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THE ONLY-CHILD DELINQUENT CONTRASTED WITH DELINQUENTS IN LARGE FAMILIES

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Dr. G. Stanley Hall is reported to have once said that being an only child was a disease in itself. It is not surprising that many writers have commented upon the predicament of the only child. Fenton declared that *a priori* one may expect all only children to be problems. Bohannon studied 380 only children and found them below the average in health, less regular in school attendance, and deficient in the spirit of group play. He noted that they preferred adults and younger playmates and they were noted for peculiarities, precociousness and selfishness. Goodenough and Leahy studied 41 cases of only children and found them slightly more negativistic, nervous, fearful, subject to food fads, sleep disturbances, and temper tantrums. On the other hand, these observers found that they presented considerably less sex misconduct.

Fenton discovered in his group of 34 children fewer symptoms than in any other group as well as a greater tendency to leadership. In a study of 75 college students who were only children little difference was found except that in class they were above the average. Anne Ward reported in the Smith College Studies in Social Work a group of 100 cases of only children and found them showing definitely less truancy, stealing and lying. Despite the younger age level of the only children there

was less enuresis, but more food fads, nail biting, restlessness, overactivity, and poor school work. The only children were less popular and cried more. The family situation in 48% of the cases, however, showed little or no social activity, and it is difficult to see why the above factors should be due merely to the only child factor.

Out of a group of 300 delinquent boys at the New York State Training School for Boys at Warwick, N. Y., a group of 37 only children were taken for the purpose of the present study. We do not suggest that there is any necessary connection between the status of only child and delinquency, but wish to find in what respects the only child might differ from the child coming from large families. The number of our only children represented 12 per cent of the total. Whether this percentage is larger or smaller than the general population, we have no precise means of knowing, but Fenton obtained 73 out of 512 college students which is 14 per cent, approximately the same ratio as we report.

This study has been based completely upon records gathered in the outline case work of an institution for delinquents. These case studies included a social history, initial psychiatric interview, psychological studies, medical examinations and histories, neurolog-

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ical examinations, and chronological, institutional, and parole histories. It is obvious that these records were not written by one person. Each boy may have been studied by as many as a dozen people with differing backgrounds, but they were all working for the same thing and under the same instructions. And those parts of the records upon which most reliance was placed for the purpose of this study, the social history and the psychiatric reports, were drawn up respectively by graduates of schools of social work, who in spite of differences of local approach have a fairly uniform attitude, and somewhat similar training, and by psychiatrists, who while they might disagree over the genesis and significance of the symptoms elicited, are in agreement in recognizing their existence.

The subjects of this study were selected from the total institutional case load on a basis chiefly of the superiority of records. The sample was so selected as to allow for the same ratio of negro and white in the study as in the institution, and for such factors as seasonal variation, etc. It is recognized that amplitude of study may denote seriousness of problem, but this is a selective factor which cannot be discounted, and may have had an unknown effect upon our findings. Three hundred records were studied, and from these were chosen the two groups now under review.

As a preliminary to the study, a chart was constructed which was largely a listing of all the personality traits and all the factors in the life experience of the delinquents, their parents and

siblings, which might be of any significance in the causation or description of delinquency. Each of the records was then read. Wherever a trait or factor mentioned in the chart, appeared in the record, it was indexed. It may be mentioned that each of the records are read twice independently by the authors, and that the differences in the indexing were then gone over. The statistical treatment was done by Hollerith technique, and we have accepted differences of over 5 per cent as significant.

It should be stated that the correlations were determined before there was any attempt to theorize. When an association was found, then appeal was taken to the case material to see what the association meant and how it could be explained. For reasons inherent in the nature of our subject matter, its complexity, the fact that our material does not cover too thoroughly the first few years of our subject's lives, the findings are presented as descriptive rather than as causally related. The contrast of the only children with those from families of five or more children, it is hoped, will present a more complete picture of the situation. The causes of the differences we do not know, and they may vary for each individual case. The case material is presented as illustrative, and not as an example of proof by story telling.

It will naturally occur to the reader that the age factor might be of some importance in determining the symptomatology of the two groups of delinquents here contrasted. A younger group of boys would be expected to show less aggressiveness in their de-

linquent offenses, less leadership, and probably also more indications of emotional dependence and emotional instability. The average age of our 37 only children was found to be 14 years. Our control group of 133 boys coming from homes of 5 children and over showed an average of 14 years and 6 months. It is to be noted, however, that of our 37 cases, 33 were negro and only 4 were white, and that the median age level of our total negro group was 13 years and one month; whereas that of the white group was 15 years and no months. Hence the factor of earlier age of commitment to Warwick for negro boys enters into our younger age figure.

In considering our case material, we must state that the percentage of negro boys at Warwick school has been in the neighborhood of 58 per cent. Of the total group of 300 cases from which this study is derived the percentage ratio of negro-white has been identical with that of the general admission rate. It is interesting, therefore, to note that 33 of our 37 only children were negro, suggesting that the racial factor is a special factor in this group and that it is likely that differences in symptomatology may be ascribed to it.

If it is also realized that there is a tendency for negro boys to be committed on the basis of less serious offenses than white boys, that fewer of the negro boys have had previous institutional experience than the white boys, that the number of probationary periods is fewer for the negro than for the white, it becomes clear that there is a selective factor in commitment by justices of the Children's Court. This

selection is not a matter of race prejudice. It may be accounted for by the comparative paucity of resources which may be used for the negro problem child, and the difficulty in treatment because of the relative instability of the negro home. At the time of this study Warwick was the only institution available to which Protestant negro delinquents were committed; and there are few Catholic and Jewish negroes. In New York City social agencies which will accept negro families for intensive case work are few. The general economic level of the negro family in New York City is lower than the white, as substantiated by the higher percentage of negro families on relief. It is almost true that when a negro boy gets into court on a charge of delinquency, there is little that can be done with him except to institutionalize him, and Warwick is almost the only institution which is available.

The objection may be made that our group of only children is atypical, since 33 of the 37 are negro, and 19 (all negro) of the 37 are illegitimate. In the general population these relationships do not hold true. It might be answered that the only child does not live in a vacuum. He is part of a social group, lives in a social milieu, and adjusts to and in terms of a social background. There is nothing absolute about the concept of the only child. It might be said that there is no only child; but that there are only children. An existing situation has been taken and upon analysis, it has been found that the only child situation is the product of social factors, and that many of the differences between the only

child and the child of the large family are attributable to racial, economic, neighborhood and familial elements.

But a finding of this sort is not restricted to delinquents. It is as much operative for non-delinquent only children. That they are only children does not exempt them from the ebb and flow of socio-economic forces. In all probability many of the differences revealed by a comparison of the studies of the different investigators may be attributed to the social differences of the groups from which the only children came. Our findings are presented as valid for the groups studied. The make-up of the groups is the responsibility not of the investigators, but of the whole complex situation which resulted in the delinquency of the subjects of this paper.

As typical as it may be, the fact remains that an overwhelmingly large proportion of the only children are negro, and that there is a reverse disproportion, although not to the same extent, in the case of children from families of five or more. If there were no factors involved relating to that complex which we are referring to, for the sake of brevity, as negro and white, it might be expected that the proportion of negro and white would be the same for the only children as for the children from large families, and this proportion would not vary from that found in our delinquent group before distribution into size of family. The difference in the size of family must be laid to something neither natural or voluntary, which would restrict the production of offspring. If the fertility of negro families were less than that

of white families, the difference could be so explained. But as a matter of fact, according to the figures of the United States Census for 1930, the negro family is larger than the white. There is no reason to believe that the knowledge and practice of contraceptive methods is more widespread among the negro group from which our delinquents come than among the corresponding white group. The explanation of this difference lies at least partially in the fact that our negro only children come from relationships which are much more unstable, much more broken by desertion or separation, or which were never more than casual in their totality than do the whites. Our white family relationships are more stable, hence there is a larger number of children. Apparently, if the marital relationship in the economic level with which we are dealing is not interrupted by the absence, for whatever reason, of one of the partners, there is a tendency for the number of children to be limited only by the fertility of the partners and the length of time the relationship has endured. If our negro delinquents came from families as stable as the white groups, it is probable that the number of their siblings would be equal to, or greater than the white group. But as they are the product of much less stable relationships, as is evidenced by the differences in illegitimacy, desertion, separation, they provide a larger proportion of only children than would be expected. At least a partial proof of this is seen in the fact that the figures for death of the parents hardly vary for the undifferentiated groups of negroes and

whites, as well as for the group of only children and children from large families.

