

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TO AN EFFECTIVE  
PROGRAM FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

By

HELEN AHERN

A.B., Greenville College

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
in  
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N. Y.

April 1936

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To My Father and Mother  
who in providing the right spiritual  
and intellectual home atmosphere have given their  
children one of the greatest and rarest of safeguards.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	
A. The Problem of the Study and Its Present Significance . . . . .	1
B. The Method of Procedure . . . . .	3

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN AMERICA TODAY

A. The Trend of Juvenile Delinquency in Recent Years . . . . .	7
B. The Nature and Present Extent of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	9
C. Causal Factors Contributing to the Present Condition of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	11
1. The Conflict in the Home . . . . .	12
2. Conflict in the Present Economic Situation . . . . .	15
3. Social and Moral Atmosphere Outside the Home . . . . .	17
a. School Standards and Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	17
b. Movies and Juvenile Delinquency. . . . .	18
c. Alcoholism and Juvenile Delinquency. . . . .	19
d. Other Contributing Factors . . . . .	20
4. The Spiritual Lack of American Youth as a Cause of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	21
D. Public Opinion Demands Action in Meeting the Present Problem . . . . .	22
E. Summary . . . . .	24

CHAPTER II

SECULAR AGENCIES AND METHODS FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A. Preventive Agencies At Work With the Home . . . . .	28
1. General Education of Parents for Child Care and Training . . . . .	28
2. The Promotion of the Economic Security of the Home . . . . .	29
B. Preventive Agencies At Work in the School . . . . .	31
1. The Work of the Visiting Teacher . . . . .	32
2. Special Classes and Schools. . . . .	33

Sept. 22, 1936  
20844

	Page
C. Community Organizations and Programs for Character Education . . . . .	35
1. Independent Societies . . . . .	36
2. Junior Programs of Adult Groups . . . . .	38
3. Plans for Character Education in Schools . . . . .	39
4. Special Interest Plans . . . . .	40
5. Interreligious Groups . . . . .	41
D. Preventive Methods of Juvenile Courts and Governmental Agencies . . . . .	41
1. Juvenile Court and Police Methods . . . . .	41
2. Assistance Given by State and Federal Governments . . . . .	43
E. The Community Program for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	45
F. Summary and Estimation of These Agencies . . . . .	47

CHAPTER III

THE RELATION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A. Introduction . . . . .	52
B. Juvenile Delinquency, A Problem of the Moral Character . . . . .	53
C. The Effect of Christian Education on the Character Development of Youth . . . . .	56
1. Limitations of Non-religious Character Education . . . . .	57
2. The Christian Contribution to Character Education . . . . .	61
3. Instances Showing the Effect of Christian Education on Character . . . . .	65
D. Summary . . . . .	67

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A. The Responsibility of the Christian Church to Provide an Effective Program for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	70
1. Past Failures . . . . .	71

	Page
2. Present Movements in the Protestant Christian Church	
Toward the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	73
a. America's Christian Youth Movement . . . . .	74
b. The United Protestant Program for "Reaching the Unreached" . . . . .	75
B. Basic Principles to be Included in an Effective Christian Educational Program for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency . . . . .	78
1. A Unified Local Church Program . . . . .	79
2. A United Protestant Program . . . . .	80
3. Inter-Faith Fellowship . . . . .	81
4. Coordination of the Program of the Church with Secular Preventive Agencies . . . . .	82
5. A Drastic Extension of Systematic Christian Education to Reach All Children . . . . .	83
C. Summary and Conclusion . . . . .	84

CHAPTER V

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A. The Problem and Procedure Restated . . . . .	87
B. Implications of the Findings of the Present Study . . . . .	89

APPENDICES

Appendix I - Some Definite Suggestions For Churches . . . . .	93
Appendix II - Suggested Elements in a Program of Inter-faith Cooperative Study and Experimentation . . . . .	95

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TO AN EFFECTIVE  
PROGRAM FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem of This Study and its Present Significance.

Within recent months society has developed widespread interest in the problem of juvenile delinquency in America. One has only to glance at headlines of daily papers, tables of contents of magazines, and titles of newly-published books and plays to realize that the juvenile delinquent is in the spot-light. Organizations concerned with human welfare now realize the inadequacy of past attempts to control crime and are resolved that new ways must be devised to aid the neglected youth who may become the criminal of tomorrow.

The conference on "Juvenile Delinquency and Christian Education," sponsored by the Religious Education Foundation in October, 1935, in New York City, and the formation of the National Commission of Christian Character Building under the International Council of Religious Education testify to the fact that the Christian church is beginning to realize that she must face the problems and needs of the delinquent, under-privileged and unchurched children and youth of America--the seventeen millions of boys and girls who are without definite religious and moral training either Protestant, Catholic or Jewish.

The problem of delinquency is now regarded by leading authorities as a problem of the individual. Crime, vice, and juvenile delinquency are recognized as symptoms, not causes, and since treatment of

symptoms is wasteful as well as futile, prevention of delinquency must involve the removal of causes.

While it is admitted that a great advance has been made in the study of contributing causes of crime and delinquency, certain criminologists have themselves raised the question as to whether juvenile delinquency can be explained exclusively in terms of physical, mental or emotional deficiencies. Many are asking whether there are not certain spiritual and moral aspects of character which cannot be measured by physical tests but which must be considered in any attempt at prevention of juvenile delinquency.

Attorney General Cummings clarified the problem considerably when he made the following statement:

"The government can do just so much. It can attempt to remove economic pressures and the social degradations that produce crime. It can write statutes and threaten punishments presumed to be a deterrent influence. It can make apprehension swift and certain. It can place criminals behind bars and then strive to rehabilitate them into useful, law-abiding citizens. But government cannot provide religious instruction. It cannot build character in the individual. It cannot evoke those moral attitudes of self-control upon which the balance of our social structure must ever rest. The problem of the government is one of dealing with the aggregate of individuals; the problem of the church is one of dealing with the individual, himself. And the last problem is the more vital of the two. It is a more delicate problem and one greater in scope than the problem of law enforcement, itself; it presents to the churches a challenge that can be ignored at their own peril."<sup>1</sup>

If moral character is found to be a factor of major importance in this respect, the question presents itself as to what is the contribution of the Christian Church toward the prevention of juvenile

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1. Quoted by Eddy, Paul D. in "The Church In Coordination With Community Agencies." pg. 28.

delinquency and how can it best meet this responsibility? This is the problem of the present study.

When it is admitted that organized crime is one of the major industries of the country today and that its cost to the people of the United States every year is greater than the budget of the Federal Government and more than five times as much as the cost of the entire public school system, the situation is alarming.

The aspect becomes even more serious when crime reports indicate that for the past two years more nineteen-years-olds were arrested than any other age group and a large proportion of them were charged with major crimes. <sup>1</sup> The fact that there are about 3,000,000 <sup>2</sup> young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five years looking for work which they cannot find in any legitimate field adds greatly to the already appalling situation.

One who has had years of experience with delinquent youth in America recognizes in the present situation a problem of vital concern to society. He says, "Once Youth paraded and shouted with a wooden gun; but today the weapon is loaded. Make no mistake about it; this revolt of Modern Youth is different; it is the first of its kind; and <sup>3</sup> it possesses means for making its will effective."

#### B. The Method of Procedure

The method of procedure in this study shall be as follows:

. . . . .

1. Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Dept. of Justice. Vol. VI. Number 4, 1935, pg. 28.
2. Studebaker, J.W., Radio Address, "The Dilemma of Youth", April 30, 1935
3. Lindsey, Benjamin, "The Revolt of Modern Youth," pg. 158



First, there will be made a survey of the present situation with relation to juvenile delinquency, its alarming trend in recent years, its present nature and extent, and causal factors which have contributed to the present condition. There will follow a survey of secular agencies and methods now working for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and an evaluation of the general results obtained through these agencies. A study will be made of the relation of Christian Education to juvenile delinquency showing the effect of Christian Education on the character development of youth. This will lead to a discussion of the responsibility of the Christian Church to provide an effective program for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and to the selection of basic principles to be included in a program.

CHAPTER I  
THE PROBLEM OF JUVENILE  
DELINQUENCY IN AMERICA TODAY

"The Pied Piper of Crime plays his lewd tune and the children follow his footsteps answering that restless urge of adventure in youth. This young procession is going on and on. We can still hear that patter of little feet crossing the 'Bridge of Sighs' swept as chaff into the prison hopper of idleness and despair."

—Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S.  
in "Why Have Delinquents?"

