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Reviews and Criticisms

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REVIEWS AND CRITICISMS

THE THIRTEENTH BIENNIAL REPORT OF WHITTIER STATE SCHOOL,
WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA. Department of Printing Instruction,
Whittier State School, 1917. Pp. 245.

The Biennial Report of the State School at Whittier may, for the purposes of review, be divided into four parts: the general statements of the trustees and superintendent; the diagnostic work of the department of research; the corrective work of the educational department; and the follow-up work of the field-worker and parole officer.

I. General Statements. This institution receives boys who have been convicted of various forms of delinquency, ranging from mere dependency and truancy to serious offenses against property. With the new policy of the administrative officers, there is emphasis upon the careful study of each boy committed to the institution. Each boy thus becomes at once a group of problems. It is important to note that the administration holds neither society nor the boys guiltless in the matter of misdemeanors. In this connection, the superintendent calls attention to general social conditions which tend toward the production of such boys: homes broken up by divorces, separations, and desertions; schools which are often unable to discover or remedy unfortunate conditions; and a career in the streets with practically no restraint or guidance.

In order to meet the individual needs of these boys, the superintendent outlines different types of segregation which need to be made. (1) As to general attitude, there are those who have lacked a fair opportunity, and who are willing to respond when one is afforded; those who by reason of mental inferiority are unable to make a satisfactory response to ordinary opportunities; and those who do not care to respond. (2) As to intelligence, there are the inferior, the average, and the superior. With regard to these types of segregation, it may be said that even the public schools are forced to make some divisions of their pupils of the elementary grades. In the public schools, however the number of "normal" children greatly exceeds the number of either the superior or the inferior; this fact makes segregation far less imperative than in the case of schools dealing with pupils predominantly of either extreme. For the worst cases of both types of segregation, the superintendent recommends treatment in other institutions.

Within the school there are now several divisions of the boys. First, there is the receiving company. When the boys arrive at the school, they enter this company, where they are examined by the officers of the medical, research, and educational departments. While in this company, the boys learn the order of life followed within the school and live under considerably stricter discipline than later—a procedure which accords with the recommendations of leading educators who insist upon "starting right the first day." After this period of detention the boys enter the regular company, unless they are under

fourteen years of age in which case they enter the company of small boys. They remain in this company, unless they become remiss: the lost-privilege company is the real penal farm at Whittier to which such intra-school offenders are committed.

The treatment of disciplinary problems offers suggestions to workers outside the confines of an institution for delinquents. If, for example, corporal punishment can be abolished or avoided for four years in such an institution, what comment must be made regarding the public school which is so organized that such punishment has to be resorted to in case of some of its boys? The superintendent might have much cause for complacency in the adoption of a policy of developing *self-control* instead of *officer-control*: he could hardly achieve more disastrous results than autocratic supervisors have achieved! In carrying out this policy, the superintendent indicates that he is not shifting the responsibility to those who are unable to assume it; instead, there is an attempt to treat each individual case in such a way that the boys may learn that certain acts are wrong not merely because the officers say so, but because society says so. One way in which the results of this policy are shown is in the decreasing number of absences without leave in spite of an increasing number of inmates: more of the boys "will not" rather than "can not."

Another matter may be mentioned before leaving the statement of the superintendent. He has noticed, as others have also, that many of the boys who are returned to institutions have fallen the second time because of inability to secure work or even the necessities of life. In order to provide the boys against such a disaster, many are enabled to stay at Whittier for some time after the end of their terms. During this time they receive wages for their work. Many go back into the world with sufficient means to enable them to withstand a period of enforced idleness and thus more easily make good.

II. The Work of the Department of Research. In the diagnostic work of the school, a clear separation is made of the functions of intelligence and educational tests. The classifications made by both forms of tests are used in determining the trade which the boys shall try to learn while in school. Much attention is given to this classification, because it is believed that the mental level indicates the level of work which may profitably be undertaken. For example, it was determined by investigation that four levels of difficulty can be distinguished in the printing work; mental tests are used as aids in selecting branches of this work for individual boys.