Of paramount importance is the family setting from which these only children come. What is the stability of the home situation? How many shifts in living arrangements were necessary in these only children? We find that only 6 of our 37 cases lived in a constant and unchanged home situation. Only three of the 37 lived with both their own parents. In studying our general group of 300 cases, we seemed to observe a tendency for a greater variety of home situations to occur in the smaller family groups. Fifteen of these 37 boys were unwanted children and 19 illegitimate. All these facts throw quite a conclusive light upon the marked instability of the homes from which the only children came. Many were only children because they were illegitimate and only offspring of that particular pair of parents.

From the above remarks, it is clear that this group of 37 only children is not to be regarded as a typical exhibition of only children. We could scarcely expect, for example, that 50 per cent of only children would be illegitimate. Hence, we may regard this group as a specially selected group of negro delinquent boys, largely illegitimate, and resulting from much unstable marital or extra-marital relationships, and not to be confused with the more usually considered type of only children from over-affectionate and over-protective parental atmosphere.

Reviewing the symptomatic differences between the two groups as brought out by the Hollerith technique,

we notice first of all that the symptom "emotional immaturity," by which we mean the retention of emotional states or reactions characteristic of an earlier age period, occurs in the only child group to the extent of 45.9 per cent as compared with 34.3 per cent in the contrast group of large families. This would seem to be of greater significance than the mere age difference of the two groups could explain. A very similar symptom called "emotional instability," by which we mean fluctuations of and frequent outbursts of emotion, is more prevalent in the larger family group. Why this should be we have no explanation, unless we can regard "emotional instability" as a social reaction.

Gang activity is much more prevalent, as we would expect, in the large family group than among the only boys (49.2 - 24.3 per cent). It may very well be another manifestation that only children have greater difficulty in making adequate group adjustment to their own age level than children who have learned to get along with others, more or less, in a large family group. We find the symptom, over-aggressiveness, more prevalent amongst the only children (32.4 - 17.1 per cent). At first sight, this would seem to contradict the assumption that only children are less aggressive than children of a large family, but over-aggressiveness is a quality which does not endear anyone to a social group. It is common experience that the over-aggressive child is often the socially insecure child, who is rejected by the group. He is unwilling to follow the leadership of others and it seems to us that this symptom

suggests a survival of a more immature stage of social adjustment.

We find a further corroborative difference in the symptom, seclusiveness. The only child demonstrates this symptom more often than the contrast group (43.2 - 23.8 per cent). Similarly, stealing which is confined to the home is found in the ratio of 59.4 to 19.4 per cent. If we are right in assuming that stealing within the home is evidence of less initiative and less maturity than stealing with the gang, then we can readily accept this as agreeing with the other symptomatic differences cited. Conversely, cooperative stealing, which involves adjustment to a group and its code, demands more of the only child than he can apparently adjust to. At any rate, we find cooperative stealing almost twice as prevalent in the large family group (71.6 - 37.8 per cent). We have defined aggressive stealing as that which demands some degree of courage, such as the attacking of a person or by the breaking in of a building. This, likewise, is much more observed in the large family group (69.4 - 40.5 per cent).

Lying is usually associated with a lack of courage. The child who lies does so to escape the punishment which he fears. To that extent we may suppose that the greater proportion of lying in the only child group (62.1 - 44.9 per cent) supports the picture of the only child as less aggressive and less courageous a delinquent than the child from the large family.

The symptoms which we could quite logically group together as rating opposite of one another; namely, running away and nostalgia, bring out another

aspect of the only child delinquent situation, which differs from that of the contrast group. Running away is twice as prevalent in the first (78.3 - 39.5 per cent), while nostalgia is more common in the latter (20.1 - 5.4 per cent). Despite the wrangling and abuse, the rejection, poverty, alcoholism and confusion of the large family, there is apparently a sufficient emotional security in the home to make the boy wish he were back there. On the other hand, the only children showed the more running away from home and less nostalgia, indicating doubtless that the emotional bond to the home was comparatively weak. Indeed, in some cases it might be said that the child did not have any home at all, but was left largely to the supervision of strangers, as in the case of John T., whose alcoholic uncle left him in the charge of the woman who happened to be living with him at the time.

The symptom, revengefulness, which we define as the excessive tendency to injure others in return for injury to oneself, is another symptom much more prevalent in the large family group (13.4 - 5.4 per cent). Here we have a symptom which is directed against others and indicates a capacity to stand up for one's own rights or else a definite hostility to others, which expresses itself in action. This may be characteristic of a child who is used to battling for his rights in a large family. To that extent, it can be regarded as an evidence of a certain level of social adjustment. In the give and take of family life, there is bitter rivalry between the siblings with injury and retaliation, but in the only child situa-

tion, there is either complete neglect or over-protection, and no one seems to loom up as a possible rival.

What has been said about running away is likewise true of the symptom "staying out," which is more prevalent in the only child group (62.1 - 25.5 per cent). In all probability this symptom is dependent upon the instability of the home and the lack of discipline.

Two symptoms, suspiciousness and temper outbursts, we find occurring with greater frequency in the large family group, the former in the ratio of 14.9 to 5.4 per cent, and the latter in the ratio of 41.7 to 29.7 per cent. Why these symptoms should be more prevalent in the large family group is at first rather difficult to say. The boy who is suspicious of others is doubtless on guard against others, and to that extent the symptom might be regarded as one developing in a group rather than in solitude. As for temper outbursts, these, too, are symptoms directed towards getting one's way or getting attention in a group, but otherwise there seems to be little that we can find in the review of our cases to suggest any more plausible explanation.

Two other symptoms show of greater incidence in a large family group—leadership (28.3 - 18.9 per cent), and

undesirable companions (74.6 - 62.1 per cent). In view of what we have stated above about the better social adjustment of the child from the larger group, this difference is intelligible. To command the respect of other boys, the boy has to learn what will make him popular with the group, as well as what the group wants. This, the only children do not seem to acquire with the same degree of facility. That they do acquire leadership indicates, of course, that even only children get a good deal of social adjustment in the street. What has been said about the gang activity of a large family group applies likewise to the consorting with undesirable companions and seems to fill in with our theory that the boy from the larger family group is more apt to engage in gang activity.

We have discussed only those symptomatic differences which were over 10 per cent and which we considered to be of probable greater significance. Smaller percentages of differences might very easily be eliminated if our contrast groups were of the same size. For a further comparison of the symptomatology in these two groups the reader is referred to the following columns, which give our results in their entirety.

ONLY CHILD GROUP (37)			LARGE FAMILY GROUP (134)	
<i>Symptom</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>% of 37</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>% of 134 Sign. Diff.</i>
Apathy	10	27.0	33	24.6
Assaultive Tendencies	11	29.7	48	35.8
Attention-Getting Behavior	12	32.4	36	26.8
Bravado	8	21.6	29	21.6
Bullying	13	35.1	45	33.5
Carelessness	8	21.6	33	24.6
Cruelty	2	5.4	11	8.2
Daydreaming	6	16.2	15	11.1

