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## Current Notes

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## CURRENT NOTES

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V. A. Leonard, EDITOR

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**Juvenile Court at the Half Century Mark**—Just fifty years ago on July 1, a law providing for the world's first court for children became effective in Chicago. The annual conference of the National Probation and Parole Association, meeting in Cleveland June 9-13, fittingly marked this significant year by featuring the juvenile court in its program. Charles L. Chute traced the history of the juvenile court over the last fifty years, stating that the Cook county act was passed after considerable effort on the part of social and civic organizations, notably the Chicago Woman's Club and the Catholic Visitation and Aid Society. The great concern at the time was to get children out of jails as well as out of criminal courts. Mr. Chute stated in his concluding remarks that the establishment of the first juvenile court was one of the greatest advances for all child welfare that has ever occurred. Like all reforms, it was developed by the pioneers before the general public had grasped its significance or was prepared to accept all its implications. There are still too many who are not yet ready to do so today—and that is probably the basic reason why we have not yet realized the ideals of the founders. But progress has been continuous, if sometimes a little slow, and the future looks promising.

Roscoe Pound, president of the Association, reminded the conference that "the socially minded lawyer has been growing up contemporaneously with the social worker." Not only did lawyers share with social workers in setting up the first tribunal, but as judges of juvenile courts they have contributed notably to their development. Using as his title, "The Juvenile Court in the Service State," Mr. Pound noted the gain in research in juvenile delinquency of the last two decades which "has put us immeasurably in advance of where we were in the formative years of the juvenile court," although the viewpoint of the founders has been sustained. Looking backward along the path of progress, he said: "As it was in the beginning, we saw only the individual child. We sought to do for the individual child what normal households had done in the everyday conduct of the family. Later we came to see that the delinquent child with whom the juvenile courts had to do was a product of conditions which had operated to bring about delinquency long before he came before the court and that we had a preventive no less or even more than a correctional task. We had not merely to adjust or readjust the individual but to deal with conditions which were making for maladjustment of so many of his kind. In other words, the juvenile court was not enough. It had to be put in a setting of institutions doing more than salvage of individual children. But after this was perceived the difficulty was that we had hardly yet perfected the court for the purposes for which we had set it up. Too few of our courts, in the country as a whole, have even now the facilities and equipment for what we have demanded of them. In the last few years, however, more and more we are seeking to organize comprehensive prevention, not for the locality

merely but for the state, and to bring all agencies and programs of prevention into effective relation."—Focus, September, 1949.

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**Inter-State Consolidation of Institutional Facilities**—In recent years leading penologists have suggested the possibility of several states consolidating their institutional facilities in the interests of efficiency and economy. Not until an official committee designated by the New England Governors' Conference submitted its final report a few months ago has the subject been developed to the point of practical administration. This committee, the Special Commission on Institutional Care, was assigned the task of "determining in what respects the problem of institutional care might be better met on a co-operative basis by the New England States co-ordinating their endeavors with one another so as to promote the best interests with the greatest economy". The commission reached its conclusions unanimously and submitted the following recommendations: a. That a single institution to serve the New England States in the care and treatment of the defective delinquent be established in Massachusetts by the enlargement of the Bridgewater State Farm to meet the needs of the respective states for this purpose; b. That the individual state administrations encourage and finance a more complete use of existing facilities for clinical study and refresher courses in the larger institutions and medical centers so that the advantages of such centers of teaching, treatment, and research may be more readily available to selected institutional personnel; c. That the establishment of a monthly publication to be called *The New England Journal for Institutions* under competent editorial direction and financed by the states be established as a medium of exchange of information and ideas in the field of institution management and care and treatment of patients and inmates; d. That the states be encouraged to place a great deal of emphasis upon a continuing study of ways and means of curtailing institutional commitments by improved preventive work at the pre-institution and community level, and it was also recommended that the governors might wish to recommend that their respective states provide financial assistance so that the Study of the Human Resources of the State of Connecticut which has been carried on by that State in collaboration with Carnegie Institute, Washington, might be expanded to cover sections of the other New England States; e. That steps be taken toward a uniform revision of the residency laws of the individual states to bring about uniformity with respect to eligibility for transfer and commitment for institutional care in mental hospitals and sanatoria, and that the last one year of residency be accepted by the New England States as the period of residency necessary to make such cases eligible for transfer—Harrison C. Greenleaf, Chairman, Special Commission on Institutional Care of the New England Governors' Conference, *New England's Proposals for Consolidation of Institutions*, *The Prison World*, May-June, 1949. (Editor's Note: Mr. Greenleaf, former Commissioner of Institutional Service of the State of Maine, is now Superintendent of the Weeks School, Vergennes, Vermont. The school serves as the Vermont institution for juvenile delinquents ranging in age from ten to nineteen.)

