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THE JUVENILE COURT MOVEMENT IN OHIO

F. R. AUMANN*

Although the juvenile court is a comparatively new addition to the judicial system of this country, the forces which gave rise to it may be traced to the period of the industrial revolution and the humanitarian movement which followed. In that period of ferment there was a demand for factory legislation favorable to women and children; a movement to abolish slavery; the beginnings of the movement against strong drink and for the reform of the adult criminal. In this bewildering array of competing interests, the cause of the juvenile offender was lost sight of. Consequently, the problem was not given the serious consideration it merited for a long time.

In 1869, Massachusetts1 broke new ground in this field in a law providing for the presence of a visiting agent or officer of the state board of charity at the trial of juvenile cases.2 This officer was to be notified of every criminal action against a child under sixteen and was to have an opportunity to investigate their cases, attend their trials, protect their interests, and make such recommendations to the judge as might seem best.

In 1870, a law was passed requiring separate hearings for the trial of juvenile offenders in Suffolk County. (Boston.) In 1872, this requirement was extended to the police, district and municipal courts of the state. The governor was also authorized to commission as “trial justices of juvenile offenders,” such number of justices of the peace as the public interest and convenience might require. In 1877, a law was passed which not only authorized separate trial of children’s cases, but also used the term “session for juvenile offenders”

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1In 1825, the so-called House of Refuge was established in New York, based on the principle that a child guilty of an offense should be kept apart from the adult criminal. In 1828, Pennsylvania established a similar institution and in 1847 Massachusetts followed suit.

2Although the systematic development of the idea of the juvenile court has taken place in this country, various European countries early recognized the desirability of differentiating the trials of adult criminals and youthful offenders. See H. H. Lou, Juvenile Courts in the United States, pp. 14-15. For the present situation in European countries see p. 23, ibid.
of which session a separate docket and record was kept. In 1877, New York passed a somewhat similar law.

Similar measures for the special handling of juvenile cases in criminal courts were adopted in a number of states. It was not until 1899, however, that a juvenile court as we now know it, was set up. In that year statutes were enacted in Illinois and Colorado providing for juvenile courts. In July, 1899, under the authority of the Illinois law, the Chicago Juvenile Court technically called the Juvenile Court of Cook County, was established. While the Illinois law was chiefly a codification of the existing law of the state plus some additional provisions from the laws of other states, it introduced one idea of outstanding importance. The gist of this idea was, that the child who broke the law was not to be regarded as a criminal, but as a ward of the state, subject to the care, guardianship, and control of the juvenile courts.

In granting a special treatment to the child, a decisive departure was made from the traditional point of view towards criminal justice which was characterized by the theories of retribution, of determent, and of law as an inflexible body of rules. Common law theory contemplated the offender as a free moral agent, who having before him the choice to do right or wrong, chose to do wrong. Justice was rendered by imposing upon this willful offender a penalty exactly corresponding to his crime. The crime was classified but the criminal was not.

3Laws of Massachusetts (1869), ch. 143; (1870), ch. 359; (1872), ch. 358; (1877), ch. 210; (1878), ch. 196; (1880), ch. 129. 4Laws of New York (1877), ch. 248. 5Laws of Illinois (1899), p. 131; Laws of Colorado (1899), ch. 136. 6That proceedings constituted under juvenile court acts and other statutes, are not criminal, has been frequently asserted by the courts. The Illinois Supreme Court in discussing this point said: “Our statute and those of a similar character, treat children coming within their provisions as wards of the state to be protected, rather than as criminals to be punished and their purpose is to save them from the possible effects of delinquency and neglect liable to result in their leading a criminal career.” Lindsay v. Lindsay, 257 Ill. 328, 333. See also Mill v. Brown, 31 Utah 473, 481; Commonwealth v. Fisher, 213 Pa. St. 48, 54. A good discussion of the nature of the juvenile court is found in the case of Januszewski (196 Fed. 123). 7Bernard Flexner in discussing this point asserts that the juvenile courts represent a growth in legal theory, rather than a departure from it, although their methods in dealing with children are for the most part unknown to common-law procedure or to chancery procedure. See Legal Aspects of the Juvenile Court by Bernard Flexner and Reuben Oppenheimer, p. 21, U. S. Children's Bureau Publications, No. 99 (1922).