ONLY CHILD GROUP (37)			LARGE FAMILY GROUP (134)		
Symptom	No.	% of 37	No.	% of 134	Sign. Diff.
Defiance	7	18.9	24	17.9	
Destructiveness	6	16.2	19	14.1	
Disobedience	22	59.4	70	52.2	
Emotional Immaturity	17	45.9	46	34.3	X
Emotional Instability	12	32.4	64	47.7	X
Enuresis	8	21.6	38	28.3	
Extreme Untidiness	9	24.3	38	28.3	
Fears and Phobias	4	10.8	6	4.4	
Feeding Difficulties	2	5.4	8	5.9	
Forgetfulness	2	5.4	6	4.4	
Gang Activity	9	24.3	66	49.2	X
Guilt Feeling	2	5.4	9	6.7	
Impudence	16	43.2	43	32.0	X
Inferiority Feeling	9	24.3	46	34.3	
Irritability	5	13.5	18	13.4	
Jealousy	—	—	4	2.9	
Lack of Concentration	10	27.0	39	29.1	
Lonesomeness	4	10.8	12	8.9	
Lying	23	62.1	59	44.0	X
Mischievousness	9	24.3	38	28.3	
Nail Biting	11	29.7	29	21.6	
Negativism	14	37.8	40	29.8	
Nostalgia	2	5.4	27	20.1	X
Overactivity	10	27.0	35	26.1	
Overaggressiveness	12	32.4	23	17.1	X
Overdependence	4	10.8	11	8.2	
Overtalkativeness	2	5.4	14	10.4	X
Quarrelsomeness	14	37.8	44	32.8	
Revengefulness	2	5.4	18	13.4	X
Running Away	29	78.3	53	39.5	X
Seclusiveness	16	43.2	32	23.8	X
Sensitiveness	10	27.0	40	29.8	
Heterosexuality	12	32.4	53	39.5	
Homosexuality—active	6	16.2	15	11.1	
Homosexuality—passive	6	16.2	9	6.7	X
Excessive Masturbation	2	5.4	17	12.6	X
Terrifying Dreams	2	5.4	3	3.2	
Staying Out	23	62.1	61	45.5	X
Stealing—aggressive	15	40.5	93	69.4	X
Stealing—cooperative	14	37.8	96	71.6	X
Stealing—furtive	23	62.1	61	45.5	X
Stealing—in home	22	59.4	26	19.4	X
Sullenness	20	54.0	62	46.2	X
Suspiciousness	2	5.4	20	14.9	X
Timidity	9	24.3	35	26.1	
Truancy	29	78.3	101	75.3	
Underactivity	13	35.1	44	32.8	
Temper Outbursts	11	29.7	56	41.7	X
Leadership	7	18.9	38	28.3	X
Undesirable companions	23	62.1	100	74.6	X

The following case records are abstracts of the records of five only children and three boys from large families. They are selected as illustrations of the factors present in the situation of the delinquent boy, and may offer some idea of the contrasting influences in the two types of homes. One can, we think, appreciate that the factors which make for the delinquency are not those factors which distinguish the small family from the large family, but are common to both situations. These factors are specifically neglect, rejection, instability, inadequacy, and inconsistency of discipline, with lack of understanding on the part of parents and parent substitutes.

The case of *Arthur C.* is that of an only negro boy, born October, 1920, and admitted to the Institution November 3, 1932. He was small for his age, but the only striking physical anomaly was extreme dolicocephalism.

Arthur was the issue of a casual relationship of little duration. His father complained that there were at least three other men who might have been responsible, but the court had held that he was the father, and he was ordered to pay \$4 weekly for the support of the child. He was usually in arrears with the payments. From the 6th month of the mother's pregnancy, he had no contact with her.

Arthur's birth is reported to be negative. There is no information concerning his developmental history until the age of three, when his mother was committed to one of the state hospitals with a diagnosis of *Dementia Praecox-Hebephrenic*. She was extremely disoriented and quite deteriorated. It is significant that for years the boy and his grandmother believed that his mother was dead. When the boy was three the grandmother was called to one of the settlement houses and asked to take the boy, because his mother had died. At

that time toilet habits had been established. There was a dietary idiosyncrasy in that the boy refused to eat anything except graham crackers and milk.

The senile grandmother, a native of the British West Indies, was over-religious and had no idea of how to deal with the boy. She wanted him to stay in the house with her all day. The father apparently rejected the boy. He was quite disinterested, and on occasion cruel to him.

The grandmother stated that the boy was very affectionate to her. He would cry easily. When he went out with the boys, it was usually with white boys. He seldom played with them, but usually watched them play. The boys used to call him "football," or "cocoanut head," and would hit him in the head. When this happened, he got other boys, usually smaller than himself to go with him.

He was committed to the institution because of persistent running away and stealing from home. He had been acting in a queer manner, wandering about in his sleep, picking imaginary objects from the bed linen, and calling out to boys in his sleep. He used to fall asleep immediately, and dream that someone was chasing him with a stick. When asked what he dreamed about, he said that a big boy was hitting him on the head.

While at the institution it was noticed that the boy, whose last name was that of his mother, addressed his home letters to himself, rather than use the last name of the father.

"On psychiatric examination at the institution, the following observations were made: Two factors are of great emotional importance to the boy: his head and his mother. He was in tears whenever the interview turned to these. One of the chief reasons for his introversion (highly schizoid, suspected of being psychotic, but is not), and his propensity for reading is the fact that when he is in the company of others he is liable to be teased about his head. So he avoids their company. Of his mother he apparently has little definite informa-

tion. He does not know whether she is alive or dead, and has a vague idea of mental disease. He cannot or will not give any rational reasons for his desertion. He has been faced by personal inferiority and social insecurity all his life."

The boy's I.Q. decreased with successive examinations. From 106 the last test gave an I.Q. of 79.

He was several times placed on parole. All were unsuccessful. His running away did not lessen. The grandmother had no idea of the boy's problems; the father felt that there was nothing wrong with him except that he was a confirmed thief.

During the parole he deserted home 13 times. Each time he stole some money from home. When he took less than one dollar he usually remained out for the greater part of the night. When he took a larger sum, he stayed out the entire night. He was found after closing time in one of the department stores with another boy. They stated that they hoped to take some toys out through the roof. The only explanation the boy gave was that his grandmother refused to let him play with other boys.

His school adjustment was equally bad. His teacher reported:

"Arthur has been very difficult in class. He mumbles a great deal, and the teacher had asked the children about him to write down what he mumbled. The words were 'go to Hell.' He also makes funny noises. He gets down on all fours and jumps around the back of the room."

Typical of his relationships with his father is the following: On his way home from the movies the boy stopped to talk to some friends. The father told him to come along. The boy did not respond quickly. The father struck him in the mouth. The grandmother stated that the father was always cruel to the boy.

In 1937 the boy's mother died, and it was necessary that he be informed of her death. In November, 1937, Arthur was caught with another boy breaking into an apartment. The boy admitted that he had robbed the apartment and

evidenced no particular feeling of guilt or concern. He wished to be taken to the adult prison and to stand trial in the adult court. This was done and the boy was sentenced to a term in the New York City Reformatory.

Analysis

While Arthur was committed to Warwick ostensibly for stealing, this was not the basic problem in his behavior. His running away was chronic, and the stealing occurred during the running away. In this case the question arises as to what the boy was escaping. His home situation was bad, that is true, but there have been boys in equally bad situations who do not run away. The question cannot be answered definitely, but we can surmise that he may have been running away toward the emotional security represented by his mother. The episode of the names would tend to corroborate this. That his behavior was symptomatic cannot be doubted, that it gave him little of the security which is believed to be essential to the normal development of the child is clear. His running away, his seclusiveness, seem to indicate an underlying pathology. His dolico-cephalism would even in the best possible situation have called for careful and sympathetic treatment. In the environment in which he found himself, first with his mother, who was beginning to show psychotic behavior, and then with the senile grandmother, and the father who was not interested in him, there was no factor which would prevent the abnormal development which did take place.

David C., a colored boy, age 13 years. This boy began deserting his home at the age of ten years. He stayed away

over-night on more than a dozen occasions, the longest absence from home being about ten or twelve days. On one occasion he stole three dollars from his mother's pocketbook and with this money bought a pair of skates and went to the movies. Once he stole his mother's clothes and sold them. He was accused of attempting to open a store door with a bunch of keys.

Family History

The boy's mother was a not-unattractive negress, described by the probation officer as intolerant in her opinions. She was matter-of-fact and not emotional. The opinion of the probation officer was that she was impatient with the boy and had no compunction about putting him away. She met the father secretly on two occasions at the age of fifteen, when the latter was about twenty years of age. She declared that at that age she did not know "the facts of life," and that his birth was a mistake. She admitted hating the child at first, but later on came to love him. Three years later she married another negro but lived with him only a year, saying that she could not and did not try to get along with him. At the age of twenty-five she lived with a third negro as a common-law wife for four years, but they separated because of David. She has been earning about ten dollars a week as a factory worker, filling bottles with cherries. Until David was three years of age she lived with her father and stepmother in North Carolina. Her methods of disciplining the boy were chiefly confined to whipping him with a strap after getting him to undress, attempting to reason with him and depriving him of such pleasures as the movies. She thought that he ran away after stealing money from her and was afraid of punishment.