Much of the time of this department must have been devoted to the giving of the Stanford revision of the Binet tests. The results of these tests are shown in the report by the use of very effective forms of graphical presentation. The percentage of cases of each of the five intelligence groups was found to be as follows: feeble-minded, 30; borderline, 27; dull normal, 22; average normal, 18; superior, 3. This kind of study and effective presentation of results should impress upon legislators the necessity of protecting many of these persons from society, and *vice versa*.

The activities of the field-worker, who is a trained sociologist, are

suggestive. Among other forms of data are presented the following: personal history of each delinquent, shown graphically; his "family chart"; and reports upon both his home and neighborhood as measured by score cards. With all these forms of data at hand, the superintendent and teachers might feel rather confident of their ability to plan corrective work, but still other tests are applied to the boys before the class lessons begin.

III. The Corrective Work. The close co-ordination between the educational department and the department of research is shown by the statement that "the school work has been organized and conducted in accordance with intellectual levels of pupils as determined by the application of scientific psychological tests." A later statement indicates that the tests enable the teachers to avoid the futile attempt to have all boys pursue the same kind of work: "As a result of the set tests, it has become evident that fully twenty-five per cent. of the boys in the State School cannot pursue ordinary school work profitably to themselves." In planning the vocational work which is given instead of the regular school work, attention is paid to the relation between intellectual levels and trade aptitudes as mentioned above.

The standard educational tests which have been applied to the boys gave such results as one might have expected. The boys "are far below the average given for the schools" elsewhere, in which the tests have been given. These tests are especially valuable in classifying the boys promptly as to the grades to which they belong.

The occupational training is carried on by thirty instructors, who may be classified as employes for duties other than teaching, in which case the boys may be called student-helpers. The frank statements of these instructors indicate that they have at least one essential qualification for their duties as teachers, that is, practical knowledge. The Federal Board for Vocational Education recommends in its first official bulletin that "evidence of successful experience in a vocation as well as in teaching, should have large weight" in the selections of vocational teachers. If the teachers at Whittier lack in theoretical knowledge, they probably measure up to the requirements of the Federal Board quite as well as many teachers who have merely theoretical knowledge of the practical arts. Excellent illustrations add greatly to the effectiveness of this section of the report.

IV. The Follow-up Work. The fourth section of this review deals with the follow-up work of the field-worker and the parole officer. Owing to the fact that the field-worker had been employed only one year at the time the report was made, little can be said of the results of his work, although much might be said of its possibilities. With his knowledge about the boys' homes and neighborhoods, he can do much in the guidance of boys who are being discharged. As the parole officer points out, a more careful study of boys conditionally discharged can now be undertaken. The superintendent indicates that the school is looking for results in the lives of boys who have left the school when he says, "in very many instances an apology and expression of regret have replaced an effort to justify the wrong," which, as he adds, "is surely a wholesome and encouraging change."

At present, the number of feeble-minded boys and men who are automatically discharged, but who cannot be expected to assume the responsibilities forced upon them by society, increases the percentages to make good.

The report contains much that will interest both specialists and general readers.

Northwestern University.

W. L. UHL.

SCRITTI GIURIDICI VARI (VARIOUS JURIDICAL ESSAYS) by *Dr. Jur. Giovanni Brunetti*, Professor of Law at the Royal Institute of Social Sciences of Florence. Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1915. Two volumes, pp. VIII-241 and IX-315.

We regret deeply to be unable to say more about this most interesting collection of various essays, because, important though they are, they are without the province of this Review, since they deal with private and public civil law, international law, history and philosophy of law.

Suffice it to mention the high importance that even from the point of view of criminal law have the essay concerning the self limitation of rights that the state imposes upon itself, the essay upon the interpretation of the law as it is made by the judge, and the study of the Italian law on that vexed European question of the natural child that the father or the mother wants to legitimate.

New York University.

VITTORIO RACCA.

PHILADELPHIA MUNICIPAL COURT, REPORT FOR NINETEEN SIXTEEN.
Pp. 320.