CHAPTER I  
THE PROBLEM OF JUVENILE  
DELINQUENCY IN AMERICA TODAY

A. The Trend of Juvenile Delinquency in Recent Years

The present has been characterized as "The Century of the Child."<sup>1</sup> The Children's Charter prepared by the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection guarantees to every child adequate provision for his spiritual, cultural and social needs. However, the youth of this generation faces problems which were unknown in the simpler life of an earlier day. The machine age with its emphasis on speed and mass production has affected almost every phase of society and has created an environment in which youth faces new ambitions, new desires, and hazards far greater than those of his parents.

The present problem of juvenile delinquency is not a superficial defect which can be easily overcome; it is an indication of deep-seated weakness and maladjustment of the whole social organism. American courts are picking up many thousands of delinquent boys and girls every year, comparatively few of whom are ever restored so as to contribute their share to the general welfare. Most of them remain a burden on society and many become the most dangerous criminals.

With the rapidly growing concern about crime and lawlessness in general there has come increased recognition of the relation of juvenile delinquency to adult crime. The report of the Prison Conference

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1. Key, Ellen, "The Century of The Child." 1909.

in 1923 that seventy-five per cent of the prisoners in Sing Sing were<sup>1</sup> under twenty-one years of age substantiates the fact that crime has become a problem of youth. Statistics show that thirty-seven and one-half per cent of all persons arrested for crimes committed in 1935<sup>2</sup> were under twenty-four years of age. It is reported that the average age of the criminal in the Los Angeles County Jail has dropped from thirty-five to twenty-five in ten years, which means that crime today<sup>3</sup> is a youth problem.

With juvenile delinquency marking out a broad highway to adult crime, the prospect for the future administration of law and order is discouraging. A speaker at one of the recent conferences on juvenile delinquency said, "If we caught every gangster and every racketeer today, and kept them in prison the rest of their lives,<sup>4</sup> there would be a new crop before they were dead."

The absence of reliable and comprehensive records over any long period of years makes it difficult to state with certainty whether juvenile delinquency has been increasing or decreasing. However, figures, which are available for the years from 1927 to 1934 have been used to show the trend of the delinquency rate (that is, the number of boys and girls dealt with by courts per 10,000 who are of juvenile-court-age). A study of these figures shows that from 1927 to 1930 there was an upward trend, but each year the percentage increase was

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1. Van Waters, Miriam, "Youth in Conflict," New York, 1926, Foreword, pg.v.
2. "Uniform Crime Reports," U.S. Dept. of Justice, Vol.VI, No. 4, 1935, pg.27
3. Cf. Blake, Samuel R., "Coordinating Council Bulletin," April 1935.
4. Hansl, Eva vB., "Must These Youngsters Be Gangsters," New York Times Magazine, Jan. 26, 1936, pg. 6.

less. During the four years following the trend was downward.<sup>1</sup>

This conclusion has been borne out by the Hon. Sanford Bates, Director of the Federal Prisons. However, his report is less optimistic since he states that with the slight decrease in the number of arrests there has been an increase in the intensity of crimes committed.<sup>2</sup>

### B. The Nature And Present Extent of Juvenile Delinquency

To those who classify the present concern about juvenile delinquency as unwarranted agitation over the neighborhood's perennial bad boy, the answer is that boyish pranks have developed into anti-social acts of a very serious nature; mischief has turned into a sour and vicious attitude toward society, and finally numbers of juvenile delinquents have increased until there is involved a serious threat to the moral fiber of the remainder of youth.

According to figures compiled by the Children's Bureau the most common charges against juveniles are stealing, acts of carelessness or mischief, traffic violations, truancy, running away, ungovernable, and sex offense.<sup>3</sup> The reason for referring juveniles to court varies both with age and with sex difference; for example, charges of acts of carelessness or mischief decreases with the advance in age while offenses such as truancy, ungovernable, and sex offense increase. Stealing is the principle charge against boys in each age

. . . . .

1. Report of U.S. Dept. of Labor, Children's Bureau, Pub. No. 215, "Facts About Juvenile Delinquency," pg. 5.
2. Eddy, Paul D., Report of Conference on "Juvenile Delinquency and Christian Education," October 16, 1935.
3. Cf. Children's Bureau, Pub. No. 215, op. cit. pg. 5.

period. Whereas for all ages of girls the principle offenses are "truancy, running away, ungovernable, and sex offense," the percentage increasing with the age of the girl.

However, many cases handled by police departments are not referred to juvenile courts and the nature of juvenile delinquency takes on an even more serious aspect when records of the Division of Investigation of the Department of Justice are consulted. These reports are of "offenses known to the police" throughout the country, the data being sent in to the Bureau of Investigation by chiefs of police in the different cities. Statistics compiled from records covering the first nine months of the past year show that arrests of nineteen-year-olds occurred more frequently than arrests for any other single age-group and that juveniles figure prominently in the most serious charges. Those most frequently placed against persons under twenty-five years are larceny, burglary, auto theft, robbery, and assault. In addition, during 1935, persons under twenty years of age committed almost twelve per cent of the homicides.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the grave nature of the offenses being committed by delinquents, the problem has become a serious one numerically. Approximately 200,000 different children are apprehended annually on delinquency charges.<sup>2</sup> In Los Angeles County, California, more than 6,000 juveniles pass through juvenile courts each year, and the Probation Department has 4,000 under its constant supervision.<sup>3</sup>

. . . . .

1. Cf. Uniform Crime Reports, Vol. VI, No. 3, 1935, U.S. Dept. of Justice,  
2. Cf. Children's Bureau Pub. No. 215, op. cit. pg.4. (pg. 23.)  
3. Cf. Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S., "Why Have Delinquents,"  
pg. 8.

Since it is largely a matter of chance or of family and social circumstances whether the delinquent child comes into contact with court authority or not, the extent of juvenile delinquency cannot be adequately stated in terms of court statistics alone. Children whose "misconduct" might be dealt with under the law, but who for various reasons do not come before the court must also be reckoned with. This class would include delinquents who are frequently overlooked in rural districts but who would be court cases if in the city. It is generally true that many children of the richer class are kept out of the juvenile court because of the family resources and receive special private care while poorer children are more likely to be turned over to the court or given institutional care when they develop serious behavior problems.

Under the present system of visiting teachers in many urban communities, a very small proportion of delinquent and problem children are brought before the juvenile court. Instead their problems of behavior and social maladjustment are being handled by the visiting teachers who are usually very competent social case workers.

### C. Causal Factors Contributing to The Present

#### Condition of Juvenile Delinquency

Authorities are now agreed that there is no single cause of juvenile delinquency, but that its foundations are usually laid in very early childhood, the period most significant in the development of personality and character. All past attempts which have been made to attribute crime and lawlessness to a single cause have failed conclusively. This conclusion is borne out by recent studies of thousands



of delinquents who have come before the courts of California, Colorado, Illinois, New York, Massachusetts and other states. These studies

"make it only too evident that behind every criminal is the delinquent boy; behind every delinquent is the problem child in school; behind the problem child is the inadequate home, the problem parent; and behind them a poor heredity. And around and about them all is an environment of economic insecurity, of social uncertainty."<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the variety of factors which may contribute to produce delinquency, the delinquent himself provides the central problem for delinquency must be regarded as a problem of individuals. Children in the same home and environment often react in exactly opposite ways to the features of their environment. Some are able to resist the influences of bad companions, the temptations offered by seeing others appear to profit by wrong-doing, and rise above extreme unhappiness or poverty in the home, as well as countless other factors which usually contribute to delinquency. Other children are apparently equally as capable of resisting all good influences thrown about them.