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**Vulnerable Parolees.**—Harvey L. Long, Superintendent of Juvenile Parole Services, Illinois Department of Public Welfare, in an address before the Loyola university institute of social administration, directed attention to the important role of fathers in the control and prevention of delinquent behavior. He referred to a study made by Dr. George A. Lunday, while a graduate student at the University of Chicago, covering 525 boys paroled to the Chicago area from the Illinois State Training School for Boys at St. Charles.

“Among other data gathered and studied was the relationship of boys to their fathers. He compared the pre-institutional experience of boys who failed on parole with that of boys who succeeded on parole. ‘A good relationship between a boy and his father’ before going to the institution was at the top of the list of statistically significant favorable factors among boys who ‘succeeded’ on parole. ‘A good relationship with the mother’ was fifth on the list.”

In addition, Dr. Lunday compiled data on numerous factors in the pre-institutional history, the institutional record, and the parole period of each boy and compared the findings on 262 “successes,” boys who terminated parole in a satisfactory adjustment, with the 263 “failures,” boys whose conduct on parole resulted in return to the school or other official disposition. Of these statistically significant data, the most critical were in the following areas:

*Dependability:* Of those rated at the institutions, “very undependable” to “somewhat reliable,” 68% failed on parole.

*Attitude Toward Supervision:* 60% of those rated “defiant” to “respectful-obedient,” failed on parole: (64% of those rated “very respectful and obedient; always accepts orders willingly,” succeeded on parole).

*Friendliness and Sociability:* 76% of those rated “antagonistic or very shy” to “usually gets along with boys,” failed on parole. (58% of those rated as “very friendly, good mixer” or “agreeable, acceptable,” succeeded on parole.)

Institutional data next in importance, according to Dr. Lunday, were as follows:

*Conduct in Institutions:* 57% of those rated between “always in trouble” and “rarely involved,” failed on parole. (66% of those rated as “never disturbs,” succeeded on parole.) Another measure of “conduct” was time spent in the special cottage with loss of privileges. Of the 356 who had spent time in this cottage, 58% “failed” on parole; 67% of the 169 who had never been in the special cottage “succeeded” on parole.

*Change in General Adjustment in the Institutions:* 65% of the cases rated “definitely worse to some improvement,” failed on parole. (59% of those rated “considerable improvement” to “much emotional insight and growth,” succeeded on parole.)

*Contacts with Home:* (Packages, letters, visits) 65% of the boys whose home contacts were “rare,” or “none,” “failed” on parole. 59% of those whose home contacts were rated “very often,” or “often,” or “average,” succeeded on parole.

*Age When Paroled from Institution:* 81% of the boys who were 14 or less, when placed out, "failed" on parole; 54% of the boys 17 or over, when placed out, "succeeded" on parole.

*Age at Time of Commitment:* 82% of the boys in this group who were 13 or less, at the time of commitment, "failed" on parole; 60% of those who were 16 or over, at the time of commitment, "succeeded" on parole. We should note Dr. Lunday's pre-commitment data on age.

*Age at Time of First Appearance in Juvenile Court:* Of the boys who were 12 or less when they first appeared in court, 63% "failed" on parole; 53% of the group who were over 12 on their first appearance terminated parole with good adjustment.

*Previous Paroles:* Having been on parole from the institution before, one to three times, or never having been on parole before, was of no significance as far as "failure" or "success" was concerned.—WELFARE BULLETIN, Illinois State Department Public Welfare, August, 1949.

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**Research in Racial and Cultural Relations**—The third quarterly bulletin of the Inventory of Research in Racial and Cultural Relations has recently been published by the University of Chicago's Committee on Education, Training and Research in Race Relations and the American Council on Race Relations. The purposes of the Inventory are to aid those who are engaged in research, in action programs and in policy making in the field of intergroup relations to become better informed about the progress of knowledge and to cooperate more effectively with one another. The reports of research contained in this Bulletin, like the contents of the previous issues, are based on replies to questionnaires and abstracts of published studies. The Inventory describes completed, on-going and planned research since January 1946. When the backlog of publications since 1946 has been covered, the Bulletin expects to confine itself to and keep abreast of current publications. Requests for schedules for reporting of research planned, under way or completed should be sent to the office of the Committee at 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago 15, Illinois. Subscription to the Inventory is invited at the annual rate of \$3.50 (postpaid in the U. S.) for four Bulletins. The price of single copies is \$1.00. Orders should be placed with the American Council on Race Relations, 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago 15, Illinois. *From a current release by Louis Wirth, Chairman of the Committee on Education, Training and Research in Race Relations, University of Chicago.*