"To dig deep for underlying causes and to treat those who have met with misfortune in a humane and understanding spirit is the task with which we are concerned." This sentence from Judge Brown's introductory statement of the year's work is typical of the spirit of the entire report, and, one is led to believe, of the court itself. This report, unusual in many particulars, is well worth the attention of social service workers connected with courts, as well as of all other students of the social and economic problems of a large city.

This is the first, and indeed the only, instance of the several branches of the various courts of a great city being united under one organization, and working together toward a common purpose. For this reason alone the report is of value, for after three years' experience one is able to arrive at a fairly safe conclusion as to the success of such a plan. This report is an indication that a combination of courts will work successfully, and to the saving of time, money, and efficiency.

Again, in this report is presented the unusual spectacle of a court studying and testing out itself, in an intelligent effort to improve its work. The statistics, differing radically from those collected by most courts, are a valuable contribution to the study of underlying causes of dependency and delinquency, both adult and juvenile. And when these statistics are used by the court itself to

measure its present efficiency and to point the way to greater community service in the future, they are seen to be of the greatest possible significance. Indeed, this one fact more than any other must impress even the most casual reader, and it renders the entire subject matter of vital importance.

The third point of especial interest is the way in which this report indicates necessary changes in the laws to make more useful the existing machinery. There is scarcely a section of the report which does not recommend some new legislation for the purpose of making that branch or department more efficient.

One indication of the effort of the court to become more efficient is the consolidation of certain departments which were organized independently to meet the pressure of an immediate demand. For example, the various branches of the court opened employment divisions as the need for them arose. These are now brought together in one labor bureau, dealing with the employment problem of the court as a whole. One cannot fail to see not only the saving in time and money to be gained by this arrangement, but also the greater opportunity presented for studying this entire problem much more accurately, and no doubt the statistics gathered in the next year will be of increasing value to students of the employment situation. Again the various branches of the court found it necessary to introduce medical work to meet their immediate needs. These are now brought together into a medical department to serve the entire court. The emphasis which this court puts on the employment and medical side of its work is well stated in another sentence from Judge Brown's foreword: "After the unraveling of legal tangles, family disputes, neglect of children, waywardness in boys and girls, nearly always resolve themselves into problems of the economic situation and of the physical condition of the family or individual." With a far-seeing judge, who recognizes these underlying facts, the organizing of these two departments is a promise of increasing efficiency in the whole court system.

One other statement of Judge Brown's must be quoted as an index to the character of the entire report, "While our ideal is that of a court that will be personal and kindly, we have not forgotten that our work must be founded on the bed-rock of science." It is this happy combination of humane treatment with a scientific viewpoint which characterizes the four reports which are of such outstanding interest as to require individual mention.

The Domestic Relations Division in an attempt to determine the reason for cases being brought to its attention has compiled careful and accurate statistics on nativity, occupation, wages, housing, age of clients, and causes of domestic infelicity. The statistics on this last point are of unusual interest. Each complainant is asked, "What do you consider the reason for the trouble at home?" This is followed by, "Are there other troubles, and what are they?" In two years the answers of 5,601 wives and 1,199 husbands have been studied statistically, with the resulting conclusions: that alcoholism alone is not the chief cause assigned by wives for family trouble, but

in almost all cases it is coupled with abusive treatment or language. These constitute the most frequent cause assigned by wives for difficulty. On the other hand, husbands attribute their greatest difficulties to interfering relatives, and next to this, other men.

The following general conclusions are stated as the result of the entire study. The wages of clients of the court are "above the average, and above the minimum required for decent maintenance of a home. The wife works more frequently than does the average woman. The home is a private dwelling, not overcrowded. The wife and husband often appear self-centered, the husband trying to force his views upon the wife by abusive treatment and language, and in many instances the wife retaliating by nagging, and most often having recourse to her family and relatives. The men and women who come to court are not immature, and have usually seen almost ten years of married life. Alcoholism often plays its part as far as the men are concerned."

