further pointed out that a fresh and more courageous approach to the foster mother problem was overdue. For older boys it was suggested that something akin to the old residential apprenticeship might be revived in the shape of an industrial foster-parent scheme.

The central theoretical postulate, from a sociological point of view, was that the industrial revolution and successive wars have disintegrated our society and made our large cities into amorphous population-masses—breaking up the larger family- and neighbourhood-groups or 'sub-clans'; uprooting small family-units so that in times of difficulty or discouragement their members are deprived of the support of relatives and neighbours; blurring the duty, recognized in more primitive communities, of other branches of the family to provide a home for any child left an orphan or rejected by its parents. As regards such community-facilities as are now available, a certain degree of personality-stability seems to be necessary before an individual can spontaneously take advantage of them; those young people who are most in need of social contact outside the home tend also to remain outside our youth organizations. The next important step which our Youth Service will have to take is that of seeking out the 'unclubbables' and of preparing them, through some kind of transitional club, for regular club membership.

In general it can be said that the less integrated a community the fewer safeguards exist against breakdown in its constituent families and individuals. The basis of our long-term programme, consequently, is the development of a

pattern of integration appropriate to an advanced industrial community; and by passing reference it was suggested that this demanded, in the first place, a greater emphasis upon the happiness of the individual, and in the second place a more active democracy than we have succeeded so far in evolving. It was pointed out that a class of administrators making arrangements for a passive and remote population are tied to a minimal level of effectiveness. Where it is merely a question of constructing a road the terrain can be surveyed by straightforward measurements, but in the making of arrangements about the lives of human beings neighbourly solicitude unstinting of time or effort and the intimate local knowledge of individual by individual are indispensable adjuncts to the organizing work of the administrator. The present division between the latter and the mass of the administrated is the political aspect of our lack of community-cohesion.

Science and Instinct in Child-upbringing

There are yet other long-term remedies which, needing no elaborate outlining, have escaped separate discussion. Our tradition of child-upbringing is still mainly in the nature of a folk-lore. To put it thus does not necessarily amount to a condemnation: no race could have survived whose methods of rearing its young, with all that entails for the personalities of its adults, have been fundamentally inappropriate. But cultures survive, not because they are the best possible ones, but because taken as a whole they have been more effective than others with which they have had to compete; they have had a rough-and-ready effectiveness which, like all Nature's arrangements, is liable to be wasteful. Most primitive cultures, for example, include drastic means of purging out not easily assimilated or superfluous individuals, such as we with our modern regard for human values would

not countenance. While the survival of a community must depend in part upon the ability to produce effective and/or stable personalities, it does not necessarily entail a maximization of individual happiness; the misfits may be simply eliminated, and up to the beginning of the 19th century this was still the rule in the European civilization.

Finally, owing to the break-up of the primitive community-structures by industrialization, the folk traditions themselves have been weakened. This has happened not only as regards the care of children but is also seen in the loosening of family-ties and even in traditions of feeding, hygiene and recreation. The result has been that in our efforts to acquire a new lore of family-relationships we have been at the mercy of this fashion and that. We have swung from the highly organized Victorian factory-methods of child incubation to an equally impersonal turning-out-to-graze technique; and during the '20's and '30's supposedly scientific psychological theories were seized upon, in defiance of healthy instinct and commonsense, as a justification for evading the parental duties of guidance, discipline and (above all) loyalty and affection.

Our cultural task is not to hark back to a primitive mother-craft-lore but rather to build up a practice of family-life based upon our modern understanding of the emotional needs and natural proclivities of children. This entails the utilization of psychological knowledge, with all the dangers attendant upon *expertise*. Against the latter there are two safeguards: for their part psychologists and psychiatrists must resist the temptation to create an aura of mystification and occultism around their speciality (which all experts are inclined to do, and to which they are encouraged by the anxieties of the public) and people of judgment must scrutinize the pronouncements of the experts, accepting only what they feel

to be in agreement with their own experience of life. This is in addition sound scientific method: the scientist does not abandon his sense of the probable and feasible (*alias* common-sense) but sets it to work at higher levels. This hegemony of judgment over expertness—*le bon sens* of the Age of Reason—will also be the guaranty for our programme of emotional education: unless the psychologist can graft his teaching on to the experience and intuition of thinking people it will have little chance of acceptance.

Our psychology must become in effect the educated counterpart of a folk-lore, building upon and refining instinctive feelings which, even though inexact, are in the main correct. But instinctive reactions, whether in animal or man, impart general directives which the individual is left to apply and to adapt according to his own circumstances. There is no contradiction between instinctive and intelligent action; instinct briefs intelligence to give effect to its purposes. Thus it is that throughout the centuries untutored feeling and shrewd observation have combined to emphasise the supreme importance of family life, of affection, and above all of unstinting mother-love. A gipsy knows these things as keenly as a king. But in an age which has mastered a scientific method of ordering facts it is to be expected that sooner or later the nature of our human emotional needs and the drama of the reaction of personality to personality should be more finely analysed for the benefit of mankind. The psychologist does not stand apart from human history any more than does the mining engineer. At a certain stage in the development of mining it became necessary to call upon specialist knowledge based on more general principles and more accurate calculations than the single-handed miner was capable of. In the sphere of human nature and human relations our helplessness before endemic delinquency and mental illness indicates that here too things

have got beyond unaided commonsense and intuitive skill.

I believe that our new knowledge of emotional rights and wrongs is comparable to the discovery of vitamins in the science of dietetics. The wide propagation of this knowledge may be expected to have analogous effects: that is to say, it will make little difference to the family with a well-founded emotional tradition, but will level up the one in which the tradition is incorrect or lacking. Above all, it will render impossible the crimes of emotional ill-treatment which are now daily being committed in the public's name. And this new tasting of the Tree of Knowledge amounts to a new awareness of right and wrong and so to a higher concept of morality. Possibly, in a generation's time, an official who wrenches a child from a secure human setting for administrative convenience or who prevents a child seeing its mother while in hospital may be judged guilty of a greater wickedness than the desperado who robs a bank; the latter sins against property, but the former sins against human happiness.

Education in Emotional Health

Our new science, young and imperfect as it is, can already boast a body of agreed doctrine which indicates the laws of healthy personality-development and points to the malformations of character which are to be expected if they are disobeyed. Since everyone, from the earliest age, has to acquire a working knowledge of other people's reactions, this teaching amounts really to a systemization of what was imperfectly known already. Hence its truth, coming within the range of common experience, can be readily grasped and its practical importance recognized. The ability to do so is in my experience relatively independent of bookish intelligence, which means that it can become a general subject of education. Until, furthermore, the principles of emotional health are firmly embedded in popular knowledge and in our methods of child-rearing we

shall not know what resources of intelligence and practical ability our nation possesses.

To reduce these perspectives to practical proposals, there seems no reason, apart from the temporary lack of the people to teach them, why 14–15 year old girls in our secondary modern and grammar schools should not, alongside their training in housewifery and in the material aspects of mothercraft, also be instructed in the emotional needs of young children and in what might be called the principles of parenthood. To suggest that girls might be given this parenthood education during their 15th year is not to absolve the fathers of the next generation from responsibility, but I doubt if boys of that age could easily be persuaded to take themselves seriously as future parents. Possibly such topics could be introduced in more general discussions of human relations in Youth Clubs. I know one in which this has been successfully done for a long time. It might be objected that we have not enough trained people to guide such courses, and that a little psychology is a dangerous thing. But to get young people to think about their dealings with others is an enormous gain in itself; the very worst parents are those who never give a thought to the effect of their words and actions.

Our lack of any established parent lore is such that even sincerely affectionate parents nowadays suffer anxieties as to whether they are acting for the best. More advantage might be taken of the popularity which lectures on child-upbringing have with Parents' Associations, Women's Guilds, etc., but probably the most important and tactically the most fruitful time for approach to mothers would be through the ante-natal clinic and the midwifery service. It is, however, for those experienced in Marriage Guidance work to frame detailed proposals for educational work of this nature. No course of formal psychology would be needed, or appropriate,

for the ordinary parent. One only has to work through a number of case-histories of delinquents to compile a fairly complete catalogue of parental Do's and Don'ts, without dragging in any Super-egos, Phallic substitutes, Oedipus complexes, castration fears or infantile sexuality. Such jargon, even if it had any scientific justification, would create barriers against its acceptance among ordinary folk.

Do we not run a danger, by these measures which aim at supervising the emotional environment of the child from its earliest years, of introducing a drab uniformity into our national character? At least since Plato, however, the formation of character has been one of the aims of education, and this implies some agreement as to what the desirable, and undesirable, qualities are. Individuality has in the past been maintained, not because it was cultivated for its own sake, but because earlier attempts at character-training often had unexpected results. Let it also be said for the consolation of the intransigent individualist that our efforts at education in parenthood, even if uniformity were the aim, will not be blessed with a fatal over-success. An artistic tradition only one generation deep cannot, it has been truly said, produce great works of art. Similarly, all we can hope to do within the next generation is to attack the most glaring sins of parenthood—those nevertheless which are having their insidious aftermath of criminality and insanity. Perhaps by way of rationalizing my own shortcomings as a parent, I have often wondered what kind of a child would be produced by parents ideally wise and angelically long-tempered. Let us suppose a youngster without any experience of unreasonableness, so that it had never learned to accommodate itself to petty injustice; suppose it had had no practice in humouring the irritable or in placating the angry; suppose, a stranger to frustration, it was only accustomed to tread smooth paths—

consisting of all Do's and no Don'ts as advocated by psychologists of an elder generation and by the family advisers of our women's magazines—why, such a child would be unfitted for life in an adult community: those defence mechanisms by which we parry strain would be denied, for lack of practice, their normal operation. The petty failings of parents at least have the virtue of giving the child some experience of human nature and of the art of adaptation. Even if unwise emotion sometimes gets the upper hand, this is better than the studied lack of concern with which some people contract out of human feeling; and over-secure children can be unbearable as adults. Our aim, therefore, would not be to produce textbook parents, but to teach an ABC of emotional cause and effect, with the grosser errors standing out plainly.

Throughout this essay it would have amounted to cowardice if I had avoided practical suggestion; but the actual putting into operation of measures requires the detailed consideration of many human and material factors about which decisions must be taken on the spot. Consequently I have not insisted upon any set administrative programme. Whether a thing should be done, however, depends not only upon its expense and difficulty, but also upon how worth while or necessary is the doing. The basic function of the administrator is to interpret social values; and every major administrative decision has to be referred to such values as are accepted, or acceptable, by the public. The standards of worth-whileness which have gained this general approval are known as principles. My aim has been to initiate a discussion of those principles which bear on the upbringing of children and only by way of exemplification to show what they might mean in practice. We see, therefore, that the phrase 'administratively practicable' is a relative one, which takes certain principles as given. Change the social

New Principles for Old

values, however, and the estimate of practicability must also be revised.

The social principle guiding our present law and administration has been that of treating the delinquent as the exceptional, even though inevitable, deviant. We wait until he or she so forces himself upon our attention that for his supposed good and for society's protection something must be done. In times when the delinquent could be permanently got rid of this principle was a workable one. When, turned humanitarian, we try to graft upon it another principle—that of rehabilitating the criminal—then our present procedures merely amount to "picking up the bits".[1] In any sitting of a juvenile court one can sense this dilemma; it is reflected in the lack of confidence with which the Bench try to decide whether any remedy they can apply will be of use. With lads who reappear in court after having already spent years in approved-schools the magistrates' discouragement is probably justified: nothing they can do, with our present means of rehabilitation, will stop many of this type maturing into hardened criminals.