#### 1. The Conflict in the Home.

Unhappy home conditions are among the familiar factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. The influence of the home atmosphere upon the very young and the primary tasks which the home should fulfill have a vital part to play in the normal development of personality and character. It is the responsibility of the home

"to shelter and nourish infancy in comfort, without inflicting damage of premature anxiety; to enable the child to win health, virility and social esteem; to educate it to meet behavior codes of the community; to respond effectively to human situations which produce the great emotions, love, fear and anger; to furnish practice in the art of living together on a small scale where human relationships are kindly and simple; finally the home has as its supreme task the weaning of youth, this time not from

1. Hansl, Eva vB., op. cit. pg. 6. . . . .

the breast of the mother, but from dependence, from relying too much on that kindness and simplicity of home, so that youth may not fail to become imbued with joy of struggle, work and service among sterner human relationships." <sup>1</sup>

Judge Ben Lindsay believes that the home is the very heart of the problem of juvenile delinquency and that right home training offers one of the greatest and rarest of safeguards. It is his experience that

"well-born young people of good stock who come from a certain type of home are in little danger from the ordinary temptations and freedoms that come their way when they are among their fellows. Unfortunately there are few such homes, even among people of good stock... Homes in which children can find the right spiritual and intellectual atmosphere are the exception rather than the rule." <sup>2</sup>

Large numbers of children coming into the juvenile courts of this country are from so-called "broken homes," which contribute to a sense of insecurity and uncertainty. This classification includes homes that have been disrupted by death, desertion, separation, or divorce of the parents. Another type of home which contributes largely to delinquency is that in which lack of affection and harmony between parents and other serious emotional problems of the adults in the home make it impossible to satisfy the child's need of security and development. A recent survey of cases appearing before the New York Domestic Relations Court indicated that more than fifty per cent of the children guilty of juvenile delinquency came from "broken homes." <sup>3</sup>

Many authorities report that in addition to being a major factor in practically every case of juvenile delinquency, the home is

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1. Van Waters, Miriam, op. cit. pp. 63,64.
2. Lindsay, Ben., "Revolt of Modern Youth," pg. 95.
3. Sachs, Dr. Bernard, "Family Court Report," New York Times, Nov. 15, 1935.

frequently the most difficult factor to adjust. Individual problems of the child can usually be solved and by patient effort community conditions can be remedied

"but a home that is broken by desertion or other cause, or that is continually disrupted by quarrels or fights, or that is controlled by parents who seem utterly lacking in qualities that would fit them for parent-hood--these homes supply the most difficult problems with which councils and Case-Study Committees have to deal...We would not have so many problem children if we did not have so many problem parents."<sup>1</sup>

Another important factor in the home environment of the delinquent is the failure of the parents to understand their child and their appalling ignorance of methods of child training and character development. This is especially evident in homes where parents are of foreign birth and unable to adjust themselves to the outside environment of freedom in which their children are growing. Fathers are often tyrannical in their attempt to dominate and control their children--with the result that the young people develop an attitude of vicious rebellion against authority of any kind.

Furthermore, "naughtiness" among little children in the modern home is frequently overlooked as necessary to "self-expression" and therefore is ignored except as it causes inconvenience to the parents. Problems which commonly confront parents of young children include such things as disobedience, lying, stealing, bad sex habits, temper tantrums, and feelings of inferiority, jealousy and fear. Such habits if not handled wisely develop into defects of personality and character and frequently bring the individual into conflict with the law.

. . . . .

1. Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S., "Why Have Delinquents?" pg. 34.

## 2. Conflict in the Present Economic System

Although the relation of the economic system to juvenile delinquency has long been studied as a contributing factor it is now receiving more attention than ever before. Doubtless this is due to the radical change that has taken place in industry during the past decade.

In 1926 a chief problem presented by the conflict in industry was that it had placed a "premium on youth," giving him a new economic value and a sense of too great independence and self-satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> Today the situation is almost entirely reversed and authorities are confronted by the mass of boys and girls who have reached working age since 1929 and who have been unable to find employment of any kind or have been employed only at intervals and in occupations for which they are unfitted. It has been estimated by the National Youth Administration in Washington that of the 22,000,000 young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five years, about 3,000,000 are on relief and 5,000,000 to 8,000,000 are "wholly unoccupied," that is, neither working nor attending school.

"The period of waiting for work has steadily lengthened until we now have a piling up of disillusionment, discontent, and despair, on the part of millions of young people from the age of sixteen up to at least twenty-five. The total cumulative effect of bottling up the explosive energies of youth is one which must be faced honestly as a problem of transcendent importance."<sup>2</sup>

Psychologists who have been studying the problem emphasize the evil effects which this enforced idleness has upon youth. The young people who find themselves unable to contribute anything to the

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1. Cf. Van Waters, Miriam, op. cit. Chapter IV.
2. Studebaker, J. W., "The Dilemma of Youth," Report of Radio Address, April 30, 1935, pg. 3.

common welfare naturally suffer a breakdown in morale and become susceptible to all the forces of disintegration which destroy character and ability. With legitimate and creative activity closed to them, young people are easily drawn into crime and dishonest rackets, which at least offer something exciting to do.

A further manifestation of the relation of economics to juvenile delinquency has been pointed out in reports which indicate that seventy-five per cent of all delinquencies originate in ten per cent of the districts of the cities. <sup>1</sup> These congested sections known to sociologists as "delinquency areas" produce children who inherit the tradition of the underworld just as definitely as children who grow up in a quiet college town inherit the tradition of a cultured society. In a study of 14,000 juvenile delinquents brought into Los Angeles County courts during a period of three years it was found that about thirty-four per cent were from moderately well-to-do homes while over sixty-six per cent were from poor homes or those depending on <sup>2</sup> charity.

As long as the economic system continues on its present basis of capitalism, competition, profit and wage, there will continue to be "the gross disparity in privileges enjoyed by various groups. A few gain enormous riches, while a considerable number fail to obtain <sup>3</sup> even the necessities essential to health and decency." Under such a system, the legitimate desires and necessities which are denied to

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1. Peyser, Dr. Nathan, "Survey Course in Juvenile Delinquency," New York City College, 1935-36.
2. Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S., "Who Is Delinquent?", pg. 9.
3. Eddy, Sherwood & Page, Kirby, "Danger Zones of the Social Order," pg. 10.

many are frequently obtained by illegitimate methods.

### 3. Social and Moral Atmosphere Outside the Home

"A child standing at the bar of justice is not on trial. It is the community which is being weighed in the balance." <sup>1</sup> Thus a prominent judge of a Juvenile Court indicates that responsibility must be placed on certain factors outside the home as contributory to juvenile delinquency.

#### a. School Standards and Juvenile Delinquency.

Since a very high percentage of delinquents are of school age it has long been recognized that dissatisfaction and maladjustment of the school child often contributes to delinquency. However, it is interesting to note that within recent years there has been a definite shift of emphasis away from the former idea which stressed intelligence as a prime factor in the determination of conduct. This change of emphasis is substantiated by the 1934 report of the New York Court of Domestic Relations which showed that of 5,277 children placed on probation during the year more were ahead of their grade in school than were retarded and the great majority were listed as "normal" mentally. <sup>2</sup>

In most instances the schools which these children attend are overcrowded and inadequately equipped. Often the curriculum itself is unsuited to the capacities of the majority and the school work does not hold their interest. At a recent state university convocation the "beautiful standards" of public education in which there is little or no provision for meeting the problem of individuality among young

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1. Blake, Samuel R., Foreword to "Why Have Delinquents?" pg. 3.  
2. Editorial "Children in Court", Mid-monthly Survey, January 1936.

students were cited as contributory to the present wave of juvenile  
1  
crime.

b. Movies and Juvenile Delinquency

In listing the "unwholesome" influences at work in the lives of children tending toward juvenile delinquency, all modern surveys place special emphasis on motion pictures. Researches of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures indicate that many pictures are not adapted to children and should never be shown to them.

That moving pictures are most important as a means of visual education is shown by the fact that they are being used very extensively in educational systems throughout the country. However, the gangster and crime films and the sophisticated sex stories are producing powerful education of a detrimental kind. Their tremendous influence on society cannot be overlooked when it is remembered that 10,000,000 people, largely young people, in the United States alone attend the  
2  
movies every week.

In emphatic condemnation of the motion picture, Roger Babson states:

"Such studies as I have made lead directly to the movies as the basic cause of the crime wave of today...I sent a questionnaire to the school principals of New England, asking which of the following had the greatest influence in molding the character of our young people today--the school, the church, or the home--and seventy per cent scratched off all three and replied 'The Movies'."<sup>3</sup>

Another who has made a careful study of the subject sums up his serious charges against the movies in the following statement:

. . . . .

1. "School Standards Held Crime Cause", New York Times, Oct. 18, 1935.
2. Babson, Roger, "Movie Morals," cited in Christian Herald, May 25, 1929
3. Ibid. (pg. 9.

"The movies are so occupied with crime and sex stuff and are so saturating the minds of children the world over with social sewage that they have become a menace to the mental and moral life of the coming generation."<sup>1</sup>

c. Alcoholism and Juvenile Delinquency

It is a self-evident fact that the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment has in no way lessened the importance of alcoholism as a factor contributing to juvenile delinquency. If the secret cock-tail parties and concealed hip-flasks had an important bearing on juvenile problems during the prohibition era the present indiscriminate use of liquor among young and old of both sexes is an even greater factor.