Added to this interesting study, is given the results of an investigation to determine whether court reconciliations hold; one of the many efforts made by the court to test the lasting value of its service to the community. A careful survey was made of the 1,002 couples reported as reconciled. Of these 310 were not lasting, 87 could not be located, and the remaining 605 lasted from six to eighteen months. The conclusions arrived at are that courts cannot compel a man to fulfil his legal obligations to his family, nor can they preserve the family unit. However, an honest effort to find out causes of trouble and to have each man and woman face the difficulties thus presented may result in a better understanding. Also physical ailments, and economic pressure, which are frequent causes of misunderstanding, may be in great measure relieved by the court's assistance.

The section of the report given over to the relationship between the court and the House of Correction is of great interest on account of the careful study made of women prisoners. Probation officers from the court are assigned to investigate the cases of all prisoners in this institution. While many men were found to have been committed without sufficient cause, few women had been unfairly detained, indeed in many cases they were deserving of a longer commitment. Out of 656 men whose cases were investigated, parole was arranged for 491; of these only 40 were again sentenced to a term in the House of Correction for later offenses. All of these men had been sentenced by the magistrates' courts, where no investigations are made before commitment. That such a large number of men were found eligible to parole after proper investigation of their cases is a good argument for the investigation of complaints in all courts of the city, if sanctioned by law.

The women were generally committed on charges of street-walking or alcoholism, more of the alcoholics appearing as recidivists than of the street-walkers. Here a careful study was made of the age, nativity, occupation, social status, and physical and mental condition of the women. The results show that immigration and inability to speak English and occupations outside the home cannot be held

responsible for the problem of drunken and disorderly women; also that a large number of the women are married and have living children. The women were found to be "socially incompetent and unable to meet satisfactorily the obligations and responsibilities of life." There was an average of one to five physical defects for each woman. Of 100 white women given mental tests 33 were clearly feeble-minded, and 69 showed signs of distinctly abnormal mental condition; only 31 were normal. There was a very close connection between mental condition and the number of commitments. The conclusion drawn after this careful research is the obvious one, that the institution does not reform women. This is due in a measure to the fact that at least 70 per cent of them have "constitutional defects requiring medical rather than correctional treatment." Many recommendations are made which would tend to make the institution more helpful to the inmate. The few who can be benefited by reformatory treatment should have the most approved sort; and above all the needs of each separate individual should be considered, and treatment given accordingly. The general recommendations, while applying to this reformatory alone, are full of suggestive material to superintendents of such institutions in general.

The study of bastardy cases handled in 1916 is a worth-while contribution to the understanding of this serious problem. In this, as in all the studies made, careful and detailed statistics have been compiled in regard to both parents, and these statistics have been studied in relation to the total number of illegitimates born in the entire city, thus adding materially to their value. The way in which these cases are handled is unusual. Whenever the complaint is made at the Municipal Court, there is an investigation before court action. On this account the number of defendants who plead guilty is increasing each month. In so far as possible bastardy cases are all heard on one day each week, and plans are under way to avoid public hearings entirely whenever the defendant has pleaded guilty to the charge. Cash settlements are discouraged, as the court wishes the father to be equally responsible with the mother for a child's support during its entire dependency, which now extends to the age of sixteen. Orders may be made to increase each year, on the basis of the man's increasing earning capacity. The suggestion is made that to keep a woman and child on probation during the entire period of dependency is the only logical way to see that these unfortunate children receive proper care. Two new acts have been prepared, one to allow the payment to wife of child of 65 cents a day for each man who is in prison for failure to support. This act is so worded as to include illegitimate children. The other act will make it possible at any time during the period of dependency to compel a father to support his child. This act makes failure to support a misdemeanor. There are also other laws recommended to make it necessary to refer all bastardy cases to the Municipal Court, and so give an opportunity for investigation, and follow-up work; to make it possible for an illegitimate child to inherit from the estate of a father; and to make failure to support a child born out of wedlock an extraditable offense.