These principles—that of treating delinquency as a series of individual, isolated problems to be dealt with as they occur, and that of reforming the delinquent—are incompatible. We cannot allow this 'hard core' continually to be produced without doing anything effective about it. Either we revert to the old-fashioned policy of annihilation or we stop Humpty Dumpty falling off the wall in the first place. But this can only be done if delinquency is seen as part of the wider evil of unhappy childhood. If we prevent the latter, delinquency will also be prevented, as with the removal of the cause of a disease the symptoms disappear. I have tried to show that this is not only the sole workable policy but, by any sane

[1] I am indebted to an approved-school welfare officer for this phrase. He used it to describe his own job of after-care.

system of public accounting, also the cheapest; the social workers and the officers of our approved schools and Borstals who are now employed in the disheartening job of "picking up the bits" would be better engaged in the more rewarding work of forestalling breakdown; and by the wider social-therapeutic approach we should, quite apart from delinquency statistics, be made a happier nation.

APPENDIX I

AN OUTLINE OF DIAGNOSIS FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL WORKERS

> "The Germans—and herein they do not stand alone—possess the gift of rendering the sciences inaccessible".
>
> "Men are vexed at finding that truth is so simple. They should bear in mind that they will be kept quite busy enough in applying it to their practical needs".
>
> GOETHE, *Reflections and Maxims.*

THE major part of the following appeared as a series of articles in *Probation*, the journal of the National Association of Probation Officers. It was thus written with special reference to the probation officer's task of assessing the character and probable future liability to delinquency of any young person charged before a court. But since I believe that the indicators of anxiety, unhappiness and maladjustment herein outlined are of general applicability the articles are reprinted more or less in their original form. All the psychiatric social worker, school welfare officer or whoever else sets out to discover the emotional background to delinquency has to do is to substitute him or herself for the figure of the probation officer. The last section, on spoiling and lack of discipline, is fresh material.

I

The probation officer is condemned, as things are at present, to follow a clumsy, hit-or-miss strategy. He is briefed to work on the assumption that the probationer will respond

to those deterrents which parents, schoolmasters and others having charge of children know to be in general effective. That is to say, he must assume that his protégé will value, and respond to, a friendly relationship, that he will listen to good advice, and that he can be given insight into his weaknesses and be persuaded to set about overcoming them.

When this fails to happen the invidious suggestion is made that the probation officer has failed with a particular case. The truth, of course, is far more likely to be that the probationer is not amenable to this kind of treatment at all. What probation chiefly does, in the broad social sense, is to sort out those who can be deterred from those who cannot. Of this the test is whether the probationer goes on committing offences. When one looks at it this way the process is immediately seen as a crude and lengthy one, morally indefensible in that many boys and girls are allowed to drift further into crime, and socially indefensible because of the nuisance and expense it entails. It is rather like the old-fashioned corner-cupboard therapy of trying syrup of figs first.

Can we not then, evolve a surer means of distinguishing the incidental lawbreaker from the breakdown-case right at the beginning, without just waiting to see which of the two each first offender is going to turn out? I think we can. And further I think that we can learn to avert breakdown in many of the cases which at present defeat us. In fact I do not consider the probation officer's chief aim should necessarily be to get his charge to last out, as it were, till the end of the probation period without committing further offences. The approach should be in the first place a diagnostic one, with the object of discovering the factors within the delinquent's family or personal life which are unsettling him. These having been discovered, the second step consists in deciding whether they can be remedied by the inter-

vention and guidance of the probation officer, or whether the delinquent's surroundings are, in human terms, impossible and likely to force him into further crime. If the latter is felt to be the case, immediate removal to another, and probably more controlled, environment would be advised.

What, then, does diagnosis mean in plain terms? It means that the probation officer must be able to measure the emotional and moral state of the offender, that he should be able to take an exact record of his behaviour in a number of typical situations—in his home, at work, in his evenings' leisure—and thereby be able to judge straightaway whether or not he is dealing with a serious case, and if so, what kind of personal situation is likely to be the cause of the trouble. This sounds pretty alarming: it is getting into psychology! And at this stage in our discussion we have to face the question: "Does this mean that the probation officer has got to become a psychologist?" My answer is quite definitely 'Yes'; but it is a Yes needing explanation.

First let us cut away a few brambles. As a nation we have a way, when we are uneasy about something and don't like to face up to it, of setting someone up as an expert and of taking what he says. This is particularly dangerous in psychology because it is such a young science. Also, experts have a way of getting bees in their bonnets, and no amount of knowledge is of any avail to them if they lack balanced judgment. What is worse, there are people who will take advantage of our public gullibility to set themselves up as modern witch-doctors, uttering incantations which only they claim to understand. If the psychological expert uses long and obscure terms and revels in unconscious wishes to return to the mother's womb or to slay the primeval father, let his reports be torn up; the probation officer can do better himself. What is wanted is an analysis of a real situation.

Then there are the intelligence-test and such-like brambles. Unfortunately psychology is largely thought of to-day in terms of batteries of tests. The application of these, where they are necessary, can be left to the professional psychologist; they do not form part of the personality-psychology which the probation officer requires, nor has he the time to administer them.

The whole question hinges on whether there is a branch of psychological knowledge which can furnish the probation officer with his technique of diagnosis and of rehabilitation—a technique with which he will be on reasonably sure ground, which will not force him to delve impossibly deep and which will be within the limits of his training. Such a branch of psychology is just beginning to establish itself upon a scientifically respectable basis, and has now reached a stage of development where the probation officer can use it as an effective day-to-day guide. What has actually happened is that for a long time the study of personality was tangled up in Freudian occultism; the simplest truths were made to look complicated by the use of an obscure phraseology, and what could be explained in terms which the ordinary approved-school lad can understand was clothed in a mysterious priestly language of sexual symbolism. In fact the principles of human behaviour and feeling need little intellectualization; they are within the emotional experience of all except those people who fight shy of human problems in general (which persons do not of course choose probation work as their vocation). And so, even to the academically untrained, the generalizations of modern personality-psychology tend to ring true.

These are rash and sweeping statements which call for amplification. As regards these principles of human behaviour, there are two main ones upon which our understanding

of the youthful delinquent is based. The first is that every human being, by his nature, requires to attach himself to a small and, as far as possible, permanent group who feel warmly towards each other, and in which he is accepted without question. Anyone without such a firm human anchorage is an unsettled, unhappy, potentially dangerous person; he may try to forget his anxieties in reckless excitement, or let them break out in open resentment; or as a defence against his unhappiness he may habituate himself to become an inhuman, unfeeling person who will have no compunction about doing injury to others. To the child his family is this belonging-group; and it may be safely said that if he is obviously unhappy, restless or resentful then he feels his position within his family group to be insecure, or he has already, emotionally or bodily, been placed outside it. Later in these articles I shall make some more detailed suggestions as to the types of security-threatening situation to look for, once the symptoms of each have been noticed. But to appreciate the general point one need only put oneself mentally in the position of a child whose family has been broken up by a divorce or the desertion of the home by one of the parents; it can be imagined how acutely he is likely to suffer from the anxiety that his family-group will collapse completely and that he will have nowhere to go. This is not to say that the break-up of the marriage will necessarily condemn the children to criminalism or even to unhappiness, for they may succeed in getting themselves accepted into some other intimacy-group, or they may even have found substitute-parents before the final break-up occurs. Only those children who fail to re-attach themselves or who cannot tear themselves from an intensely unstable and anxiety-creating family attachment are likely to break down.

The second major human need centres around the feeling

of counting for something, having some status or being able to do things. We all rely to a large extent upon other people's opinion of, and regard for us. Consequently, if the child feels that his parents have no real interest in him, or put their own interests first to the extent that he is left to fend for himself, or if they are quite prepared to place him in other care, then he is likely to come to the conclusion that in their eyes—the people on whose opinion he places the greatest value—he is a person of no consequence. He develops acute inferiority-feelings. This may mean that he will seize every opportunity of asserting himself, even though it may land him in trouble. Alternatively he may become so discouraged that he never tries to do anything; his inferiority-feelings may not show themselves in any behaviour of the inferiority-compensating type (such as bragging, showing off and bravado), but when he imagines himself insulted he may flare up in a vicious temper and do someone injury.

The emotional difficulties and behaviour troubles of young people are indications that they are 'starved' as regards one or both of these primary human needs. Mainly it is both, for lack of affection nearly always goes with lack of interest or the parents' putting their own interests and emotional needs first. With delinquent children one can study the desperate efforts they make (so long as they have not given up trying) to satisfy their needs for affection in a stable group and to overcome their inferiority-feelings. One can also watch the forms their resentment takes as they go on failing. The important thing for the practising probation officer, however, is to be able to judge just how unsettled a child is, and, above all, to be able to put his finger on what is wrong with the delinquent's family life. Like the doctor he must know what the symptoms he observes mean. What they do mean I shall attempt to answer in my second article.

II

We have to picture then our probation officer making his way to the home of his youthful 'case'. He has to decide whether a healthy scare and a bit of straight advice is all that is needed, or whether it is a question of serious delinquency-breeding unhappiness. He is not going to try to be subtle or to get deep into someone's unconscious motivation. Where this is necessary he will call in the professional psychologist. But he will know that a boy or girl who is being emotionally ill-treated will reveal the fact in other ways besides delinquency—not in words necessarily, but certainly in deeds. So he is on the alert for a number of standard indicators. And a gossip with a parent will usually tell him most of what he wants to know.

Mothers like talking of when their sons were young. Our probation officer may learn that Billy was "a proper wanderer" and that it was an awful job to get him to go to school. And he may also have been a bad mixer, who could never play with other children and possibly was bullied by them. Alternatively he may have been a tiresome child at home, or was always getting the neighbours up against him because of his mischief. From hearing such things as these it can be inferred that Billy had been unsettled and unhappy from early childhood. Either his mother was of the sort who is incapable of giving consistent affection, or something has been happening within the family life which has made Billy fear that his world may at any time collapse around him.

Whether that something is still happening, and is the cause of his delinquency, can be judged by Billy's present behaviour and by the way in which he faces life.

There is a very big chance that he will now be a restless boy who has no hobby or interest needing concentration or

patience, but who spends all his spare time around amusement arcades, billiard saloons and evening cafés—anything for easy diversion and movement, unable to stick at a job, especially of the factory type, and hankering to become a van boy or find some other restless employment. Needless to say, also, he cannot bear to spend an evening at home, and a youth club is too slow for him. The group of characteristics just described—which I have named avoidance-excitement—are often found in lads who have recently had some emotional or physical shock, but I believe this is only the 'last straw' making their tensions unbearable. This excitement-seeking is not connected with any particular sort of disturbing family-situation, as it is a fairly widespread behaviour pattern among delinquents. Where it is present in a marked form I should guess that repeated offences, mostly of the housebreaking type in older lads, and of gang-mischief in youngsters, are to be expected. No one, however, has yet collected any statistics to show how many of these boys are content with a single court appearance (I have only studied those who persisted); here is a chance for research by a practising probation officer.