This is made especially evident by reports published in California as a result of a study on "Liquor and Youth" conducted under the supervision of the Community Coordinating Councils. It was found that in Pasadena in November 1934 there were one-hundred and two offences in which liquor was involved as compared with sixty-eight in November 1933. In Riverside County the police department reported an increase of seventy cases of drunken-driving during the first nine months of 1934. It was noted that usually both parents were in the car and their children were left without supervision either at home, on the streets, or at parties of their own. Stockton reports that "children of most any age can secure most any kind of liquor at most any time in San Joaquin County, and that practically every boy that is brought to the attention of the officials for some law violation has

. . . . .

1. Eastman, Fred, "The Menace of the Movies," Christian Century, May, 1930.



been in some way connected with illicit liquor."<sup>1</sup>

At a conference convened for the purpose of considering the serious problems encountered by juvenile police officers with the large number of cases involving liquor, the problem was stated thus:

"Liquor is thrust at our youth on every side. They see it in drug store windows, in grocery stores (small bottles placed near cash register), in restaurants, in hotels, cocktail rooms, in beer parlors, in motion pictures. It is advertized in newspapers, magazines, on billboards and on the radio. In one radio program recently it was announced that 'Beer is a food. Every child should have a glass of beer with every meal'."<sup>2</sup>

The fact that young children are drinking with their parents and that illicit liquor is easily obtained by boys and girls at beer parlors and dance halls is lamented by a representative of a District Attorney's office on the basis that "We can't prosecute every case of contributing to delinquency. If we did, the courts would be congested and we couldn't hear other more serious cases."<sup>3</sup>

d. Other Contributing Factors

Other contributing causes of delinquency which are to be found in many communities include such factors as lack of wholesome recreational outlets, the presence of demoralizing commercialized amusements, the lack of any well-rounded community program for youth and the association with "gangs" and undesirable companions.

Jacob Riis, Forbush, Goldmark and others who have made careful studies of the situation present convincing evidence that the boy's "gang" is a great source of delinquent tendencies. Backed by his "gang"

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1. Coordinating Council Bulletin, January 1935, pg. 4.
2. " " " " , February 1935, pg. 1.
3. Ibid.

or forced by their ridicule, many a boy commits anti-social acts he would never think of attempting otherwise.

#### 4. The Spiritual Lack of American Youth as a Cause of Juvenile Delinquency

There can be no reasonable doubt that the failure of the modern Christian Church to make religion vital to the children and young people of this nation has been an important factor contributing to the present wave of lawlessness. The mandate to do good and avoid evil has God for its author, and long experimentation has shown that it is impossible to separate morality from religion. Religion has always been a powerful regulative force but when it does not extend beyond the church to touch the environment in which the young delinquent moves it cannot expect to awaken him to faith, quicken his enthusiasm for life beyond himself, or show him the way to triumph in his moral struggle.

The recent study of 14,000 boys and girls who passed through the Juvenile Court of Los Angeles County between 1929 and 1931 indicated that sixty-eight per cent had no religious affiliation whatever, while thirty-two per cent signified some connection with a church, Sunday School, or church club. In this thirty-two per cent the most effective work had been accomplished by the Catholics and Jews. Only fourteen and one-half per cent of these 14,000 delinquents had belonged to any character-building organization.

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1. Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S., "Who Is Delinquent?", pg. 11.

Of forty million boys and girls in the United States between the ages of four to eighteen years, twenty million are receiving no Christian teaching.<sup>1</sup> Over thirty million under twenty-five years of age are outside of all religious education, Protestant, Catholic or Jewish.<sup>2</sup> This is an extremely serious situation.

It is only fair to recognize the fact that the church usually works under a very grave disadvantage of time in its attempt to shape the character of children. If a child is a regular attendant at Sunday School, Church, and one mid-week service every week, he will be under the direct influence of the Church about one-hundred fifty-six hours per year. In comparison with this figure he will be under the influence of the school approximately one thousand hours per year, and of his home and community from four thousand to five thousand hours. This last figure represents the child's active waking hours including week ends and vacations as well as the part of each day that is not spent in school. In view of the destructive nature of many of the home and community influences, it is not surprising to find that the check-up on the character trend of the child reveals that he has been singularly untouched by religion.

#### D. Public Opinion Demands Action in Meeting the Present Problem

The public at last has begun to realize the urgency of the present situation and with this realization public opinion has demanded a change in the method of dealing with the situation. In

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1. White, J. Campbell, in Church Business, Nov.-Dec. 1935, pg. 80.
2. White, J. Campbell, "The Cure for Crime," pg. 1.

spite of many improvements which the last few years have brought in the way of creation of juvenile courts and the introduction of the probation system, in a majority of localities juvenile cases are still very poorly handled with pitifully inadequate results. "Wayward boys are not being reclaimed. They are being branded. Verdicts of guilty or not guilty settle nothing and adjust no one to a wholesome situation."<sup>1</sup>

In the past much thought has been given to building bigger and better institutions and to making the courts more efficient in handling cases after the offense has been committed. Leaders in the field are now demanding that delinquent tendencies be discovered in young children before they have committed any serious offense in order that these young lives may be turned from a possible career of crime to one of useful citizenship.

Many of those who have been spending all their energies toward the prevention of juvenile delinquency have come to the conclusion that a voluntary code based on voluntary internal restraints is the only thing which can set modern youth right. In the words of Judge Ben Lindsey:

"All that is needed to make the whole system work for righteousness is the internal restraints and codes of conduct which derive their power from within. 'There is nothing from without the man that going into him can defile...but that which proceedeth out of the man, that defileth the man,' said Jesus. We, however, think we know better than that...We think the path must be made smooth for the feet of youth; and the idea of teaching youth to walk sure-footed on paths of natural roughness occurs to nobody."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Goldstein, Johah J., cited in "Character", Jan.-Feb. 1936.
2. Lindsey, Benjamin, op. cit. pg. 162.

### E. Summary

The foregoing study has revealed juvenile delinquency in America as a problem of vital importance. An alarming trend is indicated in the recent decrease in the age limit of the criminal and the increase in the intensity of crimes committed. The survey has not led to the discovery of any one underlying element of causation. Instead it has pointed out the great multiplicity of factors which may thwart and frustrate the human spirit and thus result in delinquency. Insecurity and conflict in the home, the present economic system, the school, and the community are shown to be causal factors contributing to juvenile delinquency. In addition to these and in recognition of delinquency as a problem of the individual, the failure of the Christian Church to make religion vital to children and youth must be recognized as an important cause of delinquency. The public is becoming aware of the urgency of the present situation and demands action in meeting the emergency.

CHAPTER II  
SECULAR AGENCIES AND METHODS FOR  
THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

"Privileged or underprivileged, delinquent or pre-delinquent, it is for us to rescue from this new urban life the inherent values of childhood, with a view toward making them good men and women, sound citizens, contributing their share toward civilization's advancements."

--Samuel R. Blake

CHAPTER II  
SECULAR AGENCIES AND METHODS FOR  
THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

"Society itself does not commit crime, but society creates crime<sup>1</sup> and is responsible for the criminal." Fortunately, leaders are now awakening to the fact that this responsibility involves more than dealing with the convicted criminal; it means an active campaign against the causes that produce crime and an efficient program for the prevention of delinquency.

Records of the Los Angeles Probation Department indicated that about seventy per cent of the children brought before the juvenile court make a satisfactory adjustment.<sup>2</sup> If children can be thus adjusted how much better it would be if they were to receive the necessary help before they reach the stage of conflict with court authorities. A number of agencies throughout the country are now engaged in various programs designed to eliminate detrimental factors in the child's life and environment and to give him opportunities for normal, happy life and growth. Such programs are sure either directly or indirectly to work toward the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

An exhaustive survey of the various agencies and programs engaged in efforts leading to the prevention of juvenile delinquency would include an endless study of movements in every phase and level of society. Even a superficial study of the present situation reveals that just as there is a multiplicity of recognized causes of juvenile delinquency so there is also a great variety of suggested programs

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1. Blake, Samuel R., Foreword, "Who Is Delinquent?"
2. Scudder, Kenyon J., & Beam, Kenneth S., "Why Have Delinquents?", p.9



of prevention. For practical purposes the present study can consider only those secular agencies and methods which seem most closely related to the problem of the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

#### A. Preventive Agencies At Work With The Home

It is now generally agreed that nothing can take the place of normal home life and affectionate, intelligent parenthood in the rearing of children. It is well known that a large per cent of delinquent children come from "broken" homes and homes disrupted by unwholesome adult relationships, poverty, or other unhappy conditions. Therefore any plan concerned with the promotion of the stability and happiness of family life must be recognized as a means of preventing juvenile delinquency.