The last study in the report dealing with the families of 1,000 delinquent children, and a like number of families of dependent children, whose cases were heard in the Juvenile Court branch, is well worth careful reading. The object was to determine the social conditions of the families in each group. The statistical tables covering this subject make up almost one-third of the total number in the report. It is unfortunate that the results of this study have not been summarized, for the information contained in this section of the report is of more than ordinary significance, and it should be presented in a way to command greater attention. However, the following data derived from the statistical tables is of especial interest, as it is impossible in this brief review to discuss the detailed items brought to light. In general then, one sees that there is an entirely different problem presented in the handling of the dependent and delinquent child, largely arising from the different social conditions surrounding them. In the first place the majority of dependents are under school age; while most of the delinquents are in school, and classified as truants or retarded to an unusual degree; or else have left school much below the eighth grade, and, therefore, are difficult to find employment for. The fathers of dependents are working in unskilled trades, and at least one-third of the mothers are employed. Bad housing and overcrowding is a minor problem with delinquents. Broken families are a large factor among dependents, in one-half the cases studied children were living in homes other than their own. Where unfortunate home conditions, such as neglect, alcoholism, and tuberculosis were observed, eighty-two per cent of the dependents were listed as against thirty-eight per cent of the delinquents. In other words, delinquency among children is more often an individual problem, while dependency is entirely a family problem, and to do away with it the social status of the home must be improved. While probation officers have recognized the fact for many years, it is valuable to know that statistical data bear out their opinion.

Juvenile Court, Chicago.

HELEN M. JEWELL.

THE UNMARRIED MOTHER. By *Percy G. Kammerer*. Criminal Science Monograph No. 3. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1918. Pp. 342, \$3.00.

The publication of "The Unmarried Mother" marks the distance society has progressed in thought on the subject of illegitimacy from the days when the subject was discussed emotionally and the mother of the illegitimate child was designated as the "Fallen Woman."

The book, based on the study of hundreds of case histories from among which 500 have been selected as vividly illustrating various aspects of the subject, reveals the fact that illegitimacy is a measurable problem which may be segregated and analyzed.

The strength of the book is in its recognition that the act resulting in pregnancy is invariably an expression of the individual's habits and dates from experiences of past years and is not an isolated phenomenon in her life; for instances, "it has frequently been neces-

sary to consider an influence brought to bear upon a girl during a plastic period of her development, sometimes four or five years previous to her pregnancy" . . . and again, "many a young girl has been so accustomed to immorality from an early age, both within her home and her immediate neighborhood, that she falls into habits of sexual laxness without having to overcome the standards which more fortunate girls possess" . . . and again, "it is frequently necessary for several persons to share the same sleeping room, sometimes three or four occupy the same bed. This has normal results in the dissemination of disease. Equally contaminating is the fact that hardly a married couple in a congested neighborhood is able to have a room for itself, so that children are often forced to sleep in the same room with their parents up to and within early adolescence"

To experienced social workers the recognition of the multitude of causes in each instance and emphasis on society's responsibility will come as a balm after unintelligent treatises of the past in which all responsibility was placed on the individual. Mr. Kammerer's arraignment of society and of the economic organization is doubly effective in that it is based on facts and is incidental rather than primary.

The study is comprehensive. The conclusions are in accord with the unexpressed experiences of workers with this group:

1. Steps should be taken for the control and segregation of the mentally abnormal woman during the child bearing age
2. An attempt should be made to enact laws which will reflect the European experience in regard to the unmarried mother. The general emphasis of this legislation should aim towards the care of the child
3. There should be an extension of efforts towards general social betterment
4. There is great need for a revision of the attitude of the public towards questions of sex in general

The book is a text book which should be familiar to every case worker and to individuals identified in any way with social problems; from the introduction by Dr. Healy to the end, it is authoritative and enlightening; carrying statistics, suggestions for advanced legislation, a bibliography and complete index. It should prove of immense help to communities seeking to remove untoward conditions.

It is readable because of the lure of case histories subordinated to theory. The keynote of the book is struck by Dr. Healy in his introduction: "What may we think of punishment or even of neglect of the unmarried mother when we contemplate the essential fact that, whereas most infraction of laws coincides with destructive results, here we have a law-breaker as a constructive agent, giving as concrete evidence of her "misbehavior" nature's highest product, a human being.

Woman's City Club, Chicago.

AMELIA SEARS.