This is not to say, moreover, that the probation officer should immediately give up the excitement-seeking delinquent as a bad job and recommend immediate committal to an approved school. It must be emphasised that this group of symptoms is a *general* indication of unhappiness and anxiety. The next thing, consequently, is to look for signs which will give a clue as to what the actual causes of the trouble are.

It might be possible to construct a kind of personality-calculating machine, such that on pressing down a group of keys the answer comes out on a tin label. But I have no intention of inventing one at present. All I propose to do is to write down a number of the clues which I found it

helpful to follow up during my own diagnostic work, rather as a fisherman might volunteer various tips for catching trout.

One of my biggest surprises was to learn what dutiful sons some of my delinquents had been in their homes. It was tempting to think that the mothers were trying to whitewash them in order to get them released quickly, but from so many parents did I hear the same tale of their boy insisting on scrubbing floors, cleaning grates, running errands, making things for his mother and so on, that I was forced to accept the anomaly. Boys of this type would also want to give their mothers their personal pocket-money, and they buy her presents from time to time, rather like the husband of the humorous paper who placates his wife with boxes of chocolates. These pointers, taken as a group, indicate that the lad is suffering from some anxiety centring around his mother. Once again, no single underlying cause can be postulated. But if the mother-anxiety symptoms are found, the number of possibilities is considerably reduced; for there are types of situation which do not produce symptoms of this kind, notably where a quarrelsome relationship exists between mother and son, or where there is a barrier of suspicion and estrangement between them. And it is also important to notice whether the helpfulness is genuine and effective, or whether it is mere gesture—starting jobs and not finishing them, or leaving a mess for his mother to clear up. This kind of mock-helpfulness is often found alongside indications of resentment against the mother, or of sharply conflicting feelings with regard to her.

This worry about the mother seems to take a particularly acute form when the boy has been separated from her at some time during his earlier childhood, so that he has got an ingrained fear of losing her again. The same is apt

to happen if he has no father, or not one that counts in his life. Children who have experienced much sickness also seem to develop a very great need for their mothers, or the mother herself may be a difficult type of woman who would create anxieties in anyone, let alone in a young child who has had to depend on her. But this is all by the way. The question is: what is actually worrying the boy about his mother at the present time? Briefly, the most likely guesses are: the mother's chronic ill-health, especially if there is a fear that she may die, and, to a lesser degree, her childbearing; secondly, quarrels between the parents, with the threat of physical harm to the mother; thirdly, the insecurity provoked by the mother's threats to clear out and leave the family to get on without her (and since threatening to clear out is so often part-and-parcel of a quarrel, this fear often goes with the preceding one); fourthly, some series of events or element in the family life may have produced a state of uncertainty in the boy's mind as to whether his mother really cares for him. For example, his experiences of evacuation may have aroused in him the suspicion that his mother is content to let him remain with strangers, or she may have allowed relatives or friends to take him over. Alternatively she may have thoughtlessly threatened to have him 'put away' and he, ignorant of how irresponsible adults can be in their talk, takes her seriously. Fifthly, the boy may sense that his mother's interest in him is waning in favour of a new-found second husband or in favour of her younger children. Other special sources of an anxiety about the mother apart from these will almost certainly crop up occasionally, so that the probation officer just makes a mental note for the time being: this boy has some worry about his mother. The important, and hopeful, thing is that the boy still cares for someone; the really tough cases are those where there is no longer a desire

to please anybody. On the face of it, then, I should estimate that, where these symptoms of wanting-to-please are present, there is a good chance of mending matters without breaking up the family.

It remains next to be seen whether something further can be done about the above five groups of 'either-or'. First, as regards anxiety over the mother's health or childbearing, I should not like to be dogmatic as to whether, even when the mother is the sole effective parent, this can by itself prove an unbearable strain. In the severe cases which I found among approved-school lads it ran alongside other causes of anxiety, but it is quite feasible that a boy who is much attached to his mother may be temporarily thrown off his balance upon her having a serious illness. Here again, the psychologist must wait for the research-minded or observant probation officer to tell him.

In parental quarrelling the boy mostly takes the mother's side, and one of the signs that this is occurring is that he may make all sorts of random criticisms of his father. Only when the mother has actually deserted the home for considerable periods does one seem to find the boy reverting to his father with a passionate and somewhat forced attachment. It is unlikely that he will refer directly to the quarrelling, *for it may be taken as a safe rule that people never speak willingly of an anxiety which is really too much for them*; they rake up substitute-worries. Once again, the quarrels seldom or never figure as the sole anxiety. A family racked by quarrelling is an unstable group; one or other of the parents will almost certainly threaten to desert it, and because of her inferior physical power, this is the mother's favourite weapon. Hence the quarrelling plus desertion-threat situation is a fairly standard one, with well-marked effects upon the children. The mother-helping symptoms, for example, seem only to be

absent when the boy's desire for anxiety-forgetting excitement prevents him remaining in the house a minute longer than necessary. And there is a general tendency to moodiness and depression, of which, however, more later.

One of the interesting sidelights in this fascinating game of studying people's reactions is to notice that a desertion-threat which is incidental to parental quarrels seems to have a different effect from the threat when used as a disciplinary measure or gesture of rejection against the boy himself. In the first instance the boy is likely to blame the father and not take his mother's threat as primarily a reflection upon her love for him. While, consequently, his fear of the collapse of his family-group may be intensely unsettling and depressing, he is not so apt to question whether he personally counts for much in her eyes. (Or at least he does not show the open resentments and compensations that are associated with such feelings). But if the mother directs the threat against him as an individual or as one among her children, or if she talks of having him 'put away', he does draw this conclusion, and hence develops the very characteristic reaction of inferiority-compensation. Any kind of uncertainty, in effect, about his parents' loyalty to him is likely to produce this reaction. Sometimes it may be purely a mistaken idea which circumstances have conspired to put into his head. I mentioned earlier the unfortunate emotional misconceptions which could be produced by the mother's having to insist that her children remain evacuated. Or again, thinking that she is acting for the best, a mother may acquiesce in her son's being 'taken over' by another couple or in the grandparents' wish to bring him up. I have also met cases where the mother's having to leave the children unattended while she is at work seemed to contribute to this affectional uncertainty. If in addition the parents subscribe to the British fallacy that any show of affection will make a

boy soft, these doubts and suspicions about their affection will persist and enlarge themselves into a dominating anxiety. The boy feels that he must have some final reassurance of their loyalty, and what better way of gaining this than to see if they will stick by him if he turns to crime? Where the well-known threat is uttered that if he does get into court he will be "left to fight his own battles", one can be sure that he will have no peace until he has put matters to this very test.

The most striking evidence of his uncertainties will be in his inferiority-compensations. He will play big before other children—by bravado such as hanging on behind carts, daring to throw the first stone at a window or interfering with a stationary car; by bragging; by trying to edge his way into gangs of older boys; and by his inability to resist 'being dared' (for he cannot stand being called a coward). Furthermore, being unsure of his position within his family, he is all the more anxious to keep in with his fellows and will try to buy popularity, say, by acting the clown. He is, in short, the well-known 'easily led' type.

With this sort of boy again we have at least to be thankful, however great a nuisance he is, that he has not given up the struggle for life. He is still actively trying to count for something, even though it be in wrong ways. Before we give him up as a bad job—his delinquent-attention, his foolishness and his weakness will try our patience as well as that of his parents—it will be worth while to take the latter into our confidence, persuade them to abandon the threats of desertion and putting-away and plan with them a strategy of reassurance. It should not be left to the boy to plan his own (delinquent) tests, but they should be forestalled by something positive which will convince him that he is really somebody in his parents' eyes. Finally, we would aim at turning his urge for

assertion into some socially acceptable and constructive activity.

We next pass to what might be called the resentment- (or demonstrative-) reaction, the indications of which once again form a fairly well-defined group—running away from home, open emotional distress and rapid penitence, spite giving way quickly to excessive demands for affection, tiresomeness at home and in the neighbourhood, and an equal willingness to be friendly or hostile to anyone. Such children will be found to have parents of rather a similar type to themselves, who veer from excessive fondness and indulgence in their good moods to all-out, uncontrolled hostility when they are annoyed. With all their cuffings and beltings they never achieve any control; for their children learn to regard their outbursts as mere bad temper, and outbid them in retaliation. Quarrelsome as their relationship with their children is, parents of this type are usually quite unreasonable in defending them against authority; and so the probation officer will have to anticipate hostility from them. But like most hostile and disagreeable people they melt eventually before a friendly approach. It is also encouraging to bear in mind that the boy, with his *open* resentments and distress, is still in the stage of active protest. Once his spite has played itself out, he is only too ready to make a fresh start either with his parents or with another adult. And so, by a patient, neighbourly approach, with the minimum of officialdom about it and the drinking of many cups of tea, it ought to be possible to get every member of the family to try a little harder, and so make the outbursts less frequent and less sharp. It is doubtful if the family behaviour-pattern can ever be transformed. But part of this pattern consists of a demonstrative and, while it lasts, sincere affection; it is not a question, therefore, of the family's learning a new pattern, but of developing the good parts of the one they already have.

III

In my second article I mentioned some patterns of behaviour—mother-anxiety, delinquent-attention, inferiority compensation and demonstrative resentment—which, although productive of delinquency and possibly of persistence therein, showed that the boy was still seeking satisfaction of his emotional needs in an active way. The important thing was that he had not yet given up trying. In more psychological terms, this means that he had not settled down in the false adjustment of despair; still anxious for a good relationship, he had not reached the stage of diminishing his anxiety by cutting himself off from affection; nor had he renounced achievement, lost his self-respect or become generally dispirited. With children of these types there seems a fair possibility of mending the anxiety-creating situation and thus of removing the causes of the delinquency.

We have now to consider those graver signs which indicate that a child has for years had more worries than he can bear, and is beginning to give up the struggle, to harden himself and to develop bad social attitudes as a defence against the strains of sociability.

The first stage of this general withdrawal is moodiness. Where this is marked it always indicates a serious failure in the constancy of parental affection over a large part of the childhood (a moody person is not made in a week or even a year). Earlier I mentioned that where parental quarrelling reached the extreme stage of the mother's actually deserting the home for periods, the children were inclined to be moody. If one is sure that no such conditions exist, then it can usually be reckoned that the moody child, living with its own parents, is the non-favoured one. As a defence against the preference for the other child or children there is developed

a capacity for rejection and forced hate—that being the meaning of moodiness. It is as if the child says "All right, if I can't be loved, I'll be hated"—and sets out to make itself unlovable. Of course, for every moody delinquent there are scores of non-delinquent moody people. It just happens with them that their instability has never been brought to a crisis. In the case-records of moody delinquents it can be noticed that their breakdown occurs as a result of some worsening of their situation. It is as if some prop has been knocked away; a boy who is non-favoured by his mother may come to depend emotionally upon his father, only to break down when his father dies or is away from home for several years on war service.

Moody children have succeeded in picking up some affection for some part of the time—otherwise they would be worse than they are. So when there is any affection going they are apt to make the most of it; in their good phases they bubble over with gaiety and optimism and their faces radiate happiness, only to revert on occasions to the well-known depressed, drooping, flushed and glance-evading pout. In their characters they are two persons, with two completely opposite sets of reactions. Only one of their personalities has given up trying, the other is trying harder than ever. Their success or failure in life—even their very sanity—will depend upon their luck in making the right human associations and especially in finding the right partners in marriage.