The classification of the criminal, that is the juvenile offender, which came in the wake of the juvenile court movement was prompted not only by motives looking toward “social justice” but by expediency as well. Studies made of the criminal brought out several important facts which had been previously ignored. They were: (1) the fact that criminals in many cases enter upon their career
The spirit of social justice which gave rise to the juvenile court would have none of these things. A correct treatment of crime and delinquency from the new approach supplements the orthodox criminal law and procedure with help from scientific sources, particularly from medical sciences, and those sources which deal with human behaviour, such as biology, sociology, and psychology.

Consequently much of the evidence used in the Juvenile Court is taken from outside of the court by court officials, and is based in great part on these sciences of human behaviour plus the observations of a trained worker. This is quite different from the orthodox method, where evidence is presented and arguments are made by opposing attorneys before a judge who decides each case according to established principles on the legally admissible evidence of the witnesses. The tendency in the juvenile court is towards a more human emphasis and requires a more liberal procedure in transacting the business of the courts. In the course of time, this procedure of crime at an early age; (2) the fact that imprisonment of youthful offenders in the general penal institution served no good purpose. Instead of deterring them from future criminal acts, it had the effect of encouraging them by placing them in close contact with the hardened criminal in a virtual "school of crime." To successfully cope with crime, the youthful offenders must be intelligently dealt with. An intelligent treatment would provide at once for a different method of punishment than incarceration with hardened adult prisoners. The youthful offender presenting a special problem, required a special solution.

Roscoe Pound speaking in connection with this said: "The fundamental theory of our orthodox criminal law has gone down before modern psychology and psychopathology. The results are beginning to be felt," p. 588, Criminal Justice in Cleveland, The Cleveland Foundation (1922).

"Scientific diagnostic study as a regular science for delinquents and for a court began in the juvenile court in Chicago in 1909. This work which was started and continued under the name of the Juvenile Psychopathic Institute, was soon perceived to have much wider bearing and usefulness than study of merely psychopathic cases; the cases of quite normal offenders often justify as much, if not more attention given them for the sake of effective understandings." William Healey, The Practical Value of Scientific Study of Juvenile Delinquents, United States Children's Bureau Publication, No. 96 (1922), p. 7.


The probation officer assumes an important role in this process. Thomas D. Elliot, The Juvenile Court and the Educational System, Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology.

When a court is acting, not as an arbiter of private strife but as the medium of the state's performance of its sovereign duties as parens patriae and promoter of the general welfare, it is natural that some of the safeguards of judicial contests should be laid aside." Edward F. Waite, How Far Can Court Procedure Be Socialized Without Impairing Individual Rights? p. 55, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 97 (1922). See further in this connection, Miriam Van Waters, The Socialization of Juvenile Court Procedure, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 97 (1922). For further comments on this subject see p. 62, ibid.
may affect other courts as well.13

This possibility is increased by the activities of the proponents of the new sociological jurisprudence and by the new point of view which has been developed by this group as to the nature and purposes of law.14 The old approach to these problems had been from the angle of history or legal analysis. This approach which was set forth in the writings of Sir Henry Maine and John Austin15 has been definitely discarded by such legal thinkers as Holmes, Cardozo, and Pound, who are impressed with the idea of orienting law to life.16

Since the establishment of the Chicago court the juvenile court movement has extended throughout the country and to most parts of the world.17 Its rapid spread is one of the most remarkable developments of the American judicial system. Juvenile courts have now been established in most states although not always as independent bodies.18 As a matter of fact, no uniformity exists in the provisions

13"Today the vanguard of thought is recognizing that many of the principles of socialized treatment—such as a study of the characteristics of the individual and the environment in which he lives and constructive probation—are applicable and should be extended gradually to the whole field of criminal justice," p. 13, The Child, the Family, and the Court, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 193 (1929).

14"The main problem to which sociological jurists are addressing themselves today," Dean Pound says, "is to enable and to compel lawmaking and also interpretation and application of legal rules, to take more account, and more intelligent account, of the social facts upon which law must proceed and to which it is applied." Roscoe Pound, Scope and Purpose of Sociological Jurisprudence, Harvard Law Review, Vol. 25, April, 1912, pp. 512-513.


16These men believe that the methods of jurisprudence can be improved by studying the methods of the other social sciences. The test of the law would seem to be coming more and more to be, not the theoretical accuracy of its philosophy but its actual results. "Our philosophy," says Benjamin Cardozo, "will tell us the proper function of the law in telling us the ends the law should endeavor to attain; but closely related to such a study is the inquiry whether law, as it has developed in this subject or that, does in truth fulfill its function—is functioning well or ill. The latter branch is perhaps a branch of social science calling for a survey of social facts rather than a branch of philosophy itself, yet the two subjects converge, and one will seldom be fruitful unless supplemented by the other." "Consequences can not alter statutes but may help to fix their meaning." "We test the rule by its results." B. N. Cardozo, The Growth of the Law, p. 112 (1924); see also O. W. Holmes, The Path of the Law, Harvard Law Review, vol. 10, No. 8 (March, 1897), pp. 467, 468.