Little is known of David's true father. He was known to be fond of women, and David's mother met him on only two occasions.

Her first husband liked David but later came to dislike him because of his frequent desertions. His mother said that the boy respected both men she lived with.

Neighborhood

The boy grew up in a poor negro environment near the Lexington Avenue Elevated.

Personal History

He was born a full-term child in North Carolina and definitely unwanted at birth. He was breast-fed until at the age of nine months he contracted diphtheria. It was at about this time that he began to walk. The first teeth developed at seven months. He was always an active baby. At the age of seven months he contracted whooping cough. There was no history of other diseases. Until the age of two years he slept with his mother. Toilet habits were developed at the age of three or four. During childhood he bit his nails despite his mother's scolding. He had no speech disorders and was right-handed. He was an easy-going, jolly youngster, who got along with other children quite well. He never had temper tantrums according to his mother. He was known to have been placed in numerous foster homes during his life. With one of these—a childless married woman—he seems to have been fairly happy.

At school he was remembered as a sullen, non-social, lazy, and disobedient boy. After school he was left to his own resources until 5:30 in the evening when his mother returned from work. In June, 1933, he started going to a parental school for truants, and after some months his behavior was reported as improved. However, his truancy was resumed upon his return to public school. He attended in all nine different public schools, at which his conduct was usually rated about "D." He was found to have an I.Q. of 90.

His recreational activities centered about playing marbles and basketball. He participated in the usual street games and was always fond of the movies. For several years he belonged to a boy scout troop, but did not seem to have been very active in it. He never had an allowance but was given money regularly for movies and church activities.

He had no sexual experience with girls as far as we know and masturbation was not observed by the mother who warned him against kissing or playing around with girls.

Examination and Course in Warwick

He was a well-developed, well-nourished negro boy who was dull, moody, resentful and apathetic. The only important physical finding was a chronic infection of the tonsils. His psychometric examination showed an I.Q. of 85, placing him in the grade of dull normal intelligence. He gave the appearance of melancholia at times and seemed subdued and inhibited. He did not discuss any of his difficulties frankly, but explained his running away as being due to the fact that his mother often beat him. He seemed to have a marked feeling of rejection. In his school classes at Warwick he seemed a quiet hard-working boy. He consorted mostly with the weaker boys and seemed well liked by all. He showed no interest in reading. His behavior offered nothing remarkable. He was paroled on January 27, 1936. He was returned on February 16, 1937, for violation of parole, in that he was caught entering a private home of another boy. After being in the institution for another year, he was paroled March, 1938.

Analysis

Here is an only boy whose delinquency is quite clearly related to an absence of adequate parents. His father has at no time shown any interest in him or his mother, so that he can be said to have had no genuine home background. His mother seems to have consistently rejected him and given him very little affection. Her sexual irregularities intensified his social insecurity. His frequent change of home and school have served to intensify this insecurity. Like most of the other only boys he seems to have

manifested very little aggressiveness, and although involved in trying to enter a home he seems to have had as yet few aggressive burglaries or robberies in his achievements.

William B. was born April 17, 1922. At the time of admission to the School he was twelve. Had been before the courts twice, both times for deserting his home, and had previously been confined to the Parental School. His mother and step-father claimed that the boy would suddenly absent himself from home and would stay away for weeks at a time. They maintained that he stole to support himself away from home. At school he was a confirmed truant, was noisy and disobedient.

His I.Q. was 80, E.Q. 79. His developmental history was essentially negative, except that he was breast-fed until the age of 3 weeks, after which he was fed by bottle. He was weaned at 6 months. Teething occurred at age of one year, talking and walking at one year. There was a persistent enuresis.

William was the issue of a casual relationship. His father disappeared upon learning of Mrs. B's pregnancy. When the boy was six months old he was left with his grandmother. He remained with her until he ran away from his grandmother in order to reach New York, where his mother was.

After the mother had been in New York for about a year, she met and married the boy's step-father, who was employed in the Civil Service. Mr. B had been divorced. His former wife and young daughter lived near the B's. Both Mr. and Mrs. B continued to work and their joint income was slightly in excess of \$2,000 per year, far larger than the usual income of the negro family in New York.

The boy's childhood in New York was marked by his domination of his playmates, who were all older than he, his negativistic reaction to punishment, his maladjustment at school and his constant running away from home. The first episode occurred after he had been taken to see "Tom Sawyer." He was punished for something, and then

left home, leaving a note telling his mother to leave a light in the window if it were all right for him to return home. In spite of the fact that there was no need for him to do so, William insisted on working after school. His behavior on leaving home was marked by first making a gift to his mother. The mechanism was so regular that his mother dreaded the boy's making a gift to her on any occasion but her birthday or Christmas.

In spite of the fact that both his mother and step-father tried to cooperate with the social worker and to furnish the boy with the necessary emotional security, there were some indications that their attitude was rejective. The mother was aware that the boy was a possible threat to her security in marriage. The step-father was in the habit of urging the boy's friends to make fun of him because of his unsatisfactory showing in school. His method of punishment was that of whipping. William first learned that his step-father was not his real father when he was told so by a judge of the children's court. This was a definite shock to him. Prior to this there was rivalry for preferment between William and Mrs. B's daughter. The children would dispute as to whose father Mr. B. was.

At the Institution William made an excellent adjustment. He was regarded as a hard worker and a rather responsible person. He was involved in one disciplinary incident. One morning it was reported that he had been from bed to bed, inserting his penis into the mouths of other boys. It is, however, likely that this episode was more a practical joke than anything else, at least consciously, to judge from the attitude of the boys who were awakened, and by the fact that fellatio was not attempted.

While the boy was at Warwick the social worker continued close contact with Mr. and Mrs. B., attempting to have them realize the cause of William's delinquency, and also to have them move away from the high delinquency area of Harlem. A relative of Mr. B., a minister, and of some de-

gree of wealth, living in an almost exclusively white community of suburban New York, asked Mr. and Mrs. B. and William to share his home, with the understanding that they would become his heirs. Mr. and Mrs. B. moved to the Reverend F's home, and William was paroled to go to school.

For a short time things went well. Mr. and Mrs. B. were accepted by the community. William found a group of white playmates and did fairly well at school. He had, however, wanted a bicycle for Christmas. One day his mother noticed a bicycle in their yard. William, upon questioning, admitted that he had stolen it from the yard of a white family. He was made to return it. Shortly thereafter he stole another bicycle and ran away. He had gone a very short distance when he was caught. His parents then took him to the Children's Society of the county seat, and asked that he be institutionalized for life. Their attitude was that the boy was no good and that they would be forced to move from the community because of his wickedness. They both said that the boy would never hear from them again.

William was returned to Warwick for violation of parole. Some psychotherapy was attempted, but it was decided that the problem was essentially one of case work. It happened that the boy had never been socialized, had little knowledge of distinction between his property and that of others. It should be noted that the boy did little or no stealing in the institution, was not a member of any predatory gang, and stole when there was no necessity for him to do so. When questioned as to why he took the bicycle, he said that he didn't think he would really get it for Christmas.

At the Institution efforts were made to get William to see that he must work for what he wanted, and to give him greater emotional security. His cottage parents tried to play the role of actual parents. Successful case work relationship was established with his mother and step-father. The first thing attempted was to get them to write to the boy, then to visit him, not only to

see him and thus reassure him of their interest, but also to have them observe how he was treated by the cottage parents.

The parents moved again, this time to a good negro community in suburban New York City. The mother agreed to give up her work, and the step-father was brought to the point of seeing acceptance of William. The boy was re-paroled to them. He has been a successful parolee for the past two years. The stealing and running away have stopped. He is adjusting well at school. A paper route was secured for him, and he has worked regularly after school. A year ago Christmas his step-father presented him with a bicycle.

William's stealing and running away seem to have two roots: a desire to seek security by running away from his parents, and a desire to punish them by running away. He first tried to run away to his mother from his grandmother, and his subsequent running away came at times when he felt most rejected. The bicycle episode is significant in that William's granduncle, being the only colored parson in a white neighborhood, must have been threatened by William, stealing a bicycle. This stealing does not appear to have been based on a desire to possess a bicycle for he was to have received one as a present in a few days. It is possible that, as in the case of his step-sister, he acted out of a sense of rivalry for the affections of his parents to the granduncle. With the necessary emotional security and the undivided attention of his mother, William's delinquencies have ceased.