Moodiness is common, as might be expected, in children from broken homes and where there is a step-parent. With the break-up of a marriage, the remaining parent has to make other arrangements, and his or her children may present an embarrassment; also the second spouse may not always accept the family of the first marriage. Where more extreme

difficulties arise, such as when the step-father or step-mother presents the ultimatum that the step-child must go, the moodiness develops into the desperate sullenness of set withdrawal. I have often been surprised, when visiting such homes, to find what a reasonable person the step-parent seems to be. It is hard even to suspect his or her being down on the boy. Yet if the latter is of the extremely moody or sullen type, one can be certain that this pressure to get rid of him is being exerted and that he feels his true parent to be on the verge of abandoning him. He is an unwanted outsider in the household. And he is also a grave public danger, for he is likely to develop the 'moral defect', the viciousness and the restless instability of character of which the worst criminals are made.

Wherever an extreme reserve, a sullenness, or a tendency to dispirited solitude is found, it will be known that the child has been suffering grave and long-standing anxieties about his position in the family. What the exact nature of the anxiety is can only be elicited by tactful and friendly enquiry; but there was never an overquiet child without a reason.

The danger in this withdrawal from sociability is not only that the child himself is inwardly unhappy, but by denying himself what is essential for his healthy emotional development he is likely to accumulate a whole range of bad tendencies—not only pilfering but sexual aberration, surreptitious troublemaking, and cruelty and revengefulness justified by the illusion that everyone is against him and that he is only getting his own back.

Not all the anti-social, immoral, dangerous types, however, belong to this group of sullenly withdrawn persons. Supposing that a mother, after the death or desertion of her husband, makes attempts to free herself from the encumbrance

of her children by trying to get someone else to look after them, and then, feeling guilty about her faithlessness, tries to make it up to them by gross spoiling. Suppose also that the children are aware of her attempt to get rid of them and so, despite her indulgence and show of overfondness, lose all confidence in her. Then their faith in humanity is shattered just as much as is that of the sullen type. But they get plenty of surface-affection, which they make the most of. They wheedle and impose upon their mother, partly to see how far she is sincere and partly because they have become cynical and callous. Distrusting her loyalty, they themselves feel none towards her or towards others, and are just out to get what they can for themselves. One has the impression that they are thoroughly spoilt children; so they are, but that is not the whole story. They are also 'moral defectives'—callous types who are likely to wheedle and swindle their way through life, using the gestures of friendliness as a cover for their dishonesty and deceiving people with their confidence. Some of them, clever enough rogues not to get caught, reach good positions.

What, then, is the probation officer to do about those who show signs of losing their faith in humanity and hence also their moral feelings? He is up against a tough problem. I am not usually a pessimist, but I am about the possibility of a re-growth of confidence and a genuine warmth of affection between parent and child once a deepset attitude of suspicion and estrangement has set in. It is, however, a question of judging the depth of this estrangement, and once more we look for objective indications. If the child is still actively trying to win a secure place in his parents' affection we have seen that there is hope, and this is so of many of the milder instances of this callousness-reaction; a boy may at the same time impose cruelly upon his mother and yet be des-

perately anxious to count for something in her eyes. The crucial test, therefore, will be whether he has rejected her emotionally. If he has already done so, he will have no incentive to help her financially and will probably malinger, truant from work, put himself out of a job, or find some other way of avoiding his filial obligations. Nor will he be able to settle down at home on a purely impersonal, economic footing, for estrangement brings with it uneasiness and resentment. His callousness will be of the positive kind that is meant to hurt. (Even though he may have phases of feeling guilty about his conduct, and display a hypocritical concern for his mother). It is unlikely, also, that he will be able to put up with her company, and so he will either spend his evenings out of doors or in his bedroom or workshop. In the most extreme forms of estrangement the boy refuses to accept any favours from his parents; he would rather steal than accept pocket-money from them, and any presents they give him will lie unused. Only if he has been able to find a substitute mother, however, will he be able to voice complaints about his own.

So unbearable does it prove in the end to live with someone under conditions of coldness and estrangement that the boy himself will probably take some initiative to get away from home. The diagnostician will therefore heed the signs of this removal-urge: impulses to join the Forces or to seek a living-in job, statements from the boy that he is fed up with his home-town or wants to "get away out of things", or even the commission of wanton, obvious offences which will entail being sent to an approved school—all these, especially if found in conjunction with each other, indicate that a boy is so unhappy in his home that he is unlikely to settle down in it.

When there are signs both of emotional rejection of the

mother and of an urge to removal, consequently, there is not much point in letting events move to disaster. The boy himself will probably agree to change his quarters, and it will be easier for him to make a fresh start with kindly strangers than to try to overcome deepset feelings of estrangement towards his parents. For long I refused to recognize this, and attempted time and again to secure reconciliation, but the melancholy truth was forced upon me by my failures. Even if the boy could be persuaded to stay at home without committing further delinquency, he would be likely to plague his mother by the subtler devices of neurosis and hysteria. And if he never learns to overcome his bad feelings about womankind he will be a failure, or worse, as a husband.

There is another symptom of mother-resentment which deserves mention because in its extreme form it expresses itself in a special class of offence. When the mother is old-fashioned and prudish in her ideas about sex she lays herself open to a special type of annoyance from her son. He may shock her by running about the house naked, or by obscene language, and in extreme cases of unconscious antagonism against her he may expose himself to other women. Such acts are compulsive, and the perpetrator, being temporarily irresponsible, needs treatment rather than punishment, but I feel sure that the essence of this treatment is removal from his mother and his acceptance of another mother-figure. It is, however, necessary to distinguish true obscenity from the popular and natural sex-interest such as is catered for in the music-hall or in *La Vie Parisienne*. The latter is a sex-stimulator; but obscenity belittles sex, associates it with the baser physical functions and sneers at anything womanly.

The urge to removal will be found in several types of case besides those characterised by deep estrangement; for we all have an impulse to get away from anxiety-creating

surroundings. Where the signs of it are noticed probably the best thing, with a senior lad at any rate, is to let him have his unconscious wish for a time. It is, of course, a serious thing to tear any child away from his parents. But while removal means temporary physical separation, it need not entail emotional separation. With approved-school boys of the moody and resentful types it is quite usual for them and their parents to build up a kind of fantasy-fondness for each other during the period of separation; the daily irritations being removed, their need for each other reasserts itself and bygones are allowed to become bygones. Absence, with these quarrelsome, impulsive people, does make the heart grow fonder. But it also creates anxieties—homesickness; 'out of sight, out of mind' is the fear of the absent one. Consequently, with the transfer of the boy to a hostel or approved school, the probation officer's job is by no means finished in a human sense, even if it is in a legal one. He has got to organize the process of growing fonder and to forestall the anxieties. This means seeing that the parents keep up their letter-writing, send parcels, pay visits, welcome the boy home during the holidays, and furthermore carry out all these demonstrations of their affection regularly, punctiliously and in accordance with their promises. It may be objected that to hustle people into displays of affection which are not completely spontaneous is to make them emotional hypocrites. Not in the least: the actual giving of presents can create good feeling in the giver, or rather release inhibited affection. And many families fail in their affectional obligations just because they are the sort of unorganized people who never have a postage stamp at the right time. All this raises the question of whether the probation service should have a continuity of guidance. This cannot be decided without taking many other factors into consideration, and of course

there must be co-operation with those in charge of the residential centre; but the time it takes to build up a good relationship with a family is a powerful argument in favour of continuity.

Where a young person is definitely rejected by his family, or has none, it is a matter of urgent necessity to provide him with some human attachment. This is easier said than done; it is difficult enough to find foster-parents or homely lodgings for any boy or girl, and we have hardly yet begun to provide substitute-parents for homeless boys in approved schools. But when it is realized that this attaching is the first principle of treatment for the homeless child, we shall probably set about organizing the ways and means of doing it.

In these few articles I have felt that, to justify my claims on behalf of modern personality-psychology, it behoved me to sketch its main outlines and to try to show it as a useful tool in the hands of the probation officer. I have confined my remarks to boys, partly to avoid the continual saying of *he* and *she*, and partly because I have had more experience of them. However, the incidental information which I picked up about the sisters of my approved-school boys leads me to believe that whereas girls may choose somewhat different forms of breakdown and of delinquency, their anxieties are basically the same. So are their resentments: whereas a boy may malinger at home to spite his mother, a girl may have an illegitimate child and dump it on her for safe keeping. And just as an insecure boy may commit delinquencies to keep in with his mates, a girl may develop such a desperate emotional attachment to a man that she is unable to say No to him.

My limited experience with adults suggests also that the same principles apply: all human beings suffer emotionally, and are likely to break down, if they are not members of any

stable belonging-group. For example, it is noticeable how old people are liable to have insecurity feelings and fears of unwantedness similar to those found in children, and they can be correspondingly difficult and delinquent.

Another reason for my limiting myself to 'main outlines' is that most of the detail of the picture has still to be filled in. I am sure that the practising probation officer is in as good a position as anyone for adding to our knowledge. Intimate things about people's relationships with each other are best studied in the course of helping them—otherwise people may object to being guinea-pigs, and in any case it is the crises of real life which bring people's true feelings and attitudes to the surface. The scientifically or even the cross-word puzzle minded will find it fascinating to watch the symptoms turn up, or to discern the special reason for the failure of a symptom to do so. For those who feel they would like to combine some research, or a systematic arrangement of their observations, with their everyday work, I have available a number of blank charts for new cases similar to the one I filled in for my approved-school boys. Those interested can contact me through my publisher, and at a later stage it might be possible to arrange a conference of those working on these lines for the purpose of comparing notes.

IV

It may have seemed remarkable that the above outline of diagnosis contained only one passing mention of what the probation officer has traditionally looked for, namely the signs of lack of discipline and inability to control. My reasons for this apparent omission are twofold. Firstly, as I argue below, spoiling is not so much a cause of delinquency in the fundamental sense as an indication that there

is something radically wrong with the emotional life of the family. In other words it is a symptom of something deeper, and as I also later suggest, to concentrate our efforts upon remedying the lack of discipline will produce the usual effects of attacking symptoms: we shall merely replace one symptom by another and possibly worse one. Secondly, since discipline is inevitably associated with the punishment of the wrongdoer, we have to examine our own motives. We have to be sure, in effect, that we are not actuated by bad feelings towards the delinquent, and that our cry for more discipline is not really a demand for harshness. Harshness is punishment without love, and will be met by counter-retaliation. If we put the lawbreaker outside the pale of human fellowship and charity we shall be answered in our own language; and in competing in callousness with the affectionally hardened we are bound to lose. It is an historical truism that vicious laws make still more vicious criminals.

Since, however, indiscipline and failure to control are tell-tale symptoms, and I have more space than in the original articles, the omission must be rectified here. It is furthermore necessary, if misunderstanding is to be forestalled, for me to make a clear statement of the place discipline occupies within our psychology of human relationships.