18Every state but Wyoming has made special provisions for juvenile courts. For a list of the states which have adopted such courts see H. H. Lou, Juvenile Courts in the United States, p. 24.
made for juvenile courts in the several states, or in the same state for that matter.

Generally speaking, certain features are considered essential for the organization of a juvenile court. These features might be outlined as follows: (1) Separate hearings for children's cases; (2) Informal or chancery procedure, including the use of petition or summons; (3) Regular probation service, both for supervisory care and investigation; (4) Detention separate from adults; (5) Special courts and probation records both legal and social; (6) Provision for mental and physical examination.

The Ohio law strives for these essentials, but has not secured all of them as yet. In Ohio as in most states a judge of some other court is designated as judge of the juvenile court. Courts of common pleas, probate courts, insolvency courts, superior courts, all have jurisdiction in this field. This jurisdiction extends to all delinquent, neglected and dependent minors, and to their parents and guardians, or any person or corporation who in any way contributes to their delinquency, neglect, or dependency. Accordingly, these courts may hear and determine any charge against such persons for any misdemeanor involving the care, protection, education, or comfort of a minor. In several counties, however, juvenile jurisdiction

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19 In 1918 a survey was made of the courts which have authority to hear children's cases involving delinquency or neglect. Of the 2,034 courts reporting only 321 were effectively organized for juvenile work. Specially organized courts served all cities of over 100,000 population, and 70 per cent of the population in cities of 25,000 to 100,000; but only 29 per cent of the population in cities of 5,000 to 25,000. In the rural areas, moreover, only 16 per cent of the population was served. In half of the 48 states less than a fourth of the population was within reach of the courts equipped for children's cases, and in several states no courts with special organization was reported. See pp. 10, 11, 12, Evelina Belden, *Courts in the United States Hearing Children's Cases*, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 65 (1920).


21 The usual practice has been to make juvenile work a specialized part of the work of an existing court. It is only in the larger cities that district agencies for trying children's cases are found. Jurisdiction over juvenile cases is usually made a part of the county court. However, the probate court in Arkansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Missouri, and Kansas; the superior court in Arizona, California, and North Carolina; and the district court in Iowa, Minnesota, and New Mexico, exercise jurisdiction in juvenile cases. See Katherine F. Lenroot, *The Evolution of the Juvenile Court*, 105 Annals of the Amer. Acad. of Pol. and Soc. Sci, pp. 213-23 (1923).

22 See O. G. C. sec. 1639.

23 The Juvenile Court age throughout the United States varies from 16 to 18 years. In Ohio the age is 18 years.

24 Providing they are not inmates of a state institution or any institution incorporated under the laws of the state for the care and correction of delinquent, neglected, and dependent children.
is conferred upon the common pleas judge who is elected to the division of domestic relations.\textsuperscript{25}

Under the Ohio law the juvenile judge and no one else, may hear children's cases. When a minor under eighteen is arrested he must be taken directly before that judge. If by chance, the child is brought before a justice of the peace, or a police court judge, he must be transferred immediately to the juvenile court.\textsuperscript{26} Whenever possible the county commissioners are required to provide a special room for these cases.\textsuperscript{27} An especial attempt is made to hold them in a different place than where the usual criminal cases are held.

In arresting children under eighteen years, officers are required to avoid incarceration if possible. In such cases, they are required to accept the written promise of some reputable person, usually the child's parent or guardian to be responsible for the presence of the child in court at the proper time.\textsuperscript{28} In passing on the future of the child at the trial, probation is made a very important factor.\textsuperscript{29}

Not only does the Ohio law safeguard the trial of children but it makes special provision for their detention.\textsuperscript{30} Accordingly, the county commissioners are required to provide a suitable place as a "detention home" for delinquent, or neglected minors.\textsuperscript{31} In counties which have a population exceeding forty thousand, the juvenile judge may appoint a superintendent and matron to take care of the home and the children detained there. These officials are required to meet certain standards of fitness for the position. They must be particularly qualified as teachers of children. In administering the affairs of the