##### 1. General Education of Parents for Child Care and Training.

Since parental attitudes are of fundamental importance in the normal development of the child, it seems extremely unfortunate that parenthood does not bring with it a natural knowledge of proper child care and training. In order to compensate for this lack, public-spirited agencies have provided opportunities for parental education in home-making, family relationships and child training.

In recognition of the necessity of preparation for marriage and parenthood, many colleges and schools have included pre-parental instruction in their educational programs. Practical courses in child care and development are being given to high-school students in the progressive schools of the larger cities. A very popular department in Vassar College is that known as euthenics which is in reality a course in the preparation for parenthood. Many universities and State

departments of education now sponsor State-wide programs of education in child care and guidance.

The Children's Bureau at Washington, D. C., and various State Bureaus, as well as university departments, have carried on extensive research in the field of child psychology and development and have published their findings in the form of free bulletins on child care and management which are of very practical value to parents.

Such national organizations as the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Child Study Association of America, and the American Association of University Women, have sponsored study groups for parents and furnished child-welfare materials for their guidance. These same agencies with others are now making wide use of the radio to give information and advice for the benefit of parents throughout the country, and thus they are reaching even into the most remote districts. In addition, several magazines of wide circulation are being devoted entirely to the problems of parenthood and the child. Other magazines publish monthly articles on related subjects.

Besides offering the average parent instruction in child care, modern society is developing facilities to furnish him practical expert assistance in dealing with the behavior problems of his child. These facilities include such things as habit clinics for the treatment of the difficulties of the pre-school child and child guidance clinics dealing with the personality problems and difficulties of social adjustment of the child of public school age.

## 2. The Promotion of the Economic Security of the Home

At the National Conference of Social Work in 1919, Julia

C. Lathrop, first Chief of the Children's Bureau, said:

"Children are not safe and happy if their parents are miserable and parents must be miserable if they cannot protect a home against poverty. Let us not deceive ourselves. The power to maintain a decent family living standard is the primary essential of child welfare. This means a living wage and wholesome working life for the man, a good and skillful mother at home to keep the house and comfort all within it. Society can afford no less and can afford no exceptions. This is a universal need." <sup>1</sup>

Any definite attempt at an ideal program for the promotion of the economic security of the home involves the solution of the problem of unemployment and the establishment of wage levels adequate to maintain wholesome living standards. Up to the present time such an ideal program has not been practically demonstrated, but much is being done by various agencies to elevate the economic status of the home.

The name of Jacob A. Riis is closely associated with the early movement to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. His forceful appeal to the civic conscience resulted in the destruction of hundreds of unfit tenements and the application of definite building standards to all habitations. At the present time many large cities are actively engaged in promoting better housing conditions, lessening congestion in certain areas, and improving the surroundings of tenement districts. Under the present administration the Federal Government has undertaken the construction of homes for people in the lowest income group through the supervision of the Public Works Administration.

During the recent period of economic emergency public home relief has been used extensively in the maintenance of the home and

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1. Quoted in Children's Bureau Publication, No. 215, op. cit. pg. 11.

the preservation of the quality of family life. It has been estimated that there were about 24,000,000 persons dependent upon relief throughout the country during the winter of 1935-1936.<sup>1</sup> Legislation to provide home care for dependent children is prominent as a child-welfare measure in most of the States. In forty-five States through the mother's aid laws 275,000 children each year are kept with their mothers. Without such aid the mothers would have been forced to leave their children to become breadwinners or the families would have been broken up entirely.

The preventive work of the Visiting Nurses' Association deserves mention here. In most large cities well-trained nurses systematically visit the homes of the poor and look after the health conditions of the entire family. Although it is difficult to estimate the actual results of their work in terms of its relation to the prevention of juvenile delinquency, long experience has varified the conclusion that cleanliness and godliness are inseparable. Lillian D. Wald of the Nurses' Settlement, Henry Street, New York City, stated:

"I do not know how to estimate the result of their methods for the prevention of vice and crime. They accomplish a great deal in this way, I am sure, through the education that they bring on the hygiene of the body and the home, and the impression they create through their actual labors in these directions."<sup>2</sup>

#### B. Preventive Agencies At Work In The School

Maladjustment and dissatisfaction in school are known to be fertile sources of delinquency. Since the child's most serious problems develop during his school days, the school is obviously in a strategic

1. The New York Times, March 3, 1936, pg. 22.

2. Henderson, Charles R., in "Preventive Agencies and Methods," pg. 115.

position to get at the real causes and to work for the removal of conditions which may lead to disaster. Leaders in the educational field now realize that the school must provide certain services to assist in preventing and solving the problems of the maladjusted child.

#### 1. The Work of the Visiting Teacher

Progressive educators have been convinced of the necessity of having specialists who can study the difficulties of problem children in their school and outside life and who can make effective use of every available resource to eliminate the harmful and reinforce the good in the home environment as well as in the educational experience. As a result of the attempt to meet this need, there has been organized the National Committee of Visiting Teachers. According to their own definition

"a visiting teacher is a social worker, trained in mental hygiene, advising with the parents and relatives, with the teacher and the school authorities, and with social agencies, if these are necessary in handling the case." <sup>1</sup>

In order to demonstrate the value of the work of visiting teachers in bringing about the adjustment of delinquent children, the National Committee on Visiting Teachers has cooperated with local school boards throughout the country in providing well-trained visiting teachers as part of the Commonwealth Fund Program for the Prevention of Delinquency. <sup>2</sup>

As an outgrowth of the effective work of visiting teachers, there has been developed in Jersey City, New Jersey, a unique plan of handling juvenile delinquency, a plan which is now being studied by

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1. Children's Bureau Publication No. 215, op. cit., pg. 18.
2. Cf. Sayles, Mary B., Nudd, Howard W., "The Problem Child in School," pg. 254.

social agencies with a view to recommending its adoption by other cities. The Jersey City plan which has now been in operation for four and one-half years works through the Bureau of Special Service which handles all cases of Juvenile maladjustment and delinquency whether found by school authorities or by the police. By order of Mayor Hague of Jersey City, "No juvenile is to be taken into a police station or to be conveyed through the streets in a patrol wagon for any reason whatever."<sup>1</sup> Instead of being bundled off to jail, the apprehended delinquent must be turned over to the Bureau of Special Service or, if the Bureau is closed, taken to the Jersey City Medical Centre for detention over night. The personnel of the Bureau includes twenty-five truant-officers, six visiting teachers and a supervisor, five plain-clothes officers, a medical inspector, a dental inspector, a nurse, a psychologist, and a psychiatrist.

"Under this arrangement it is not possible for any child to become involved in serious difficulties with the school authorities or the law without having a thorough investigation made of the home, school and leisure hour activities as well as of his physical and mental condition in order to determine the factors which are shaping his career in an anti-social direction."<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note that as long ago as 1921 the public school was suggested as the proper machinery for local control of delinquency.<sup>3</sup> Ten years later Jersey City was the first to hand the entire problem over to the public school system.

## 2. Special Classes and Schools

Careful examination of the problem child in the school often reveals that he has needs which are not being met in the regular class. Therefore many schools have organized special classes in which the child

1. "Rescue of the Juveniles," New York Times, Dec. 8, 1935, pg. 12X
2. "Aid for Juveniles," New York Times, Nov. 23, 1935, p.9
3. Cf. Goddard, Henry H., "Juvenile Delinquency," p.112

with a problem receives the treatment indicated for his particular difficulty. In various school systems special classes have been formed to meet the needs of such groups as physically handicapped children as those with poor vision or hearing; mentally deficient children; retarded children who are not mentally deficient; and the children of superior mental ability who have developed behavior problems because the classroom work does not come up to the level of their ability.

In addition to the arrangement of special classes, in certain places entire schools have been organized to deal scientifically with boys who have become maladjusted and therefore incorrigible in the regular school system. Each boy receives thorough physical, psychological, and social study and individual case histories are kept on record. The Montefiore and the Moseley schools in Chicago and the Thomas A. Edison School in Cleveland are examples of institutions which have developed comprehensive programs for the betterment of boys who have started on the way to delinquency.<sup>1</sup>

It is gratifying to note that in recognition of the child's needs the public school is realizing the inadequacy of mere formal instruction and has added other activities and services which greatly broaden its field of usefulness.