Living within any small community such as a family, where its members are in intimate daily association one with another, necessitates some restraint of individual wants and impulses. And if there is affection there will be a mutual regard for each other's convenience and personality-needs. Indeed I have elsewhere argued that mankind's habit of living and working in communities has made fellow-feeling a racial and biological necessity. Without it people just cannot live together, and this, incidentally, is why lasting estrangement between members of the same household represents an emo-

tionally impossible situation. As I have pointed out in the main body of this essay, the natural assertiveness of children has to be directed into productive channels and diverted from those easy means of self-enhancement which consist merely in imposing upon and belittling other people; and a child who has never learnt to accommodate itself to the needs and convenience of others will be an unbearable (but not necessarily delinquent) person.

Nor is that the end of the matter: for the child's own safety—as in the crossing of roads or in elementary hygiene—a parent must be able to exercise his or her authority upon innumerable petty occasions. And whereas it is often possible to persuade by sweet reason, the affectionate parent will never be willing to allow a child to run the risk of being killed in the street, however dire the effects of saying No or administering a slapping may be thought to be. In short, any parent who cares for a child will, unless his or her judgment and common-sense are distorted by some over-insistent emotional need, recognize the necessity of exercising guidance and of maintaining the authority which makes this possible. An unchallenged acceptance of authority and of the superiority of the parental status which it involves are less damaging to childish self-respect than the occasional necessity of taking orders from people whom one is accustomed to treat as equals or disobey with impunity. A continual struggle for hegemony between parent and child will not only make accommodation to guidance painful, but the bad feeling which accompanies it destroys mutual affection. Love cannot exist without discipline any more than discipline can be successful without love. The lack of affection in the so-called 'free discipline' family is usually most marked.

Discipline is in effect such an obvious necessity of family life, and ordinary men and women so quickly learn to

appreciate this as parents even without formal teaching, that there is always some special reason for its absence. I indicated above that this reason lies in the overriding of parental commonsense by some emotional consideration. And it is the latter, as the cause of the spoiling or lack of control, that the probation officer must get at. From my study of delinquent cases and my general observation I have been able to isolate six of these false emotional attitudes, and am willing to bet outsider odds that every case of discipline-failure which the probation officer meets will answer to one of them.

The first is that the parent feels guilty, either about having wronged the child in some way, or because he or she is aware of her inability to give the child affection. Thus a mother may wish to make it up to her son because he is illegitimate. Or she may be conscious of having neglected him during a crisis in her own life, such as when she was in process of acquiring a second husband (or a first one if the child is illegitimate). One finds a very similar state of affairs when the mother has allowed some relative or friend to care for the child for a number of years and then takes him into her own charge again. To allow a child to be reared by someone else must imply, I believe, a certain inhibition of maternal affection. Most natural mothers would refuse to part with their children whatever the material inducements to do so. It is not only, however, a question of feeling guilty over some major event such as separation; mothers whose maternal feelings are inhibited lack the incentive which enables them to give untiring attention and labour to the upbringing of their children. Although we freely use the word 'affection' as an abstract term, it must be remembered that really we mean by it, as far as the all-important human relationships are concerned, the *manifestations* of affection. It is deeds rather than feelings that count, although of course

a mother cannot devote herself to the welfare of her child in a practical way unless she is actuated by strong feelings. Inhibited mothers, therefore, are in fact guilty of innumerable petty neglects. Some of them are inwardly aware of this, and compensate for their feelings of guilt by spoiling. Such parents tend to express their guilt-compensation by buying their children expensive toys which they can ill afford.

This feeling of guilt is very often found alongside the second cause of spoiling. Having left the upbringing of the child largely, say, to a grandmother, the mother gets alarmed when the latter displaces her in the child's affections. So she tries to buy the child back again. I have elsewhere pointed out that any kind of correction implies a *temporary* worsening of the relationship, in fact it is the anger or displeasure of the parent which represents the real sanction. If, consequently, a mother is in a state of over-anxiety about 'losing' her child in the emotional sense she cannot bring herself to face this temporary straining of relations which the enforcement of obedience may involve. She in addition allows herself to be imposed upon and bullied by her child, and if the latter has an affectional preference for the grandmother and regards his mother with a certain indifference or callousness he is likely to take full advantage of her softness and become an 'enfant terrible'.

The third parental attitude prejudicial to good discipline is again cognate to the last, but arises from the parents' own feelings of insecurity. They lack the affectional confidence required for firmness. Perhaps because they remember how they themselves harboured bitter feelings against their own parents because of the harshness to which they were subjected, they fear being spurned by their own children. They are resolved never to lay a finger on them, and leave the onus and unpopularity of correction to the other parent.

Where the father thus makes the mother bear the brunt of being the disciplinarian a particularly dangerous situation is apt to arise, for the softness of the father is apt to make the mother's firmness appear as harshness and so the boy grows to be uncertain of her affection. A variant of this refusal to exercise discipline is seen in the moody sort of parents during their phases of demonstrative affection. A fear of being rejected lurks beneath their spoiling overfondness; and yet they are apt to veer, in their moods of hostility, to the other extreme and resort to unjust and ill-considered punishment. They tend to produce children of an uncontrolled emotionality like themselves, who include delinquency within their repertoire of retaliation and counter-rejection.

The fourth pattern of spoiling is a very characteristic one; it arises when the mother is on bad terms with her husband. She is then inclined to turn all her thwarted affection upon one of her sons. Not only does she dote on him, become quite uncritical of his failings and fears to correct him, but in extreme cases showers indulgences upon him so that her husband may feel her spite all the more keenly. The boy has pocket-money to squander while the husband goes without his dinners. Whenever the father accuses the mother of spoiling the boy, giving him too much pocket-money or allowing him to malinger as a ne'er-do-well, and serious conjugal friction is suspected, then the spoiling may be reckoned to be of this kind.

The four categories of parental attitude so far discussed have their origin in some anxiety, either the allaying of guilt or the fear of losing the child's love. The result was spoiling in the sense of a positive over-indulgence and a fear to exercise discipline. The next two categories represent rather a neglect of discipline from indifference or apathy.

Typical of the first of these is the father whom his wife

describes as "not a family man". He is just not interested in his children. He may bluster or be harsh if they upset his convenience, but so long as they are out of sight they are out of mind. They are allowed to misbehave themselves with impunity out-of-doors—so long as they do not involve the father in trouble. There is no exact counterpart in the grossly affectionless mother, because the latter invites against herself such resentment, to which she replies by harshness, that the situation soon becomes impossible. The child may become psychotic or severely maladjusted, or the mother may seek to rid herself of him by a plea of 'Beyond Control'. Whereas a child may write off an indifferent father, it cannot dispense with mother-love.

The last cause of failure in discipline is that characteristic of the demoralized or 'problem' family. The essential psychological state of the parents is that they are in a chronic state of depression and apathy. The effort, against the odds they have had to face and with their own frailty of character, to maintain their standards has proved too much for them. And so their philosophy is one of avoiding strain by letting things slide. They live entirely from minute to minute and have no policy even about feeding themselves, let alone about the upbringing of their children. Needless to say, they also neglect them and so they spoil, when they have the means to do so, for the same reasons that other neglectful and disloyal parents will. The demoralized, apathetic parent who alternatively neglects and spoils is of course not confined to the typical slum family; women deserted by their husbands sometimes lapse into this frame of mind.

Every one of these six categories of discipline-failure, it was remarked, could be traced to some defect in the affectional relationship between parent and child. I might lose my bet occasionally by someone finding a case of spoiling or

discipline-neglect which cannot be included in the six categories—there can after all be no rules-of-thumb in the study of people; but I believe that the wider rule, which links discipline with affection, will always hold. It might be objected that some parents are induced to spoil their children because of the fashion of the times or because they have read in a women's journal that you must never say 'Don't'. But the sort of people who heed such advice do so precisely because it panders to their anxieties or helps them to rationalize their indifference. We choose our philosophies to suit our emotional convenience. Nor are these failings fortuitous in any other way: they can be traced to the affectional deprivations of the parents' own childhoods. The mother who abandons or neglects her child or who is content to have him reared by another woman, or the uninterested, irresponsible father merely represent the contemporary phase of an inhibition of parental feeling which may have run through their families for generations. Fundamentally, then, the disciplinary shortcomings of parents are the result of affectional shortcomings one generation back.

From this analysis of the origins of indiscipline we must pass to the practical question of what tactics the probation officer should employ when, as often he must do, he has to deal with an undisciplined boy or girl. It is evident from our general discussion that a direct and simple exhortation to the parent to be sterner would be like Canute's bidding of the tide to halt; for the probation officer would be guilty of ignoring the real forces with which he has to contend. On the other hand, a lack of discipline makes a delinquent response to anxiety more likely. Everyone has to learn to bear a degree of tension without breakdown; and there are obvious reasons why people should be discouraged from solving their difficulties at the expense of others. Only it

must be borne in mind that if the naughtiness is a response to a really unbearable situation then to demand that the parent be strict (to which an affectionless parent might easily be persuaded by the threat of further legal action) may be an invitation to cruelty, and even if the delinquency ceases there is a danger of its being replaced by hysteria or insanity. The probation officer will have to use the diagnostic techniques outlined in order to assess the emotional depravity of the parent. Where, however, he judges the family not to be beyond treatment as a unit, it will be his duty somehow to contrive to raise their general disciplinary standard.

His technique for doing this follows from our general proposition that lack of discipline is primarily a symptom rather than a prime cause. The underlying fault in the parent's attitude to the child will become apparent by the noticing of other symptoms. It will then be a question of correcting this attitude. To the parent who is afraid of exercising authority for fear of losing his or her child's affection it can be explained that the danger is rather in the opposite direction. A child cannot love a grown-up whom it does not respect. In fact children like to feel that there is some person whom they can look up to and rely upon; a parent who is 'kicked around', and hence despised, can never fulfil this need and may even arouse a certain resentment for failing to supply it. It can also be emphasised that the child has a great and continuous need for parent-love, (even though a spoilt youngster can be so sure of the devotion of the parent that it never has to reciprocate the affection in a practical way). That is why, when a normal parent has been cross with a normal child, the latter shows an intense desire for forgiveness. Correction can serve as a reminder that the child has to mind its p's and q's in affectional matters. The over-anxious mother who tries to buy love through

indulgence may in fact absolve her child from the necessity of reciprocation and so find herself bullied and imposed upon. As for the casual or indifferent parent, we again have to judge the degree of the inhibition. If it is mainly a question of affection-shyness or inexpressiveness which masks a genuine concern for the child the fault should yield to explanation. Such parents seldom realize that by not bothering how their son spends his evenings or what time he gets home, or by allowing him to change his employment as it suits his whim, they may give the impression that they are not interested in him.

I cannot end this discussion on discipline without commenting upon the power which the law at present gives the parent to bring a child to court upon a plea of 'Beyond Control'. From the general theory of human relationships upon which I have worked I cannot see that such a step can ever do any good, and I have seen it in practice doing harm. Surely it is a terrible and vicious thing that a parent should be aided and abetted by the law in the abandonment of his or her own child. It is an invitation to the parent to reject and give up trying. Lending reality to irresponsible threats of 'putting away', it sets in motion the vicious spiral of anxiety, loyalty-testing and resentment-expressing nuisance, and still more threats of rejection and still greater nuisance which in the end makes 'putting away' inevitable. If, furthermore, fears of rejection figure so largely among the delinquency-producing anxieties, it is difficult to see how such a crowning and formal act of rejection as a plea of 'Beyond Control' can be expected to have any salutary effect. One result seems almost certain: such a permanent scar of distrust that the boy can never feel comfortable in his own home again; the possibility of family reconciliation which should always be the first consideration in the therapist's mind is nullified.