\textsuperscript{25}O. G. C. sec. 1639.
\textsuperscript{26}O. G. C. sec. 1659.
\textsuperscript{27}O. G. C. sec. 1649.
\textsuperscript{28}O. G. C. sec. 1648.
\textsuperscript{29}O. G. C. sec. 1652.
\textsuperscript{30}A child under eighteen years of age coming under the custody of the court continues to be the ward of the state until twenty-one years old unless committed to the care of the Department of Welfare, or some institution certified by it, with permission to place the child in a foster home for adoption purposes. O. G. C. sec. 1643; Opinions of the Atty. Gen. (1920), 1009.
\textsuperscript{31}Consideration of the use of boarding homes for children as places of detention is just beginning in Ohio. In one populous county of the state, many of the delinquent juvenile and court children pass from the detention home into boarding homes, or go directly to boarding homes after the court hearing. They are tried out in normal home environments with considerable sympathy and patience before industrial school sentences are imposed, if environment has seemed to be their chief difficulty. In Canton, the Juvenile Court has selected an experienced and well known foster home that has boarded boys for years. With this family the court is placing their problem boys for observation and a chance to make good before conferring a court sentence. P. 69, Esther McClain, \textit{Child Placing in Ohio}, Division of Charities, Department of Public Welfare, Columbus, Ohio, March, '1928.
home, the delinquent children are kept separate from the dependent children insofar as it is possible.\textsuperscript{32} Wide powers are given the juvenile court to treat dependent, or neglected children as well as delinquent children. Such children may be committed to any one of a number of suitable institutions or persons.\textsuperscript{33} Strict rules govern the practice of committing children to the care and custody of an institution, association, or to the state.\textsuperscript{34} For the purpose of information and cooperative supervision, the juvenile court is required to report monthly to a division of the state welfare department the names of children committed to institutions and individuals. This report does not include children coming under the supervision and custody of the court but permitted to remain with their parents or guardians.\textsuperscript{35}

At the present time, the work of the Juvenile Court in Ohio is greatly aided by other agencies. For instance sixty-three of the eighty-eight counties of the state have a county organization for the

\textsuperscript{32}O. G. C. sec. 1670.
\textsuperscript{33}Eighteen counties in the state have no public or private institution or organization to do this work. Consequently it remains for the Juvenile Court to do it. Miss McClain of the State Department of Welfare in discussing this feature said: “The greatest need today in child placing in the state is the need for standardization of this work by the juvenile courts. Further developments of county child welfare boards with a competent social worker in charge, is anticipated in these counties to which the courts may turn for placing service. “Being continuous boards, the child is not affected or lost sight of through political changes as has often happened when his welfare and control rested completely with the court.” Esther McClain, \textit{Child Placing in Ohio}, Division of Charities, State Department of Welfare, Columbus, Ohio, March, 1928, p. 47.

\textsuperscript{34}Children may be committed to (1) a suitable state or county institution; (2) to a reputable citizen or training or industrial school; (3) to a duly authorized association for caring for dependent, neglected or dependent children; or (4) to a private or public hospital. A child committed to an institution for permanent care becomes a ward, subject to the sole and exclusive guardianship of such institution. Such agency may place the child in a family home and it must be made party to any proceeding for the adoption of a child and may assent to the adoption. The individual to whose care the child is committee, may not consent to adoption, however, without further order of the court. All associations receiving children under the juvenile court act are subject to supervision by the State Department of Welfare. There are some ninety-five child-caring organizations in the State of Ohio. These organizations not only undertake to find and investigate boarding houses and recommend them to the state for license approval or disapproval but tend to function more broadly as community support is given and case working methods are employed. See O. G. C. sec. 1653. Also Esther McClain, \textit{Child Placing in Ohio}, Division of Charities, Department of Public Welfare, Dec., 1928, p. 49.

\textsuperscript{35}O. G. C. sec. 1672. For a good discussion of this whole topic, see Mary M. Leete, \textit{The Children's Bureau of Cleveland, A Study of the Care of Dependent Children in Cleveland}, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 177 (1927).
care of dependent children.38 Eight counties out of the sixty-three that have some form of public child-care organization aside from the juvenile court, have a non-institutional plan, each with a social worker or placing agent in charge of the case work and child placing, some operating with, others without, a receiving home. In each case foster homes free or boarding, are the medium for child-care and adjustment.37