John T., age 14 years and 4 months, colored, an only child, was sent to Warwick for truancy, staying out late, annoying girls, and running away from home on four different occasions. He was not involved in stealing or more serious delinquency.

Family Background

The father was a colored mill worker, who married the mother at the age of 21. He was a heavy drinker but was considered otherwise stable. After his wife's death, his drinking increased. He abandoned the boy when he was two years of age and his whereabouts are unknown. The father's brother, aged 35, a colored tailor, undertook the boy's upbringing. He was mildly alcoholic, but was promiscuous with women and had at least three different women living with him. In 1930 he "married" a girl 12 years younger than himself. He came to New York City from South Carolina in 1923 and in his work his average wage was about fifteen to twenty dollars a week. The uncle appeared genuinely interested in the boy and declared "that he was all he had to live for." The uncle disciplined him by whippings which were sometimes quite severe. This did not apparently create any fear or hatred of the uncle. At times the uncle's attitude was considered over-protective and he tended to minimize the boy's misconduct. Later when the uncle lost his job, he seemed less inclined to support the boy, particularly after falling in love with his landlady.

The boy's mother died suddenly in 1922. She was only twenty-two years of age and came of tenant farmer stock, accustomed to working in the fields. According to the uncle, the parental relationship seemed to be affectionate and harmonious. Since the death of his mother, the boy does not seem to have any permanent or affectionate mother substitute. Any unfavorable reference to his mother caused the boy to flare up in anger and when the subject of his dead mother was brought up by the psychiatrist tears would frequently appear in his eyes.

The neighborhood in which the boy grew up after coming to New York City was in the crowded tenement section of Harlem. The apartment was overcrowded, dark and dirty. A high delinquency rate characterizes this section of the city, together with marked economic privation. The social worker

on various visits to the home noted a sort of suspicious guilty behavior about the inhabitants, which made him suspect that something illicit was going on, possibly gambling.

Relative Element

John's birth was normal, full-term and not particularly difficult. He was nursed at the breast and presented no eating difficulties. Outside of whooping cough, he seems to have had no serious illness. The uncle was sure that the boy was a wanted child. He began school in New York at the age of six years, but did not care for it. He made complaints that teachers did not like him and acted sternly toward him. Some teachers found him docile and acceptable. His dislike of school is proved by his detention of ten months in the so-called Parental School for Truancy. At the time of his commitment to Warwick he had reached the seventh grade, but was considered to have only borderline intelligence. At Warwick he did not surpass a fourth grade achievement. His chief interests were the movies and playing in the streets with neighborhood boys, with whom he seemed to get along fairly well. He belonged to no organized recreational group. At Warwick he first expressed an interest in his uncle's occupation of tailoring, but later preferred to work on a farm. He seemed to enjoy basketball and was considered a good player. He declared on one occasion that he had sexual experience with a girl before coming to school. He did not appear to have any particular fondness for homosexual activity.

Course in Warwick

Physically the boy presented a certain precocious development without any endocrinopathy, and during his stay he developed a gonorrheal urethritis after an experience of sodomy. It was noted that while working or in active play, the boy seemed quite cheerful and friendly, but when any attempt was made to discuss his problems he became sullen and negativistic. Psychiatric interviews seemed to bore him. In the cottages he had the repu-

tation of being a good worker, but mischievous. On his second return to the institution, he was found to have acquired syphilis and was given injections of neo-arsphenamine. He was obliged to have a room by himself, paid for by his uncle.

Discussion

The factors in this boy's case come out clearly enough. First, the insecurity in the home, caused by the early death of his mother and the desertion of the father, with the inadequate discipline and supervision of his uncle. The latter's sexual promiscuity and excessive beatings acted as additional factors in producing insecurity in the home. His borderline intelligence made school work unattractive to him. The environment with its delinquency rating gave little of constructive value to the boy. The absence of any mother substitute and the attitude of the uncle made his emotional insecurity the greater. It is apparent that the fact of the boy being an only child was not in itself of any determining importance in causing his delinquency but rather the instability of the home without understanding or proper ideals. These rendered him all the more susceptible to the challenge and practice of the gang of the neighborhood.

The case of *Michael S.* differs greatly from that of the other only children in our group. Michael is white, of a stable family relationship, his parents had been married in 1918 and were both alive and living together rather harmoniously at the time of his confinement. The boy is of high intelligence—I. Q. 128, but his school achievement was considerably below his intelligence level. While the family was certainly not wealthy, the father had always made enough money as a butcher to permit them to live nicely and to save.

Mr. S. was born in Austria in 1885. He was apprenticed to a butcher, and followed this trade both in Austria and in America, where he came in 1911. As a child and young man he was extremely attached to his mother. It is likely that Mrs. S. was a mother substitute. Although there was little difference in their ages, she was born in 1883, she looked twenty years older than he. She was a widow at the time of their marriage, and had four children, who were already grown, by her previous marriage. Mr. S. was unstable and emotionally immature, and over-protective, both of Michael and Mrs. S. It is interesting to note that Mr. S. stuttered until he was 12, and that with the death of his father the stuttering ceased.

Michael was born May 5, 1920. His birth was normal. However, he did not talk until he was 4 years old, and did not walk until he was 4. His walking was not a matter of disability, but of preference. Michael was able to walk when he was two, but his parents preferred to carry him about. Toilet habits were not established until he was 6 and a half years old. The boy slept with his mother until then. Thumb sucking, which began in infancy persisted until the sixth year.

Physically, Michael was big and rather mature for his age. His school adjustment was good, and his behavior in school was excellent. However, he had no friends or playmates. The parents kept him away from all other children, refused to allow him on the streets alone, and as he grew older forbid him to know any girls because they were afraid that the girls would lead him into dirty habits.

When Michael was 12 he began to run away, and did so at least six times before his commitment on May 7, 1934. He was committed at the insistence of Mr. S. from whom he had stolen a hundred dollar bond. His last episode had been to run away from home in the company of an adult to Norfolk, Va. On examination at the Bureau of Child Guidance it was disclosed that he had engaged in homosexual practices with this friend, and that while

his psycho-sexual development was of course not complete, since the boy was an adolescent, there were strong homosexual components, and that at the time of examination the boy was an anal pervert.

At Warwick Michael made three attempts to run away. It was noticed that there was a periodocity in them, and it was believed that there were sexual elements. There were no indications that the boy was engaging in homosexuality at that time. The father continued to over-protect the boy, even at long range. He tried to bribe the social worker so that the boy would get preferred treatment. Both he and Mrs. S. wept and wailed over Michael. Attempts to interpret the causation of the boy's behavior to them were fruitless. Mrs. S. had begun to show signs of cardiac collapse, and suffered a stroke.

At the institution intensive psychotherapy was attempted, but Michael showed no desire to be treated, and transference was never accomplished. Treatment, therefore, was always on a superficial level.

After a little more than a year, Michael was paroled to the custody of his parents. Plans were made for him to return to school and to learn to be an aviator. He had very good mechanical ability. However, a month after his return his mother died, and his father seemed to blame Michael for her death. Michael left school and began to work as a butcher's helper. He maintained no more than a cursory contact with the parole officer. In the spring of 1936, he returned to the institution. Mr. S. had decided to remarry, and Michael resented this. He quarreled with his father over the marriage. A job was found for him at a summer resort. Here Michael began to go with girls. He claimed that he really disliked them, but that he wanted to get them to like him.

In the fall the resort closed and Michael returned to the city. Mr. S. meanwhile had remarried. Very soon thereafter, Mr. S. went to Austria to settle an inheritance. But shortly before he left Michael again ran away.

Nothing has been heard from the boy since that time, except one postcard, saying that he was in New Orleans.

Analysis

Michael's delinquencies seem to be clearly on a neurotic level. Certainly his parents made it almost impossible for the boy to have a normal sexual development. He was not allowed to play with girls, and was warned against them. He was told by his father that masturbation would make him insane, and of course the boy masturbated. His parents kept him as dependent and infantile as possible. He was never known to steal outside the home, and even there only in conjunction with running away.

Michael presents a picture more similar to the classic pampered, over-protected only child than do our other cases, and it is perhaps for this reason that the neurotic basis of the delinquencies of the only child is greater. Stealing was not a way of living for this boy, not a primary method of life, but rather a substitute and a symptom of a conflict.