"The treatment of attendance, health, vocational guidance, and similar school problems outside the field of instruction in its restricted sense is being permeated with this awakened consciousness of the whole life of the child. The school is thus looking out as well as in for the enhancement of its purpose and is adding twenty-four-hour construction to its former five hours of instruction. It is realizing that mere presence in the flesh does not

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1. Cf. Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 215, op. cit. p.19

suffice when children are absent in spirit." <sup>1</sup>

C. Community Organizations and Programs for Character  
Education

A recent survey of children appearing in the New York Domestic Relations Court indicates the close relationship between character-building organizations and the prevention of juvenile delinquency. The report showed that most of these children "have never had an opportunity to benefit from contact with persons of high ideals and personality, nor the intelligent personal guidance of some older persons who understand them and whom they respect." <sup>2</sup> The survey further pointed out that in many cases there was not a single character-building factor in the child's life contacts which might help to counteract the unfortunate hereditary and environmental influences and to prevent the juvenile delinquent from becoming a hardened criminal at an early age. Another survey which included the cases of 14,000 delinquent boys and girls indicated that only fourteen and one-half per cent of them had ever belonged to any character-building organization. <sup>3</sup>

Many other statistics might be cited to further emphasize the fact that character building organizations and programs are important factors in the prevention of juvenile delinquency. In the words of a prominent judge of juvenile court, "One of the prime essentials for preventing juvenile delinquency is a sound foundation in old fashioned character." <sup>4</sup> In spite of the fact that the potential

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1. Sayles, Mary B., Nudd, Howard W., "The Problem Child In School," p.280
2. Sachs, Bernard, Report in New York Times, Nov. 15, 1935.
3. Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S., "Who Is Delinquent?" p.10
4. Blake, Samuel R., "Coordinating Council Bulletin," April, 1935



possibilities of the character building agencies have never been fully realized they form a powerful influence for good.

### 1. Independent Societies

A number of independent societies of national and international extent carry on comprehensive programs designed to develop the character of boy and girl members and thus prepare them for worthwhile life and service. The program procedures of these various societies differ sufficiently that they are able to serve a great variety of needs and types of individuals.

The Boy Scouts of America is an organization which is making use of the interest and activities of boys of the teen age to carry on a program of character building. The aim of the Scout program is,

"to aid the boy in the solution of many situations by supplying him with activities which are in close correlation with his natural life processes and by affording him situations in which intelligent control of conduct for worthy ends is almost essential to a satisfactory experience. The stimulus of opportunities to do something worthy and interesting is followed by the further motivation to worthy living which comes from recognition for services rendered." <sup>1</sup>

Nearly every community is acquainted with the Boy Scouts. Young hikers in khaki with red kerchiefs have become a common sight on forest trails and they are even more prominent in various community service activities and in emergency relief work. It is impossible to estimate the influence for good which has resulted from the motivation offered to the four million <sup>2</sup> Scouts and Scout officials in America who have given their allegiance to the Scout oath and law during the past

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1. Pendry, Elizabeth R., Hartshorne, Hugh, "Organizations for Youth," p.20  
2. Cf. Ibid, p.25

nineteen years.

Similar programs for groups of other ages and interests are to be found in Cub Scouting for younger boys, Girl Scouting, Sea Scouting, Explorer Scouting, and Rovering or "grown-up" Scouting for young men.

The organization of the Maverick Clubs is a more recent program designed to give underprivileged boys opportunities for growth in character. The first Maverick Club was organized on January 1, 1934, in Amarillo, Texas, in an effort to rehabilitate Amarillo's delinquent boys, twenty-eight of whom had been sent to State reformatories within the previous year. The boys of the Maverick Club, "Home of the Unbranded Calf," engage in such activities as boxing, swimming, reading, ball-playing, debating, and public speaking. They attend religious services regularly. Since the beginning of this movement juvenile delinquency has almost vanished from the city, only four Amarillo boys have been sent to reform schools. Forty-two boys have been paroled to the Club by the juvenile court. A number of other communities have organizations affiliating with the Mavericks. There are the Dogie Club for the Negro boys and the Pinto Club for Mexicans, and a similar program has been launched tentatively for girls. After the first eighteen months of its organization, this program had affected the lives of more than 2,250 youths of three races in two States. <sup>1</sup>

Other character building societies independently organized which contribute to the prevention of juvenile delinquency are the Camp

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1. Cf. "Dime and an Idea Saves Texas Boys," New York Times, Oct. 19, 1935  
S. C. Frank, R. S. Smith, R., Fort Worth, Tex., op. cit. Sec. I, pp. 11-101

Fire Girls, Boy Rangers, Pioneer Youth of America, Boy's Brotherhood Republic, the Woodcraft League of America, Junior Achievement, Boy's Clubs of America,<sup>1</sup> and the Four-H Club work.

## 2. Junior Programs of Adult Groups

The promotion of a sympathetic understanding between the older and younger generation has long been a problem to those interested in character-building. A number of business men's clubs organized for "Service" have sponsored junior programs in order to improve their own understanding of youth and to serve underprivileged children. The Kiwanis "Brothers" and "Dads", the Rotary Club's Boys' Work, the Optimist International Boys' Work, the Lion's work among underprivileged boys, and the Order of Demolay are all fine examples of this type of character building agencies.<sup>2</sup>

Outstanding among these is the work for the prevention of juvenile delinquency sponsored by the Rotary Club of Los Angeles, California. Through their vital interest in the problem of juvenile delinquency and its prevention, there have been organized the Coordinating Councils of Los Angeles County which have accomplished much by awakening public opinion and creating a sense of community responsibility for the reduction of delinquency. Their statistics show that during the first six months of work there was a decrease of four-hundred and seventy-three in petitions filed before the juvenile court of the county.<sup>3</sup> Through local efforts and cooperation one High School

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1. Cf. Pendry, Elizabeth R., Hartshorne, Hugh, op. cit. Sec. I, pp. 11-104
2. Cf. Op. cit., Sec. II, pp. 107-143
3. Cf. Scudder, Kenyon J., Beam, Kenneth S., "Why Have Delinquents?" p.40

reduced the number of juvenile petitions from one-hundred and twenty-nine to five in one year. The police of another city reported a decrease in certifications from forty-seven to five during the same<sup>1</sup> period.

### 3. Plans for Character Education in Schools

Within recent years practical educators have become vitally interested in various public-school methods for character education. Extensive research has been conducted and experiments have been carried on in the name of "progressive education". Today there is a vast number of private schools whose distinctive aims are centered in character building, as well as a multitude of programs for character education in public school systems.

Among the most noteworthy of the latter type is the Iowa Plan developed under the direction of Dr. Edwin D. Starbuck of the University of Iowa and presented in 1922. In philosophy this plan appears to be based on

"an appreciation of the newer methods of pedagogy and their moral as well as intellectual values, an appreciation of the new psychology. . . , and a realization that character must be a purposeful product, not a chance by-product, although it is not to be taught by a study of virtues nor by a stereotyped plan." <sup>2</sup>

A somewhat different type of plan for character building which is being used in connection with public schools is the Junior Red Cross. Organized during the World War as an emergency relief measure, the Junior Red Cross was recognized as a means for training in ideals of service and citizenship, and hence has been developed by progressive

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1. Cf. Ibid, p.41

2. Pendry, Elizabeth R., Hartshorne, Hugh, op. cit. p.153

educators during the years since the war. In 1933, it had a membership of 5,645,414 children in 28,871 elementary schools and 959,039 boys and girls of high-school years. Its aim is "to promote health, to develop the altruistic tendencies of children, to give practice in good citizenship, to promote international friendliness among the children of the world."<sup>1</sup>

Other character education programs devised for use in connection with the schools include The School Republic, the National Self-government Committee, the Pathfinders of America, Knighthood of Youth, and American School Citizenship League.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. Special Interest Plans

The National Recreation Association, Inc., is an example of an organization pursuing a line of special interest which by its philosophy, procedure, and results must be recognized as a means of character development. Since its inception in 1906 when its roll of honored leaders included such names as Theodore Roosevelt, Jacob Riis, and Jane Addams, the Association has been actively engaged in promoting in every community recreational opportunities for young and old of whatever sex, creed or color. In general its purpose is to

"encourage the leisure-time activities which help boys and girls and men and women to become better and happier citizens; which promote health, decrease juvenile delinquency, decrease adult's crime, increase better workmanship, and increase a friendly feeling in the community."<sup>3</sup>

Other character building plans which pursue some special

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1. Op. cit., p.193  
2. Cf. Ibid, pp.161-200  
3. Ibid, p.238

interest are the American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the National Association of Audubon Societies, the School Garden Association of America and the Sportsmanship Brotherhood.<sup>1</sup>

#### 5. Interreligious Groups

The influence of such organizations as the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association has done much to assist young people to reach a satisfactory adjustment to the problems of life. Careful studies of the methods and procedures of the Y. M. C. A. have demonstrated that through its activities,

"men and boys have found an increased interest in good physical condition as a means to better lives, an increased understanding and appreciation of the better choice in the ways of life, an increased understanding of sex, love, marriage, family life, and an increased appreciation of art, music, etc., a higher standard of personal physical living and of educational aims and interests, a broader appreciation of humanity with a lessening of prejudices, often a happier adjustment to vocation and to life in general."<sup>2</sup>

The Big Brother and Big Sister organizations have done splendid work in many communities through their trained case-workers and their method of finding men and women of high ideals who are willing to act as Big Brothers or Big Sisters to the underprivileged boys and girls brought to their attention.