Another agency which cooperates with the various Juvenile Courts of Ohio is the Bureau of Juvenile Research of the State Department of Welfare, which is maintained for the purpose of studying the problem child. The Ohio law as noted provides that all minors who in the judgment of the juvenile court require institutional care and guardianship shall be wards of the state, and shall be committed to the care and custody of the State Department of Welfare.38 The Bureau of Juvenile Research was established primarily in the terms of the law “for the purpose of mental, physical, and other examination inquiry, or treatment” of children admitted to the guardianship of the state. The law also authorized the receipt for observation from “any public institution other than a state institution, or from a private charitable institution having legal custody” of the child.39
The Bureau receives its cases from three sources: The Department of Welfare may assign to the Bureau any child committed to its guardianship; Juvenile Courts may commit directly to the Bureau any cases upon which expert diagnosis is desired; children of county homes, orphanages, hospitals, schools, or private homes may be brought to the Bureau of examination and advice concerning their care, education and medical status. Up to date, it would seem that the Bureau has not realized its fullest possibilities; neither have Juvenile Courts used it to the best advantage. There are other psychiatric clinics in Ohio, however, which the Juvenile Courts may and do use to some extent.

In addition to their judicial duties, juvenile courts in Ohio have certain duties of a strictly administrative character to perform as well. Their principal duties in this connection are the administration of the mother's pension law. In 1913, Ohio enacted a Mother's Pension Law and provided that it should be administered by the juvenile court. This law made it possible for the court upon application to give aid for the support of children to women whose husbands are dead, permanently disabled, prisoners, or deserters. In the case of deserters, the desertion must be for a period of three years. The family in all cases, must have a two years' residence in the county granting assistance. The maximum allowance is $35 for the first child

the problem cases without the necessity of an extended commitment to the Bureau itself. P. 407, Fifth Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare, Columbus, Ohio (1926).

For criticism of the work of the Bureau of Juvenile Research and recommendations, see Report of the Joint Committee on Economy in Public Service, Part V, pp. 18-24. This report is the result of the study of state administrative agencies made by a joint legislative committee of the Ohio General Assembly during 1927-28-29.

Besides the Bureau of Juvenile Research which maintains both traveling and stationary clinics, there are psychiatric clinics at Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Hamilton, Massillon and Toledo, of a public and private character, available for the examination of children. In Canton there is a city clinic. In Cincinnati there is the clinic of the Hamilton County Court of Domestic Relations; the Neuro-psychiatric Clinic at the Medical Dispensary of the United Jewish Social Agencies; the Psychopathic Institute of the Jewish Hospital; and the Central Clinic. In Cleveland, there is the Behaviour Clinic of the Day Nursery, and Free Kindergarten Association; the Child Guidance Clinic; the Mental Hygiene Department of Mt. Siani Hospital; the Neuro-psychiatric Clinic of the Red Cross; the Neuro-psychiatric Department of Lakeside Hospital; and the Psychiatric Clinic of St. Luke's Hospital. In Hamilton, there is a Mental Hygiene Clinic; in Massillon, the Mental Hygiene Clinic of the Massillon State Hospital; and in Toledo, there is the Mental Hygiene Clinic in conjunction with the Toledo District Nurses' Association. See pp. 21-22, List of Psychiatric Clinics for Children in the United States, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication, No. 191 (1929).

and $10 for each other child not eligible for age and schooling certificates. Vesting this function in the Juvenile Court has not proved altogether satisfactory.48

Up to date, the juvenile court in Ohio has not realized its fullest possibilities. Although the ideas underlying the juvenile court movement have been adopted quite generally throughout the state, that does not mean that they have been put into effective operation. Many rural communities and small towns throughout the state have no facilities for dealing with children in need of the protection that a juvenile court can give. Even in many of the larger cities, the juvenile court lacks an adequate staff and the means for a careful, systematic study of the child. Results are obtained through the method of trial and error instead of through scientific study followed by treatment adapted to the needs discovered.

As the fundamental relationship between juvenile delinquency and crime in general becomes more apparent, more attention will necessarily have to be directed to this still neglected field. More of the money and energy now expended in maintaining and perfecting the costly apparatus for dealing with the adult criminal will be increasingly devoted to getting at the roots of criminal behavior as the public finds itself blocked in dealing successfully with such behavior. When that time comes, the necessity for organizing our juvenile court system on an effective basis will be realized, and we may then expect to find it given the same consideration and attention as are the other courts, with regards to organization, personnel, and working facilities in general.

48For example the Akron Bureau of Municipal Research in a study made of the public welfare activities of Summit County in 1920 recommended that this function be transferred from the Juvenile Court to a proposed County Welfare Department. See Public Welfare Activities of Summit County, Bureau of Municipal Research, Akron, Dec., 1920 (Manuscript).