Charles C., an Irish-American Catholic boy, 13 years and 4 months of age. His chief problem was running away from home on ten or more occasions. His stealing was confined to taking pennies from his father's pockets. He frequently played truant from school.

Family History

The father, George C., was born in 1894. He told how he disliked school so much that he entered the Navy under age. He, too, used to run away from home and at age of eighteen became addicted to alcohol. He claimed to have been a welter-weight prize-fighter and said with pride that he always got along by using his hands. For twenty-three years he was assistant

foreman in the Sanitation Department, but was dismissed after making twenty-two infractions of the rules, most of which were due to his alcoholism. At night he drank himself stupid and he lost so much time through drink that his pay check was generally a quarter of what it should have been. He is a conceited little man, pretending to ignore his own shortcomings and even going to the extent of claiming that his drinking was caused by despair at Charles' misconduct. When drunk he uses the vilest language and often beats his wife. Once, in 1924, he tried to borrow money from a man while he was drunk and when the man refused, he beat him up and spent a month in the Tombs for it. In the same year he was brought before the Family Court for non-support. After the first child, Joseph, died he went off alcohol for a period of about five months and it was at this time that Charlie gave him trouble. Charlie declared to the psychiatrist that his father did not beat any of the other children, but only himself. He did not know why this was so unless it was because he was the oldest boy. The father at one time took him to Bellevue Hospital because he thought there was something mentally wrong with him. Mr. C. related that as a youngster he himself had always been the "black sheep" of the family. His father used to single him out as the chief object of his rage and give him "real beatings and not the sort of thing I give Charlie." He used to be blamed for everything that went wrong, and he was beaten with a raw hide strap or horsewhip, but declared that these beatings were so severe that he was sometimes unconscious after them. He truanted from school a great deal and was committed to the Catholic Protector, where he received the same kind of beatings that he got at home. Not being able to adjust at home he entered the Navy for about three years. He relates with definite satisfaction the terrible beatings he had given every man who "got in his way." He thought that he had the strength of two men. His alcoholism he explained as an attempt to escape from his problems. The

social worker felt that his beatings of Joseph and Charlie were indications of his unwillingness to accept his wife's earlier sexual experience and that he identified Charlie with the first son, Joseph, who was illegitimate and who may have been the issue of a relationship more affectionate than rape. It is interesting that he greatly abused his eldest daughter, Beatrice, who resembled Joseph. When Joseph was placed in a foster home he gave up drinking and settled down for a time. The father frequently compared the boy unfavorably to himself when he was that age. Despite the above, the father seemed a sincere person, not without a certain charm of manner when sober. He blamed his wife for being too soft with Charlie. In one of his rages he is said by his wife to have beaten Beatrice unconscious.

The boy's mother was of the same age as the father. She had been sent to an orphanage at the age of five and remained there until she was sixteen years of age. Her attitude and remarks clearly reflected her convent training. She went into domestic service, but gave up a job after two years because she was "raped by three men and had become pregnant." After bearing the child, Joseph, she obtained a job as a laundress in several hospitals. She appeared a very tired looking woman, quite submissive to her husband's violence. When her husband was unable to attend to his job for alcoholic reasons, she got what work she could to pay the bills. In 1924 she had an operation for a tumor in the neck, which resulted in the insertion of a silver tube in the larynx. She felt a continual sense of inferiority on this account, for she covered her throat with her hand when talking. She has taken her husband to court for non-support and physical assault many times, but seems never to have made anything out of these charges. Though complaining to the social worker of her husband's violence, when she came to the court she would give the opposite picture. She told Charlie not to mind his father, as he was not responsible, and when the boy ran away from home she left the

front door open and filled the ice-box with food, apparently thinking he would not have to steal if he had enough to eat. She seemed interested in her many children, but was at a loss to know how to handle their more serious problems. Charlie seemed much attached to his mother and accepted discipline from her and never ran away after being rebuked by her. She usually interceded with the father on his behalf.

Before her marriage, Mrs. C. gave birth to the illegitimate child, Joseph, supposedly the result of her early rape experience. She was engaged sometime afterwards to a German Protestant, but put off the marriage because of the difference in their religion. Enticed by the tales of Mr. C's wealthy family, she felt great admiration for the father. He did not at first seem to mind that she had had an illegitimate child, but his attitude toward Joseph was always violent, and she later admitted that her husband constantly threw this experience into her face during their altercations. She stated that she lived with the father only for religious motives; that she was disgusted by life and having so many children. After having had nine pregnancies, she was inclined to favor birth control and regretted that she did not marry her earlier admirer.

Siblings

Charles was the fifth child of this marital union, the first being Joseph, who died, at the age of thirteen, of pneumonia. Though the mother described Joseph as a wonderful boy and never in trouble, the A.I.C.P. reported that he caused much strife at home, and when the child was committed the father ceased drinking and lived fairly decently for a few months. The second child, a boy, died at the age of three of pneumonia. The third child, a girl of seventeen, was quiet, well-mannered, attended Catholic High School, and helped her mother with the housework. The fourth child, a daughter, was in the eighth grade. Next comes Charlie. After him came John, aged ten; Charlie gets in frequent conflict with him. Three other children, including two

twins followed the boy John, and the mother at the time of Charlie's admission was pregnant with the tenth child. The family lived in a moderate middle class residential section in the Bronx, near Fordham. It is not classified as a delinquency area and the standards are reasonably high. The apartment for this large family consisted of four rooms and was generally in a disorderly state, for the children threw their things about, and the father when drunk usually tried to wreck the house. There was a prevalent smell of urine about the house. After some of the family brawls, they have been requested to move from the apartment.

Personal History

Charlie was a full-term baby, vertex presentation; weight $8\frac{1}{2}$ pounds and was fed at the breast for ten months. He walked at twelve months and talked at about the same time. His first teeth occurred at seven months. At eight months of age he had measles followed by pneumonia, which caused the mother to fear that he might die. At ten months he had whopping cough. Charlie's mother said that all the children were put to bed at 8:30 sharp and she carefully folded their hands on their shoulders to keep them away from their bodies. As Charlie grew older, he slept with his brother. Enuresis ceased at two years of age and began again at the age of six, and still occurs occasionally. He was twice hit by automobiles at seven and at nine years of age, and each time sustained a fracture of his leg. For a chronic mastoiditis he was operated upon three times. During the latter illness, the boy received a great deal of solicitude from the mother. At school Charlie was a truant, but was amenable to discipline. He seems to have adjusted better to the parochial school than to the public school. He was fond of sports and played basketball and football with active interest. He loved the "movies." At the age of eleven, Charles was brought by his father to the Catholic "Big Brothers" because of his truancy, running away, and disobedience. He was under the supervision of this organization for about a month, but it was felt that his

problem could not be solved by living home.

Examination

The boy was physically well-developed and nourished, but showed a scar over the right mastoid region and some purulent discharge from the ear. The psychometric examination showed the boy to have dull normal intelligence. He seemed immature emotionally.

Subsequent Course at Warwick

Though the butt of many practical jokes from other boys, he seemed to take it all good-naturedly. He showed a tendency to tease the other boys and then appeal to someone in authority when they retaliated. He seemed full of vitality and presented no vicious traits. On the whole the other boys liked him and he was cooperative with the school officials. He took no interest in his personal appearance and often did not follow directions. Later on in the school he developed a tough, hardened, aggressive manner, in order to dominate the other boys. When paroled in 1935 he first made an adjustment, but the father's drunkenness and extreme severity with him caused him to run away again and he was returned to Warwick on April, 1936. A foster home placement was decided against because of his strong attachment to his home. An attempt was made to get him into the Boys' Guild, but he got involved in stealing with some other boys, and was brought into Court. The father claimed that the reputation of his home was being ruined by Charlie's behavior. He said he was disgusted with the "sob stuff" which the probation officers gave him about the boy and that it only made him worse. At one time his rejection of Charlie became so intense that he declared that if he stayed much longer in the home, he would kill him. A few weeks later, he said he could not understand why Charlie did not confide in him and come to him for advice. In March, 1936, he stole a bicycle from another boy and sold it for \$1.25. When the bicycle was returned to its owner, Charlie ran away from his home for fear of his father's beatings. He also stayed away from school at about

this time. A month later the boy again ran away and when arrested, declared that any place was better to stay in than his home. In 1938 he ran away twice from home and though the mother brought the father into court on two occasions because of violence and drunkenness, the home situation was not fundamentally changed.