Of the 15 boys among my 102 whom their parents had at some time brought to court with this plea none did in fact subsequently settle down with them thereafter. If their case-histories are studied in detail it will be noticed how often the parents' going to the probation officer itself constituted the crisis-factor. Here again is a promising topic for probation-officer research.

The legal provision for committing a child to an approved school as beyond control of the parent is based upon two now untenable dogmas. The first of these is that the parent is always right and the child always wrong, and the second is that bad behaviour is primarily due to lack of discipline. In my sample of 102 the 'Beyond Control' plea was in fact more associated with parental harshness than with leniency; it represented the final failure of attempting discipline without security and affection. There is, in consequence, neither moral nor practical justification for this power of the parent to apply for the removal of his child, and it should be annulled so completely and certainly that no confusion about the matter can persist. Where, nevertheless, removal from home is considered advisable it should be possible to effect this by mutual consent, with the understanding that it is a temporary measure and a form of treatment. If compulsory removal becomes necessary the step should never be taken on the initiative of the parent. And eventually, as the probation officer's function becomes more that of a family adviser, it should be easier for parents to seek advice without arousing their child's suspicion that there is a plot to get rid of him.

The behaviour-patterns outlined in this Appendix may be represented diagrammatically in a 'window'.

		Sociability (need for good human relations)	Self-realization (need for status, to be an effective person)
Confidence in fulfilment		Normal enjoyment (and selection) of human relations.	Normal exploitation (and selection) of activities and roles.
Non-fulfilment	Unadjustment (trying too hard)	Overdemanding, seeks attention indiscriminately. High, open anxiety; demonstrative resentment. (In the transition to withdrawal) phases of moodiness.	Plunges recklessly into new activity but lacks persistence. Chooses over-easy achievement. Inferiority—compensation (bragging, showing off, bravado, teasing, annoying).
	Maladjustment (has given up trying)	Withdrawal reaction: Lack of response, aloofness, suspicion and antagonism. Sullen or spuriously confident 'moral defective'. Deep anxiety and resentment (possible vicious outbursts).	'Loss of self-respect'. Lack of interest in life and of natural curiosity. Slovenly; shirks achieving situations; behaves like much younger child, refuses to face the future. (Sometimes) lets himself be bullied.

APPENDIX II

DELINQUENCY AND DULLNESS

"La passion fait souvent un fou du plus habile homme et rend souvent les plus sots habiles."

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD—*Maximes.*

CONSIDERING how often mental dullness is cited among the causes of delinquency, it may seem surprising that I have not put forward any proposals for the treatment of some young offenders as dullards rather than as delinquents. I am aware also that there is a humanitarian bias towards doing so, based on the feeling that if some other than Borstal or approved-school treatment can be found for a boy or girl it should be preferred.

There are several objections to this viewpoint, but I am concerned here with two theoretical ones. Firstly, I do not believe that dullness is even a contributory factor in delinquency. Secondly, our whole theory of mental functioning is due for overhaul: we are realising that the issues are not so simple as a rating by the intelligence quotient or other numerical measure might suggest. I shall argue later that, applied to delinquents, intelligence-tests can mean very little, and are certainly not a reliable guide to their capacity for intelligent or stupid behaviour.

I am of course aware that as a class persistent delinquents are educationally very backward, and have a significantly lower test-intelligence on the average than other young people of their age. For example, the 508 boys tested at the Kingswood Classifying School during the first $1\frac{1}{2}$ years of its operation had an average (median) I.Q. of 90, and the

arrangement of the test results in graphs for each 6-month period show the consistent tendency of approved-school entrants to group themselves in the 'below average' ranges: 14% of these were illiterate.[1]

However, it is now a commonplace that mere statistical association proves nothing about cause and effect. This can only be inferred by examining the actual processes and so coming to understand how things happen. The assumption that dullness is a cause of delinquency rests upon our failure to study the mental processes and habits of delinquents. It is, for instance, assumed that a dull boy is so much less able to appreciate the difference between right and wrong that he is apt to offend unwittingly. This may be true of the more recondite sins, such as the discharge of air-guns or fireworks in public places, although it is doubtful whether even the boy of high intelligence who is disposed to such crimes takes the trouble to enquire as to the legality of his pastime. In general children have a keen sense of what they may or may not do. A cat or a dog can easily be taught not to steal; one might say that a dog learns that it is wrong to steal.[2] A child incapable of this amount of learning would be very low down the intelligence scale indeed, and would certainly have been spotted as a mental defective long before it had a chance to commit a series of outdoor delinquencies. It is significant that of the 508 approved-school entrants referred to above, only four (less than 1%) had previously attended schools for educationally sub-normal children, and the staff of the Classi-

[1] Kingswood Classifying School, Third six-monthly Confidential Report. (Quoted by permission of the Principal, R. H. Adams, Esq., M.A., B.Sc., and of the Board of Managers).

[2] This is not meant to imply that a dog can think on an abstract, ethical plane, but that it understands stealing as an offence against good relationships. It learns this by observing the association between unauthorised taking and its master's displeasure. As with all moral issues it is a question of instinct and emotion rather than of intellect.

fying School thought that only an additional 12 (2½%) should have been thus referred. There is probably at least an equal proportion of unreferred backward children within the general school population.

Alternatively, it is sometimes suggested that the stupid children tend to commit the stupid crimes and so get caught, while the clever ones escape detection. There may be some truth in this as regards adults; but however ingenious the juvenile delinquent, his inexperience is against him, and he lacks the means of committing technically advanced crimes. Being no match for modern police methods, he gets caught after a longer or a shorter run. Nor is it necessarily the intelligent youths who have the longer run, or who commit the more intelligent offences. Expressed statistically it is doubtful, if a series of delinquent acts were rated on a scale according to their cunning, whether there would be any correlation with the intelligence of the doers.[1] The only one of my group of 102 adolescent delinquents who was later certified as a mental defective got away with a long series of burglaries. When asked how he had escaped arrest he gave two reasons: he always worked alone, and he never broke glass. I defy even the police authorities to formulate better safeguards.

The ingenuity or stupidity of an offence is determined much more by the emotional state than by the mental ability of the delinquent. I have quoted cases where an unconscious wish to get caught, or an indifference about being caught or not, resulted in clever boys committing the most clumsy offences.[2]

[1] This is not to be confused with the finding that it is the scholastically more advanced delinquents who tend to commit such crimes, as forgery for instance, for which their superior education and employment give them opportunities. I am speaking not of the type of the offence, but of its efficiency.

[2] See the reference 'obvious offences' in *Delinquency and Human Nature*.

The clever are also just as prone to bravado or to be egged on by their associates as are the stupid; when an over-insistent emotional urge takes possession every wider consideration is inhibited, and so the level of intelligence hardly comes into question. Possibly the chief difference between the intelligent and dull boy is that the former realises his folly more easily *after* the offence.

Any teacher in a special school can recall instances of the intelligence which supposedly dull children can muster when it suits them to do so. We have tended to explain away this ill-fitting brick in our theory of intelligence by vague statements about the dull being cunning, shrewd, glib or superficially clever. Scientifically this is dishonest; our concept of intelligence must embrace all 'higher' behaviour which serves the ends of the agent to good effect. We have no right to restrict it to that kind of mental behaviour at which we ourselves excel, nor assume that the thinking techniques or the aids to thought which we prefer are the only ones.

This argument will assume more concrete a form if illustrated by some further notes on *Searle*.[1] It can be repeated, to save the reader consulting his case-history, that on entering an approved school at 16 years he was illiterate; by the Raven Progressive Matrices test he came in the lowest fifth of the population as regards intelligence; and certain members of the staff, among them his housemaster, who had previously worked in a colony for mental defectives, were convinced that he was at the very least a 'borderline' case. From his approved school Searle went to Borstal, and some six months after his discharge he came to visit me on his B.S.A. motorcycle, a recent present from his mother as a reward for settling down at home. When he went to fetch the machine from the motorcycle agent he was not only unable to ride, but was

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 81–90.

ignorant of the very purpose of gears. So the man showed him how to work the mechanism, and Searle mounted and rode off. Getting into difficulties in the middle of the town's traffic, he pushed the machine to the side of the road and thought what the man had told him to do. Thereafter he remounted and had no further trouble. Without previous experience of Searle's amazing capacity, by any standard, for carrying out a series of instructions I should have found it hard to believe his story. He further demonstrated his versatility by playing a dance tune with both hands on our piano although he could play no musical instrument at the approved school. Someone had asked him if he could play a mouth organ, so he said he would try. He worked at it all night, until he could play tunes. Then he went on to the piano, and after that to the harmonica. A few moments after telling me this he added: "Everybody can do a thing, can't they, Sir? It's will power. You've got to make yourself do it. It's confidence you need."

I quote the last remark as an illustration of his habit of clinching practically every topic by some general reflexion. His mind seemed naturally to turn to generalization and wide association. He accounted for his left-handedness by the fact that his mother had always sat on his left from infancy, and so he had learned to grasp a spoon from her with his left hand rather than stretch over with his right. This he had thought out himself; he had both appreciated the need for a general reason and in search for it he had mentally explored the antecedent situations, until he could visualize one which seemed to offer an explanation. His idea might be usefully tested by research.

When, in his work as pastry-cook, he over-baked some shortbreads his employer grumbled that they were uneatable and that all 18 were wasted. Searle counted them later, and

discovering that there were in fact only 15, informed his boss accordingly. The latter declared that someone must have eaten the other three, whereupon Searle reminded him that he had pronounced them uneatable; if three had been eaten he had better put the rest in the shop window! Chicanery admittedly, but of quite a high level, such as many a cross-examining lawyer would like to be master of.

It is often advanced of the unintelligent that they lack foresight, seizing upon immediate satisfactions without regard to the consequences. This trait is actually more characteristic of the emotionally desperate, such as many delinquents are. Searle, in his earlier phase, provided a good example: his inferiority feelings were so intense that he could not resist any taunt or incitement, however hare-brained. It is possible that a great many objectively stupid people (i.e. those who continually act against their best interests) are so for emotional rather than for intellectual reasons. Since emotional attitudes vary with our experience of frustration or satisfaction, one would expect, if this proposition were true, to find even normal people, that is, those who are not inveterately stupid or delinquent, showing inconsistencies in the mental quality of their acts. This general variability of intelligence-level is a matter of common experience; no one can be proof against a foolish act or an ill-considered word. One suspects that we have been blinded to this general phenomenon of intelligence-variability by the fashionable hypothesis that each individual has fixed mental qualities or traits. Searle, delinquent, lacked foresight; Searle, faced with the prospect of military service, was a top-notch schemer. When I enquired of him, on this visit to me, how he had managed to evade conscription, he replied: "I used me loaf". Shortly before leaving Borstal, he explained, he had begun to complain about his eyesight, which was nevertheless perfect. His object was that when

he was called up there should be a record of his previously having had trouble with his eyes. At the 'medical' the doctor said: "I want you to read what's on that card". Searle was ready with: "I will when you put it there". The doctor moved him nearer, whereupon Searle: "I can see it now, that brown thing"—explaining to me in an aside to the narrative that the card was actually white. He was put in Grade III. Asking what that meant, he was told he would not be called up. Feigning indignation he demanded his medical over again. However, the medical authorities refused, and Searle, as he had planned for months to do, entered civilian life.[1]

It would not answer of him to say that he was fundamentally of low intelligence but cunning and possessed of certain special abilities, nor that he was fundamentally of a high intelligence which lay unutilized. The real contradiction does not lie in Searle's varying intellectual performance: it lies in our habit of assuming the existence in everyone's mind of a mysterious, self-functioning object or essence called intelligence. We slip into this error of concept whenever we make a statement that someone *is* of high or low intelligence. Strictly, all that we should say is that so-and-so *acts* intelligently or otherwise. If, in speaking generally (as for convenience we sometimes must) we say that a person is of high intelligence, all we are doing is to make an abstraction about his typical behaviour. To be accurate, we should say: 'The average quality of his mental acts is high'. Searle showed both low and high intelligence according to the dictates of his emotional attitudes, and these changed as his circumstances variously drove him into an obstinate negativism or encouraged the exercise of his practical and reflective wisdom.