#### D. Preventive Methods of Juvenile Courts and Governmental Agencies

##### 1. Juvenile Court and Police Methods

In no case should the work of prevention be considered at an end when the delinquent has come into conflict with the law for then he is in greatest need of careful study and sympathetic under-

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1. Cf. Op. cit., pp. 211-250

2. Ibid, p. 300

standing. "Since children are, in a sense, wards of the State, the State must deal with those who break its laws as a wise parent with children on the basis of complete and intimate understanding."<sup>1</sup>

Juvenile courts vested with exclusive jurisdiction over children's cases have been established in all but two States. In most instances the county is the unit of jurisdiction, which in a majority of States extends up to the age of eighteen years.<sup>2</sup> According to the White House Conference report on the Delinquent Child, the primary function of the juvenile courts "hinges on the fact that they are not looking outward at the act but, scrutinizing it as a symptom,<sup>3</sup> are looking forward to what the child is to become."<sup>3</sup> When such a theory of function activates any court administration the preventive influence of that court is substantiated.

Present-day juvenile court standards emphasize the importance of using probation in the treatment of delinquents in order to give them opportunities for normal development and growth. In correction of fallacious ideas which are currently held concerning this system, a prominent judge states, "Probation in the hands of a competent probation officer is something far more constructive than punishment, more curative than giving another chance,<sup>4</sup> more creative than imposing rules of conduct by force from without."<sup>4</sup> The real purpose of probation lies in the establishment of right relationships. The delinquent is made the center of a plan of social treatment which attempts

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1. Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 215, op. cit., p. 27
2. Cf. Juvenile Court Standards, Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 121, p.2
3. Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 215, op. cit., p.29
4. Loevinger, Judge Gustavus, in "Character, Jan.-Feb., 1936, p.6

to supply as far as possible whatever is lacking in his security and developmental needs in his relations to himself, his family, his school, his church, and his community. The probation officer tries to make it possible for the child and those about him to arrive at the necessary right relationships.

Wide-spread efforts have been made to improve police administration especially in the direction of crime prevention. Police-training schools have been established and specialized departments developed for the purpose of dealing intelligently with juvenile problems. A fine demonstration of preventive work which can be carried on by police departments is being offered by the Crime Prevention Bureau of the police department of New York City. This bureau which was first established as an experiment in 1930 has since continued its operations with two main objectives in mind. They are, first, "the discovery and attack upon situations, community conditions, and individuals contributing to the delinquency of minors," and second, "helping to secure more adequate social treatment for individual juvenile delinquents and wayward minors."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Assistance Given by State and Federal Governments

A State-wide program is necessary if resources for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency are to be adequately developed in rural communities and small cities. Although as yet no State has launched a complete State program, many States have passed Child-Labor Laws, compulsory school ordinances and other laws for the

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1. "Police Dispense Gangs Before They Grow Up," New York Herald Tribune, April 10, 1932. Sec. VIII, p.1



protection and welfare of the child. Other States have developed successful plans for the cooperative work of State and local welfare organizations which form an excellent basis for dealing with delinquency problems.

The Federal Government through its research agencies and its educational programs as well as by means of various types of social legislation has greatly assisted in the nation-wide development of a program for dealing with delinquency. A very concrete expression of Federal assistance is the section of the Social Security Act of 1935 which authorized an annual Federal appropriation of \$1,500,000 to be used through the Children's Bureau in cooperation with State public-welfare agencies.

"Plans for the use of these funds, . . . will have among their ultimate aims that of substituting constructive for destructive interests in the lives of children and of building up for them a wholesome social existence that will safeguard them against the sort of dangerous activities which lead to the necessity for juvenile court proceedings." <sup>1</sup>

A nation-wide program related to the present dilemma of unemployed youth and therefore to the prevention of delinquency is the work of the National Youth Administration established in June 1935. By means of \$50,000,000 from the Emergency Relief appropriation the N. Y. A. is attempting to establish outlets for the normal activities of youth. Much of its work has been done toward making it possible for young people to continue their education. Approximately 300,000 students have been kept in high schools and colleges and more than 4,000 graduate students are receiving N. Y. A. aid in colleges and

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1. Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 215, op. cit., p.43

universities. Other young people are being helped through work on WPA projects or by jobs secured through the United States Employment Service. In addition many are being trained in practical activities for leisure time.<sup>1</sup>

#### E. The Community Program For The Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

Various studies have been made which show that community environment is closely related with the rate of juvenile delinquency. The report of the delinquency committee of the White House Conference speaks of community responsibility thus,

"All children, privileged and underprivileged, take what the community has to offer. Adults make the community what it is. When it does not satisfy the needs of its children or when it thwarts and exploits them the adults are responsible, and no clinics, juvenile courts, or reformatory institutions can ever fully adjust the child."<sup>2</sup>

Leaders are urging the organization of an effective agency to combine all groups fighting crime into a concerted community effort to war against juvenile delinquency. An interesting development in this direction is the organization of community councils to coordinate the work of public and private agencies in a community-wide approach to the problem. The Coordinating Councils of Los Angeles County have done much to arouse the sense of community responsibility for every child regardless of race, color, or situation. In the organization are included representatives of schools, churches, service clubs, Police department, recreational agencies, welfare department, Y.M.C.A.,

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1. Williams, Aubrey, "A Crisis For Our Youth," New York Times Magazine, January 19, 1936, pp. 4,5
2. Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 215, op. cit., p.21

Boy Scouts and other character building groups. All these agencies are centering their united interest and attention upon the unadjusted child, his problems and his environment.

Many communities in attempts to meet the needs of their children have come to realize the importance of providing facilities for wholesome, happy recreation. Public playgrounds sponsoring interesting recreational programs and providing opportunity for free play have become a part of all progressive community plans. Some localities have added athletic fields, municipal beaches and swimming pools to their play-time equipment. In crowded industrial areas where sufficient play-grounds are lacking, certain traffic streets have been officially blocked off at specific hours for the use of children at play. Such facilities as public libraries, public concerts and community choruses, and free exhibitions at museums and art galleries have likewise contributed to the community program.

In addition to the program of providing for constructive use of leisure time, most communities now attempt to protect children from harmful and demoralizing influences. Such organizations as Child-welfare departments, Children's Aid Societies, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children often make protective work their major junction. Certain places of commercial amusement such as movies, pool rooms, billard parlors, dance halls and roadhouses are required by many cities to be licensed and regularly inspected by municipal officers. Often city ordinances set an age limit under which children shall not be admitted to such places. In certain communities a Motion

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Picture Estimate Service makes available to the public information as to the desirability for children of any certain motion picture. Other protective efforts being made by various communities include the suppression of obscene literature, the enforcement of laws prohibiting the sale of liquor, drugs, and tobacco to minors, and the prosecution of adults for contributing to juvenile delinquency.

#### E. Summary and Estimation of These Agencies

It is now evident that the problem of prevention of juvenile delinquency is being approached from many different angles. Preventive agencies are at work to improve both the home and the school environment of the child. In addition altruistic organizations of many types are offering programs for character education. Not satisfied to drop the preventive interest even after the child has been apprehended by the law, certain police and juvenile court officials are making use of preventive methods and procedures. State and Federal governments are giving valuable assistance in cooperation with smaller agencies. Finally, there has come in some districts concerted community efforts to solve the problem by bringing about an intelligent coordination of all preventive agencies.