Analysis

Most of the psychiatrists who saw the boy considered him as not intrinsically a delinquent inasmuch as his running away from home, his truancy, and stealing, were all clearly related to his father's hatred of him and its consequent violence. He was capable of a normal relationship to his mother, who did not reject him, and the relationship to the other members of the family was not remarkable for any abnormality. The necessity of looking after a large family led to the inevitable neglect at the hands of the parents, which has been seen to be characteristic of almost all our delinquent boys. Especially noteworthy is the projection upon the boy of the father's own treatment at the hands of the grandfather, indicating what may be expected when this boy has children of his own. The Oedipus situation in both father and son is so clearly at work here that it tends to dominate other etiological factors. Like the other boys of large families, which we have reported, there was an absence of neurotic symptoms. The boy's behavior was a clear and not illogical response to the treatment he received at the hands of the father, and the father's drunkenness seems tied up to his own insecurity connected with the boy.

James J., a mulatto boy, aged 13. Began his delinquency career by truancy at the age of nine years. Was taken to court because of it. He was later found guilty of stealing paint brushes, tires, batteries, and chiseling locks off doors—easily sold to certain "screens." On another occasion, he grabbed a woman's pocketbook. The woman claimed that he used indecent language and tried to sexually assault her. The boy stoutly denied the latter charge.

Family Situation

The father was a husky, burly negro, who came to New York at the age of 9. He declared that he had never gotten into trouble all his life. He graduated from elementary school and was employed as a painter and decorator, and a contractor. Before the depression started, he earned a good living. At first he seemed to like his children, but after each child became older than four years of age, he lost interest in it. His wife said that after marriage he was no longer the same jolly, cheerful person he had been. His chief difficulties were chronic alcoholism and a violent temper, during which he would beat the children with his fist or anything that was handy. He once admitted that he felt like breaking the boy's neck with a stick. He neglected his wife and children and did not provide them with enough clothing. He was also niggardly with food. After the boy was sent to Warwick, he refused to have anything more to do with him. One of the workers characterized him as self-righteous and harsh. At one time the boy seemed to be very much ashamed of seeing his father drunk. He used to fear that his father would use violence upon his mother and therefore would often refuse to leave home when his father was drunk. The mother confessed that when drunk he once attempted to choke her. One of his daughters called in a policeman who merely told him to behave himself. The wife states that the Judge told her she should be proud of her husband. On one occasion the social worker, on visiting the home when both parents were present, found a very si-

lent, strained situation, suggestive of considerable strife.

The mother is a tall well-built negro, who seemed friendly and anxious to help her children. She herself is the fifth of six children and was brought up by an aunt. She gave the worker the impression that she was holding back something which seemed to be a burden upon her. She claimed the first years of her married life had been happy, but after that the home had been miserable. Though she has tried to make the home an attractive place, she feels beaten. She seemed a little ashamed of the fact that her last child was only eight months older than her grandchild. In disciplining the boy, she used a strap, which she considered superior to the father's methods.

Siblings

The family consisted of eight children of whom James was the fifth. The second boy died at the age of 17 of acute appendicitis. Five years before his death he appeared at the Children's Court for burglary and was placed on probation. The second son, William, was also in the Children's Court for stealing lead pipes. He was admitted to the C.C.C. The younger children did not present any delinquency problem. James was attached to his eldest sister, Gertrude, and her husband, and the relationship to his brother William was fairly affectionate.

The family lived in a neighborhood of two-story dilapidated brown-stone houses in a negro district of the city. The apartment was a six-room railroad flat and the furniture seemed in good condition. The family was on "relief."

Developmental History

According to the mother, he was a wanted child. She had always wanted plenty of children. Labor was easy. He was large and well-nourished. He was fed at the breast until eighteen months of age. At the age of ten months he fell out of his bed and is said to have broken his right arm. The only children's diseases were measles, chicken-pox, and whooping cough. He did not have any sphincteric control until he

was three years of age and after that it was imperfect. The boy was reputed to be ambi-dextrous. As a young child he was quite jolly and got along well with siblings. He was teased because of his obesity and his great appetite. About the house he was a good worker and he did his chores well. At the age of eight he developed fears of the dark after other children had been trying to frighten him. He slept with his older brother William and a cousin who teased him about enuresis. His father said he gave the boy money when he asked for it. He started kindergarten at the age of five. When he began to play truant, his mother blamed older boys for influencing him. The mother attributes his dislike of school to the lack of decent clothes which excited the ridicule of the other children. He made poor progress in that school and was kept back several times. The principal characterized him as a dirty, lazy, sloppy, unreliable boy, but his school record showed periods in which he was well behaved. Movies constituted James' chief interest and both parents blamed them for creating his difficulties. He played very little at home, but read detective stories and newspapers. After returning from the movies, he frequently stayed out late. The parents disagreed about disciplining the boy and it seemed evident to the psychiatrist that their attitudes were very inconsistent—sometimes his offenses being treated with violence and at other times with indifference. He seems, however, to have gotten his own way more than was good for him. They gave him very little sexual education, but the boy claimed an interest in a girl named Sally, whom he liked to embrace and engage in sexual pleasures. She lived in the apartment below. He felt rejected by other girls, however, because of his sloppy appearance. He denied any homosexual interest,

Course in Warwick

On examination this mulatto boy was found to be somewhat obese with enlarged tonsils and astigmatism. His intelligence quotient was 89; his E.Q. was 89—which placed him in the group of

dull normal intelligence. At Warwick the boy was first found to be evasive, contradictory and uncooperative. At times he was reported to be friendly, courteous and much at ease. Many questions he refused to answer. He admitted stealing and truancy since the age of ten years and it appears that his stealing was almost always solitary. He frequently complained of insomnia which he said was due to worrying about his mother, from whom, however, he received weekly letters. He admitted grabbing a woman's pocketbook as this was the only way in which he could get to Coney Island. When asked why he played truant, he replied that he enjoyed playing around with his friends. He was not interested in school. When visiting the Vanderbilt Clinic, he ran away from the social worker. Later he agreed that this was wrong. Towards work he displayed no bitterness or resentment, but after eight months he ran away. His statements could not be relied upon. He frequently used vile and obscene language. In a classroom he never got into mischief and was willing to do what was asked of him, but he appeared indolent and inclined to day-dream. One of his chief sources of amusement was to get a group of boys around him and tell stories about prize fighters, movie stars, etc. He seemed to be a weak type of boy and was easily led. In fights with other boys he was slow and awkward, but not vindictive. He avoided gymnasium by hiding in a corner and singing to himself. Because of his obesity, he was teased by the other boys, but he never seemed to resent it deeply. In general, he seemed to hide his problems very well under a happy-go-lucky exterior. Every time after returning home on parole, the boy became quite seclusive, staying at home reading books or going to the movies. Where he got the money for this his mother did not know, and he was vague about it when questioned. He refused to participate in any Y.M.C.A. or boy's club activities, calling them "regimentary organizations," and preferred to be what he called a "free lancer." This consisted of hanging around pool rooms and shooting crap. When basketball

was suggested he declined any interest in it. He gave up attending school and consorted with a boy, with whom he used to smoke cigarettes for hours. His mother had to conceal his thefts from the father to avoid violent outbreaks. Finally James refused to go to school and obtained a job on a coal truck. Later he obtained a job in a drug store. His employer entrusted him with \$100 to be deposited in the bank, but James failed to deposit \$60 of this. He did not return to work and stayed away from home from four to six days. He then returned to the New York office with a very guilty expression, but said nothing about his theft. He was encouraged to pay this back, but did not do anything about it. The antagonism between the boy and his father continued as before. They had little to do with each other. However, he contributed part of his earnings to the support of the home.

Discussion

The salient feature in this case is the deep rejection of the boy by the drunken and abusive father. The mother appears in a good light as the chief stabilizing factor in the home, but the rivalry between the father and son seem to have been beyond her powers of management. The boy's weakness does not seem to be entirely a reaction to his environment, but depending on something inherently defective in his constitution which showed hypopituitarism and enuresis. The father's inconsistency and alcoholism was a manifestation of his own immaturity. The outlook in this boy's case is anything but promising as no fundamental change in the situation has developed that would lead one to think of a permanent recovery from the delinquent pattern.