[1] There is no suggestion that the medical board were in fact deceived by Searle's manoeuvre. Almost certainly they were not. He was quite unfitted for military service by reason of his personality, and unconsciously he must have made this evident.

I have quoted fairly long samples of his mental functioning because they displayed, in an illiterate of low test-intelligence, qualities of general thought and of originality which are hard to dissociate from any concept of high general intelligence. Many so-called dullards, and especially delinquent ones, have 'excepted areas', or spheres of activity, within which they can operate with surprising acumen. It is not so much that they are good at any specified activity, but rather that certain situations or topics seem to favour good mental functioning, and others bad. A boy who seems quite unable to memorize his arithmetical tables, the kings and queens of England or the dates of famous battles can repeat closely analogous material in the sphere of sport. It has long been recognized that the quality of a person's memory cannot be measured in the abstract, in other words that memory is no independent faculty; we simply remember those things to which we pay the most close and frequent attention, and they are those which interest us, or in other words which evoke an emotional response.

Similarly we shall have to cease thinking of intelligence as a kind of self-functioning, independent faculty. All neurally normal people are capable of both intelligent and stupid responses to their environment, although the proportions of each vary widely from person to person; the important, practical thing to know about each one is his available, or operative, mental competence. Intellectual variations and inconsistencies, like those of memory, can only be made sense of if we regard them as situation-attitudes. One type of situation is emotionally promising, and our mental powers are called into activity; other situations evoke a sense of danger and our wits are again sharpened. Towards other situations, however, we remain indifferent or become bewildered, and we make no effort to apprehend. This is

the effect that the inside of a wireless set has upon me, while I can display moderate competence with the inside of a car engine. In effect our 'blind spots' are situations in which we see no prospect of achievement; they are 'discouragement-areas'. Some children are discouraged by wide segments of their environment; the kind of inhibited daze which a wireless mechanism produces upon me must to them be a habitual state of mind. This possibility, and its effect over a number of years upon a child's intelligence, is exemplified below in the notes on typical backward institution-children.

The inhibiting effect of anxiety (i.e. emotional desperation) is coming to be recognized, at any rate in dealing with maladjusted children. But it is regarded as a temporary and superficial overclouding of an intellectual capacity which on the whole remains unimpaired. The immediate attitude of a child to a situation, including that of an intelligence-test, is known to be responsible for vast variations in performance—hence the emphasis upon inducing a good test-mood. It is possible, however, that emotional influences produce more permanent and deeper changes, which it is beyond the ability of the tester to overcome.

Intelligence might be described as the functioning of the human organism at its higher administrative level. Our decisions depend not only upon good office work — in other words upon sheer neural efficiency—but also upon our having at our finger-tips a mass of information about the matters with which we are dealing. The brain is essentially a manipulator and storer of impressions received from outside. A child has to carry out a lengthy examination of the objects surrounding it before it can manipulate them effectively. Perception is the foundation of intelligence. The perceiving of any object, that is to say, the grasping of its important characteristics, itself depends upon the prior existence within

the mind of a number of measuring rods, colour cards, tracings of probable movement and so on, which are themselves the generalized memories of a large number of earlier perceptions. (The reason for this apparently is that the absorption-rate of new impressions during even close attention is limited, and that if we are confronted with too many unfamiliar impressions at any one moment the receptive mechanism stalls). Any sensory data, therefore, to be meaningful, must be matched up against the best available pre-existing mental patterns. If no close mental counterpart of an object seen is available, it is likely to be paired up against a clumsy likeness. Only when there is some incentive to attend closely to objects of a certain type do we learn to discriminate finely, and about them an elaborate equipment of images and concepts is built up and held available for use. (Nothing more, it seems to me, is necessary to explain most so-called 'special abilities').

It can thus be appreciated that the operative mental efficiency of any person is in large part determined by the size and type of the 'stockpile' of concepts which he has available.[1] It may be that the ability to build up and organize this stockpile is more important than any normal variation in the efficiency of the neural connections. The latter of course must have a bearing on the former, since the speed with which the essential features of an object can be perceived and transferred to the storehouse, and the extent of interdepartmental co-ordination, must affect the size and availability of the final 'stockpile'. But this must also depend to a very large degree upon the keenness with which the individual casts around for new experiences, upon his powers of attention and concentration

[1] A school-master friend of mine said of certain people whose basic education had been neglected that 'they *had no pegs to hang things on*'. This is another way of saying that any one thought depends upon a number of earlier thoughts.

and finally upon his inducement to weave his concepts into more satisfying patterns.

Once more it is seen that intelligence (defined, as I believe it can only be, in terms of mental behaviour) must in large part be conditioned by the forces of personality which impel us to see and to think, or as an earlier generation would have put it, by qualities of character. Like every other organ of the body, the brain develops through the exercise of its powers; it is just as unrealistic to measure its innate capacity as to measure the innate strength of a muscle. Nor can the effects of environment be discounted, even with children who have had a similar schooling. We now know that a child's human experiences, especially those within its family or other early environment, can produce vastly different attitudes and behaviour-patterns. The latter includes mental behaviour. Human activity at the conscious level is so intricate a compound of what is outwardly observable and of what takes place within the mind as to make exclusive attention to either component academic; all purposeful behaviour is a unity of mental and overt activity. The part which is customarily isolated as intellectual participates in the basic patterns of reaction. In short, one must expect to see reflected in the more mental aspects of activity the usual responses to incentives, and, when the basic needs of the personality are thwarted, the usual defences, inhibitions and attempts at readjustment.

It remains to enquire more concretely how this thwarting of the personality-needs[1] can actually bring about an impairment of the mental functions. For the suggestions which they contain I shall refer to a small number of mentally retarded institution-children of whom I have made a personal study.

[1] For a discussion of the nature of these needs see the Theoretical Notes, *Delinquency and Human Nature,* Appendix I.

The case of *Joan Bradley*[1] offers a clue as to how the elementary attention to percepts—described above as the foundation of intelligence—may be subject to interference. She was a vivacious, flighty, giggling child of seven years, who flitted butterfly-like from one activity to another without giving herself the time to concentrate upon anything. She whipped over the pages of a book too quickly to absorb the pictures, referring for example to a donkey as an elephant. She could not even bring her attention to bear upon her own speech, so that she used inappropriate words or called people the wrong names like someone speaking absent-mindedly. She could not sit still at meals or rest awake on her bed. This answers to the 'avoidance' frame of mind, and was possibly precipitated by traumatic experiences. It was known that her father used to ill-treat her mother; and during her seven years of life the child had had 16 changes of institution, hospital, foster-home, etc.

Whatever 'technical' intellectual ability this child possessed, it remained inoperative owing to the 'avoidance' reaction-pattern, which denied her the calmness of mind to give attention to primary percepts. She was thus unable to build up a stock of useful generalized images—for example she confused the figures 2 and 3. Over a number of years this inability to concentrate upon anything must produce a *de facto* low intelligence. It goes without saying, also, that this frame of mind would inhibit the primitive reflective thinking needed for the organisation of the generalized images into coherent systems. Among delinquent youth, those with the 'avoidance' habit of mind have a notable dislike of, and weakness in, arithmetic, and some are illiterate. Whatever the skill of the tester may be, it is unlikely to overcome their ingrained failure to perceive or to reflect, thus the low

[1] The names of the children mentioned in this Appendix are fictitious.

test result is not so much of a record of their neural inefficiency as of their mental emptiness. This is not to suggest that the intelligence-test is telling a lie—these children are objectively dullards—but just that the attempt to measure pure intelligence is like the alchemist's quest for gold.

The restlessness and inability to concentrate of which the above case offers an extreme instance seemed to be an important factor in the backwardness of all the institution-children whose cases I either investigated personally or upon whom I received written reports.[1] Burt further records that an "inability to attend continuously stands out as one of the most obtrusive characteristics of the dull and backward pupil . . . . Usually the teacher reports that the child cannot concentrate."[2] Admittedly the very inability to follow classroom work will be likely to induce inattention through discouragement. But the fact that teachers select lack of concentration as the salient characteristic suggests that the causal sequence may often run the other way: the emotional disability may be the prime factor producing the dullness and backwardness.

A characteristic which vies with lack of concentration and restlessness among backward institution-children is what might be termed achievement-neurosis. Their general anxiety and the nervous exhaustion accompanying it are so great that they cannot face the uncertainty and tension which any difficult task involves. In the milder form of this attitude, that found in the 'unadjusted' institution-child, those activities are selected which allow of easy and immediate achievement. Consequently they never master the more advanced mental techniques which are needed for serious study or for craftsmanship. In its severe form, found in withdrawn

[1] See the 'profiles' summarized in the chapter on Deprived Children.

[2] Sir Cyril Burt, *The Backward Child*, p. 483.

near-psychotic children, it becomes a general lack of interest or of curiosity in anything. *Harry Smith,* aged 10½, was typical of this stage. He had been in an institution from the age of nine months, with the aggravating factor of knowing that his relatives cared for his sister but did not want him. At six years, when he came to his present institution, he could not smile and could hardly talk. His only attitude to other children was one of violent temper when crossed, and he was quite unamenable to ordinary school discipline. For the past two years he had been in a special class for sub-normal children, where however he made little progress. His attitude to my padlock puzzle, which intrigues most children, was significant of his lack of response to the ordinary challenges of life. He tugged at it in a peculiarly mechanical, stereotyped way without even looking at what he was doing. His mind was evidently not on the problem; even when he glanced at the puzzle it did not occur to him that there might be an alternative to his senseless tugging. Yet he had his 'excepted areas'. His House Mother reported: "I was reading a story to the children when I had to break off. I asked Harry to carry on with the reading. He seemed to be reading so well that I did not know until I went to start reading again that he had not been reading at all, but remembering the story and re-telling it to the others."

My study of backward institution-children revealed other possible ways in which emotional influences may retard the development of intelligence. These can again be illustrated by short references to some of the children studied. *Jackie Thompson's* all-pervading anxiety was for adult attention, of no matter what kind. He would neglect to wash his hands for the sheer pleasure of being sent to do so, and if, by feigning incompetence, he could get some adult to perform the operation for him, so much the better. If a visitor to his

Home had once shown any interest in him he would pitifully hang around or peer in through windows in the hope of picking up another mite of attention. Or he would buy presents for a sympathetic visitor out of his own pocket-money. His chief means of attracting the sympathy of adults, however, was to pose as a much younger and more stupid child than he actually was. At 10½ he was still talking in a babyish way, and could neither read nor write. But his House Mother said of him; "When sweets or pocket money are about he knows everything. He can apply his mind when it concerns himself." From the age of 1½ years he had been in various institutions. At six he was sent for observation as a mental defective. It was reported that he knew he was under scrutiny, behaved normally and was too clever to give himself away. It became clear that he afforded an example of the babyhood or play-daft neurosis, which is not infrequent among institutionalized children.[1] Their competition for attention induces them to adopt the pose of being more helpless, younger in age and less intelligent than they actually are. One might say that the incentive is towards stupidity and infantilism. For lack of a normal development urge, and with their unconcern about falling behind other children, they fail to acquire those concepts usually imparted by an ordinary schooling.

Peter Jenkins afforded another example of the achievement-neurotic: "He never tries hard at any game. It's almost a waste of time to try to play a game with him, he gets tired of it after a few minutes. . . . He will make an effort to play football but his heart is not in it; he does not seem to want to exercise his energy at all. . . . When indoors on a wet day he will cut out paper, just roughly". His I.Q. had been com-

[1] The expert burglar, referred to earlier in this Appendix, was another example.

puted at various times at 76 and 91, and at 10 years he could not read. There was, however, a further element in his personality apart from his withdrawal from achieving-situations to account for his backwardness. His mother had deserted him in an institution at 3 years, while taking his two sisters home with her.[1] Although she visited him regularly and had him home for short holidays she was continually, but insincerely, talking of having him home to live. This parental disloyalty imbued him with a characteristic cynicism, immorality and lack of any desire to please. He was dishonest, untruthful, scheming, selfish and lazy. I believe that in young children a most powerful incentive to make progress in school is the desire to respond to the teacher. This Peter Bradley lacked; in school he would "just sit". His headmaster said that nothing he did or said had any effect on him; bribery, threats, reward, punishment, all left him untouched.

With *John Neale* the lack of a desire to please or to respond to teaching had developed into what might be termed an obsessional resistance. He was one of the most nearly psychotic children I have met in an institution or approved school, having deep attitudes of hostility and suspicion which induced him to misconstrue the most innocent acts as directed against him. A woman who used to take him for walks remarked: "You can never get near to John; he will be walking by your side but you feel he is a long way away."

The personal intimacy involved in having something explained to him would have involved too great a breach in his defences of aloofness. "When you try to tell him something," reported a member of the staff of his Home, "he can't seem to understand, his mind gets fixed". At school

[1] She had up till then lived in the institution with her children.

he was classified as educationally subnormal and had an I.Q. of 79. Yet "he is very good at dominoes; he plays a good game and often wins. He can play a difficult game like Chinese Chequers (a variety of Halma) and can beat my wife, who is good at it. On passing boys doing a jig-saw puzzle he will suddenly see a bit that fits in."

He had been a foundling child, having been abandoned soon after birth on a common. At 18 months he was boarded out, but his foster-mother ill-treated him; he was admitted to hospital in an ill-nourished and bruised condition and suffering from trauma. With his next foster-mother, at three years, he suffered burns from having a tray of hot ashes fall over him. From then on there are reports of his trying behaviour and of his difficulty in making verbal contact with people. In his case more than any it seems feasible to regard his mental retardation as a concomitant of his general personality-deformity.

Withdrawal involves depression, a damping down of striving and curiosity, a loss of the eager interest in living which impels us to cast around for new experience. Withdrawn approved-school boys show this inhibition of vital force in their sluggishness and the heavy dullness of their appearance. They see less, do less, think less.[1] I have suggested that the ability to operate successfully, i.e. intelligently, within one's environment requires several years of active seeing, doing and thinking for the building up of a store of useful information and experience. If this is so, it is to be expected that these depressed, withdrawn children should be mentally backward, as indeed they are. Occasionally, however, they allow a rift to develop in their depressive

[1] Samuel Johnson admitted that during his depressions "he was sometimes so languid and inefficient that he could not distinguish the hour upon the town-clock". (Boswell's *Life*).

neurosis; they show unexpected competence in some skill, such as a handicraft or music, involving material rather than personal relations, at which they can be free from the tensions of sociability.

In this Appendix my intention has not been to expound any ripened hypothesis, but primarily to show that earlier conceptions of an independent faculty of intelligence, with or without special abilities, fail to explain the mental development of delinquent and other emotionally dissatisfied children. My first suggestion was that anxiety may bring into play habits of reaction—restlessness and failure to attend to intricate relations, a fighting shy of uncertain achievement, or the inhibition of human response—which are certainly inimical to scholastic attainment and probably also to success in intelligence-tests. My second suggestion was that if these deleterious attitudes have been dominant during the formative years of the intellect, the latter will suffer a functional impairment which is virtually absolute. The stock of concepts against which everything seen or heard must be matched up will be too small for efficient apprehension. Even when good attitudes to learning or to intelligence-tests are induced there would still be a poor foundation of mental experience, so that performance would continue for a long time to be inefficient. The great error made by those who have claimed to test innate intelligence was to assume that since the formal environment of most children—their schooling, home and street surroundings etc.—was similar, their exploitation of that environment and the mirroring of it in their minds would also be approximately the same.

The general purport of this Appendix has been to suggest that mental competence may be emotionally conditioned in ways which have not so far been fully taken into account. I have argued that much dullness, previously held to be innate,

is the outcome of emotional maldevelopment.[1] The latter is also prominent in serious delinquency. The delinquent's dullness may therefore be, not so much a causal factor in his breakdown, as an additional symptom of a more deep-lying maladjustment.

[1] This view is supported by a certain amount of statistical evidence, summarized by Dr. John Bowlby in *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, chapter 2. The data he quotes concern the mental and emotional retardation of institution children, especially those who have been deprived of a mother-figure during their early years. But there is no reason why a similar retardation should not result from other deleterious human environments. The important general finding is that developmental retardation (including mental retardation) and emotional ill-treatment tend to go together.

FURTHER READING

A short list for those interested in the human aspects of delinquency

DIRECTLY ABOUT DELINQUENCY AND ITS TREATMENT

Sir Leo Page, *The Young Lag* (Faber, 1950).
Basil Henriques, *Indiscretions of a Magistrate* (Harrap).
John Watson, *The Child and the Magistrate* (Jonathan Cape).
Margery Fry, *Arms of the Law* (Gollancz).
D. H. Stott, *Delinquency and Human Nature* (obtainable only direct from Carnegie U.K. Trust, Comely Park House, Dunfermline).
Norval Morris, *The Habitual Criminal* (Longmans, 1951).
D. A. Griffiths, *Youth and Crime* (Epworth Press, London).
G. Howland Shaw, *The Sponsoring System* (Howard Journal, 1949–50, reprinted from the Prison Journal of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, October 1949).
Big Brother Movement, *Your Adventure in Friendship*—a guidebook for Big Brothers (207 Fourth Ave., New York 3). Other pamphlets from Big Brothers of America, Broad Street Station Building, Philadelphia 3.
E. Powers and H. Witmer, *An Experiment in the Prevention of Delinquency* (The Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study), Columbia University Press, 1951.
W. F. Roper, *A Comparative Survey of the Wakefield Prison Population in* 1948 *and* 1949 (British Journal of Delinquency July 1951 and April 1951, Vol. I, Nos. 1 and 4.)

THE PROBLEM FAMILY

A. Collis and V. Poole, *These our Children* (Gollancz).
C. Fraser Brockington, *Problem Families* (British Social Hygiene Council).
R. C. Wolfinden, *Problem Families in Bristol* (Cassell, 1950).
Tom Stephens, *Problem Families* (Family Service Units).

THE DEPRIVED CHILD

D. M. Dyson, *The Foster Mother and the Boarded-Out Child* (Allen and Unwin).

J. Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health* (World Health Organization, Geneva, 1951).

Women's Group on Public Welfare, *The Neglected Child and his Family* (Oxford University Press, 1948).

A. Bowley, *Child Care* (Livingstone, 1951).

THE SCHOOL

W. Carson Ryan, *Mental Health through Education*, N.Y., The Commonwealth Fund (Oxford University Press, 1948).

C. S. Segal, *Backward Children in the Making* (Muller).

A. G. Hughes, *Education and the Democratic Ideal* (Longmans).

M. F. Cleugh, *Psychology in the Service of the School* (Methuen).

Sir Martin Roseveare, *Age, Ability and Aptitude*, Address to N.U.T. Conference, 1950. (Obtainable on application to the National Union of Teachers, Hamilton House, W.C.1).

J. F. Wolfenden, *The Public Schools To-day* (University of London Press).

Henry Williamson, *Dandelion Days* (fiction). (Penguin).

L.C.C. (ed.) *Helping To-morrow's Citizens*—an account of the work of the L.C.C. School Care Committees (free on application to the Children's Care Organizer, County Hall, S.E.1).

H. W. Nudd, *The Problem Child in School*, N.Y., The Commonwealth Fund, 1927.

THE YOUTH MOVEMENT

Youth Councils, issued by the University of Bristol Institute of Education (University of London Press).

The Barge Boys' Club, First and Second Annual Reports. (S/B Normanhurst, Eagle Wharf, Wapping, E.1).

P. L. Crawford, D. I. Malamud and J. R. Dumpson, *Working with Teen-age Groups*—report on the Central Harlem Street Clubs Project (Welfare Council of N.Y. City, 1950).

Duane Robinson, *Chance to Belong*—Story of the Los Angeles Youth Project, 1943–1949. (Woman's Press N.Y.).
E. F. Piercy, *National Association of Boys' Clubs Research Memorandum*. Replies to Questionnaires sent to Past Members of Boys' Clubs.
J. C. Spencer, *The Unclubbable Adolescent* (British Journal of Delinquency, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 1950).

SOCIOLOGICAL

R. J. Havighurst and H. Taba, *Adolescent Character and Personality* (Wiley, N.Y.).
J. Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (Kegan Paul).
M. Mead, *From the South Seas:* studies of adolescence and sex in primitive societies.
F. Zweig, *Labour, Life and Poverty* (Gollancz).
Alwyn D. Rees, *Life in a Welsh Countryside* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1950).
M. B. Sayles, *The Problem Child at Home,* N.Y., The Commonwealth Fund, 1928.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND FICTION

a) Studies of family relationships and personality.

E. Arnot Robertson, *Ordinary Families* (Penguin).
Nancy Mitford, *The Pursuit of Love* (Penguin).
Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son* (Penguin).
Daphne Du Maurier, *The Du Mauriers* (Penguin).
D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* (Penguin).
A. Mikhelson, *The Castle of Chillon* (Putman).
Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows.*
Betty Smith, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (Penguin).
Joyce Cary, *Charley is My Darling* (Michael Joseph, Carfax edition), 1951.
G. Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (Penguin, Coghill's translation).

b) Life of the slum and underworld.

A. Morrison, *A Child of the Jago* (Penguin).
Michael Sadleir, *Forlorn Sunset* (Constable).

INDEX