Libro M. was born in New York in 1919. He was committed to Warwick at the age of 14 for having stolen in

company with other boys, some lead pipe. Libro had a record going back to his tenth year. In 1929, Libro, his brother and three other boys were arrested for breaking open a slot machine. In 1930 he stole an overcoat from parochial school. Later in the same year he stole a bicycle for which he was committed for one year to Catholic Protectory. In 1934 he was arrested for the offense which led to his commitment.

He was of borderline intelligence and emotionally unstable. Developmentally, the history was essentially negative, with the exception of enuresis. He was the eighth of eleven children. Of the ten brothers and sisters, six were known to the courts, on charges ranging from stealing to sexual delinquencies. The home was reported as filthy, over-crowded and neglected. The three youngest children were for a time committed on a dependent child petition.

Libro's school adjustment was miserable. In eight years of schooling he was left back four times. It may be interesting to quote from the school reports:

1927—"He was a very neglected looking boy, wearing ragged soiled clothing and uncleaned shoes. Frequently he had been sent home to bathe and have his clothes brushed and mended. Of late he developed vagrant habits and had been reported stealing crackers from a neighboring store."

3/6/28—"Libro never came home from school until he reached home in the evening. Two days later he stole a box of crackers valued at \$2.30 from the school. The parents reimbursed. On 5/18/28 Libro stole a dime from a boy. He was reported to be of nervous temperament and could not stand still."

9/28—"The boy's absence was caused by truancy and being kept at home by the parents. Parents will not cooperate with the school. Boy fights and runs out of class. On 3/11/29 he was playing with a five dollar bill. When the teacher saw him he went out of the school without his coat and did not return that

day. He took blotters, pens, and pencils from the school children and caused much trouble."

From P. S.—"—bold, not responsible to the teacher's orders, constantly tried to keep the class in order. Pest, troublesome, always taking things away from other boys, noisy, strikes other boys, tough, fresh in Print Shop, temper like a wild steer—always gets himself in trouble, stubborn. When things go wrong at home he goes to pieces. He has a violent temper, filthy-minded, incorrigible, trouble-maker among smaller boys, and quite often entirely irresponsible—likes to throw the first thing at hand when angry."

* * * *

Libro's mother and father were married when she was 14 and the father some 15 years older. From the beginning there was the sharpest conflict. Mr. M. was a syndicalist and an atheist. He was a person of good intelligence and had studied for one year at an Italian university. Mrs. M. was almost illiterate, and of low intelligence. She was over-religious to the point of being sent home from church by the priests. At no time did she appear capable of managing the home or the children. Mr. and Mrs. M. were separated several times; the last separation occurring in 1935 appears permanent. During the course of the conflicts between Mr. and Mrs. M. there was rivalry between them for the affections of the children and a mutual recrimination for the children's misconduct. Mr. M. claiming that Mrs. M's stupidity and religiosity were at fault, Mrs. M. insisting that Mr. M's disregard of the children made them bad. Mr. M. was a fatalist and he was certain that what happened to the children must happen, and that there was nothing he could do about it.

At one time Mr. M. had been a person of fair economic means. He had been worth \$25,000 and had a well-established business as a piano repairer. The depression swept all his possessions away, and when Libro was admitted to Warwick the family was poverty-stricken.

At the institution Libro's adjustment was rather good. He came home to his mother for several weekends and seemed to fit in well. His mother kept continually asking for his release. She had separated once again from Mr. M. and was living in New Jersey. Libro was paroled to her custody, but found it impossible to live with her. There was a conscious rivalry between the parents for the affection of the children, of which Libro seemed to be the center. Libro left his mother and went to live with his father.

In a month he was in jail, held on a burglary charge, for an offense committed in the company of an adult. The boy's story, and it seemed to be true, was that this man had taken him to a prize fight, and when he asked Libro to accompany him in the burglary, the boy felt obligated to cooperate. Libro was released from jail and returned to Warwick for violation of parole.

At Warwick he again adjusted well. His father had said that if Libro got into trouble again he would have nothing more to do with him. Libro was quite disturbed, but the social worker persuaded Mr. M. to resume writing to the boy. In six months Libro was reparaoled, this time to an uncle in whose store he was to work. It was felt that if he were completely away from both mother and father he would not be disturbed by their rivalry. The position proved to be unsatisfactory. Libro then went to live with his father and to work in his father's store, learning the trade of reconditioning pianos.

For almost two years Libro has had an excellent adjustment. He has been put in charge of one of the stores. He works well, has spending money, is well clothed. His father has taken a larger apartment and has succeeded in winning over the affections of all the children. Mrs. M. seems to be virtually eliminated from the picture. She does not come to the father's home. Occasionally the children visit her.

Analysis

Schematically, the picture is that of a boy of limited intelligence in a home

environment incapable of giving him any fixed behavior pattern or any security. He was literally driven on to the streets, where there was a strong delinquent tradition, and he drifted into a predatory gang, patterning himself after them.

It should be noted that he was not neurotic, and that there do not appear to be any compulsive elements in his delinquency. When the conflict in his own home subsided, through the elimination of the mother, Libro dropped his delinquency, and today shows promise of developing into a reliant, independent craftsman.

In summarizing this paper there is no attempt to present a formal outline, but rather to state certain tendencies. The differences in symptomatology and behavior pattern exhibited by the two groups may chiefly be ascribed to the different family situation in which the groups were found. The only child situation resulted in a more neurotic, seclusive, immature, less aggressive delinquent than the contrasted group. Since it does appear that the only children are more neurotic it might be said that their problem might be handled in the more usual manner of psychotherapy. And as the delinquent from a large family appears to be more the product of the predatory gang, since he is anti-social, rather than not socialized, as are the only children, treatment for them would consist in changing the direction of the socialization, fixing their standards to society and away from the standards of the gang and the delinquency area.

It should not be forgotten that in spite of the differences in family and

parental relationship, all these boys are delinquents. They have one thing in common: unsatisfactory homes. The type of home background differs in kind, but not in quality. It is not hav-

ing many siblings or having none which is of etiological value for delinquency, but the lack of a normal child-parent relationship.

A *deterrent* penalty only becomes operative in those cases where it has failed of effect. A *reformatory* discipline is only applicable where the subject of it has already been corrupted. An *educative* law presupposes an ignorant or biased mind. In very large measure the necessity for the enforcement of penal laws is a demonstration that proper *preventive* measures have not been taken. Fundamentally, then, any penal system is unjust in so far as the necessity for it might have been avoided by proper social conduct.

W. W. Willoughby, professor of Political Science in Johns Hopkins University, in "Social Justice," chap. X, "Primitive Justice."

Bishop Lawrence has well said, "If the Gospel will not touch some men's hearts, the warning of heavier taxation will touch their pockets; and the neglect of the prisoner means the increase of taxes." Yet the average taxpayer is indifferent to the crime question, and to the cost of the criminal. . . . He scrutinizes almost every item of state and municipal budgets, but only rarely does he ask whether there can be a reduction in the cost of crime. His pocket is "touched" by the criminal, but he is not "warned by heavier taxation." . . . the only way to reduce crime cost materially is to reduce crime.

Warren F. Spalding, Secretary of the Massachusetts Prison

Association, on "The Cost of Crime."

So long as the individual citizen pursues the objects of his desires without diminishing the equal freedom of any of his fellow citizens to do the like, society cannot equitably interfere with him. While he contents himself with the benefits won by his own energies, and attempts not to intercept any of the benefits similarly won for themselves by others, or any of those which Nature has conferred on them, no legal penalties can rightly be inflicted on him. But when, by murder, theft, assault, arson, or minor aggression, he has broken through these limits, the community is warranted in putting him under restraint.

Herbert Spencer, "The Ethics of Punishment."

The functions of criminal procedure are two—one positive, the other negative. Its positive function is to apprehend every criminal; its negative function is to prevent as far as possible the prosecution and certainly the condemnation of any innocent person. The ideal procedure, therefore, would be too firm to permit the escape of a single criminal and yet sufficiently flexible to prevent the prosecution, and especially the condemnation, of any innocent person.

Maurice Parmelee, professor of Sociology in the University of Missouri, "Public Defense in Criminal Trials."