However, after a comparison of the services being rendered by all these preventive agencies and methods with the view of juvenile delinquency as it exists in America today, it must be admitted that the problem of the prevention of juvenile delinquency is not yet adequately solved. Too often these agencies have made the mistake of

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1. Cf. Coordinating Council Bulletin, May, 1935, p.3

stressing one cause of delinquency to the entire neglect of all other contributing causes. There is still an enormous gap between the needs of youth and the provisions being made to meet those needs.

In spite of serious efforts being made to correct delinquent tendencies in the early years in home and school life, the ranks of organized crime are constantly being filled by apprentice criminals-- children who are bred in broken homes, nurtured by a school system arranged for the masses, and accentuated by public indifference.

Character building organizations have neglected almost entirely the youth of eighteen years and over at a time when these young people desperately need to find activities and challenges which will make life seem worthwhile. The few organizations which do serve young adults offer programs which are too well planned and expertly run by adult leadership and do not allow the young people to exercise their powers of self-expression and administration.

Strange as it may seem, in many courts obsolete theories still exist side by side with the newer methods. Children may be handled with intelligent understanding when their offense is of a minor nature but if the offense is a serious one the treatment is often the conventional severe "justice" which would be administered to an adult criminal. Public opinion in most places is ready to discriminate unjustly against the child who has gone through court or has received institutional care. There is too wide a gap between the court and the agencies of the community. Members of the delinquency committee of

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1. Cf. Pendry, Elizabeth R., Hartshorne, Hugh, "Organizations For Youth," p.4

the White House Conference agreed that, "The community has not yet realized that it is responsible for building to satisfy the fundamental needs of the child."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Children's Bureau Bulletin No. 215, op. cit., p.21

CHAPTER III  
THE RELATION OF CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

"Hear me all of you, and understand: there is nothing from without the man, that going into him can defile him; but the things which proceed out of the man are those that defile the man."

— Gospel by Mark 7:14,15



CHAPTER III  
THE RELATION OF CHRISTIAN  
EDUCATION TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A. Introduction

Religion has many personal and social functions in life. The Kingdom of God is in direct opposition to all forces of oppression, corruption, ignorance, intemperance, impurity, disease, poverty, and crime. Through the centuries multitudes have testified to the power of the Christian religion to comfort in times of trouble, to give courage and moral strength in hours of temptation, to repress savage temper, to awaken love even toward enemies. Public opinion which believes in righteousness and condemns vice and all immorality has been moulded by the teachings of the Gospel.

No one imagines that punishments or law enforcement can ever expell criminal impulses and tendencies. Only the power of awakened moral conviction can do this. In spite of the endeavors of numberless social welfare agencies and character building organizations it is evident that a large majority of children and young people have been left untouched by any influence which is memorable, moving or soul-stirring. The secular agencies have failed to offer that which will arouse effective moral conviction and create moral character. It is therefore imperative that Christian education be considered in its relation to the problem of juvenile delinquency.

In spite of repeated attempts to clarify the issue there still exists much confusion in the usage of terms relating to the nurture of individuals in the Christian Faith. The phrase "religious education" while it is extensively used in Christian circles is unsatisfactory to many on the basis that it is evasive if not actually misleading. They feel that it implies a naturalism and might refer to education in any religion. On the other hand, the more specific term "Christian education" has frequently been limited to the institutional field to designate the Christian college and other educational institutions under direct denominational control.

For the purpose of this thesis, Christian education is considered to mean the use of all the resources of the Christian church for the purpose of bringing the growing person to a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Christ in such a way that his whole personality becomes integrated by Christlike ideals and loyalties. The Christ-centered personality results in the highest of human welfare, for in addition to man's relation to God there is involved a satisfactory relation to his fellowmen and a peace within himself.

#### B. Juvenile Delinquency, a Problem of the Moral Character

Thus far juvenile delinquency has been considered in relation to its causal factors together with a study of certain agencies which are working for the removal of these causes. However, in the final evaluation of the accomplishment of these agencies it must be admitted that little actual progress has been made toward the ultimate goal of successful prevention of juvenile delinquency.

In any careful consideration of causes contributing to juvenile delinquency there enter into the problem certain basic factors<sup>1</sup> which cannot be measured by physical tests. While poor environmental and hereditary background must be recognized as predisposing and contributing causes, it has never been conclusively shown that crime and delinquency are the inevitable results of such conditions. More often such forces appear to be the occasions of crime rather than its ultimate causes. With increased investigation of causes, there has come a growing belief that with the exception of actual insanity, the real cause for crime will be found not in outside factors but in the individual himself. The moral character of the child or man will decide the issue.

One who has had long experience with young delinquents recognizes that delinquency is not actually caused by bodily defects, low intelligence, or any one part of the child's being or environment. She maintains that delinquency is the child's way of responding to the human situation and involves the whole being,—heredity, physical make-up, intelligence, habits of emotional response, life history, and social and cosmic relations.<sup>2</sup>

Character has been defined as "an organized self, socially<sup>3</sup> integrated and spiritually motivated." The child may be said to have character when he acts according to voluntary, internal principles. However, character development begins much earlier than this. Child

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1. See p.21
2. Cf. Van Waters, Miriam, "Youth In Conflict," pp.173-174
3. Cf. Fiske, G. Walter, in "Studies in Religious Education," edited by Lotz & Crawford, p.84

psychologists maintain that new emotional patterns may be "learned" in early infancy, as for example when the baby cries to be picked up. If the mother rewards this desire the child soon becomes "spoiled" and the first step has been taken toward later maladjustment to the adult world. It is generally agreed by social workers of experience that in countless instances the spoiled child of two or three years becomes the ten-year-old truant, the fifteen-year-old delinquent, and the adult criminal.

The growth of character comes through the commonplace experiences of life. The manner in which the child makes adjustment toward his environment is a definite step in character development; ". . . the experiences that have moral value are not added to the ordinary activities of life but consist of these activities themselves when they are carried on with full realization of their significance."<sup>1</sup>

As the child grows his adjustments to his environment are based, first, upon the approval and disapproval of those about him, later, upon his own appraisal of his behavior and the personal satisfaction derived therefrom. A review of the foregoing discussion of causes of juvenile delinquency serves as a powerful reminder of the tragic situation in which the youth of today finds himself. His world is a mixture of social injustice, economic insecurity, disintegrated home-life, and moral degradation. Worst of all, society offers no single norm of honesty, cleanliness, kindness, or justice upon which he may make his life adjustments. A certain schoolman writes, "A

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1. Hartshorne, Hugh, "Character in Human Relations," p.21

boy may find a given behavior pattern approved by the church, disapproved by his playmates, ignored by his home, and misunderstood by the school.<sup>1</sup> Under such circumstances can anyone wonder that youth frequently fails to achieve consistent moral behavior?

A strong will trained to self-mastery is basic to any effectual degree of character development. The child must know himself and be prepared to face successfully the moral conflict within himself. Christianity maintains that this moral struggle cannot be accounted for by heredity or environment. The only adequate explanation for the constant internal conflict between right and wrong is to be found in the recognition of the human race as a fallen race, twisted morally out of shape. Professor Myers of Hartford expresses a like idea when he says,

"The Church holds that there is a Power in the universe whose desire is the highest of human welfare, and without conscious fellowship with whom neither the individual nor society can ever attain its best self. It believes that the human heart by its nature has ever been seeking, often blindly, that infinite God, and this because he, the Father, first loved his children."<sup>2</sup>

The child raised in an ideal home who is taught early in life the difference between right and wrong undergoes a discipline of self and learns self-sacrifice. But for the underprivileged child from the "broken home" and the "delinquency area" of the city who receives no such training the struggle is far too much.

### C. The Effect of Christian Education on the Character

#### Development of Youth

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1. Quoted by Cole, Stewart G., in "Character and Religion," p.175
2. Quoted by Fiske, G. Walter, op. cit., p.88

## 1. Limitations of Non-religious Character Education

Any education which merely trains the child to be robust and intelligent can never be considered adequate. The child must receive an education suited to his whole being. He must be nurtured physically, mentally and morally. This need for education for the whole of life has been widely acclaimed. From its beginning, education in America has recognized the importance of maintaining moral objectives. The records of the proceedings of the National Education Association since its organization in 1857 have shown a constant interest in the moral as well as intellectual development of pupils.

Modern educators, deeply concerned over the present extent of moral delinquency, are affirming the truth of John Ruskin's principle, namely:

"Education does not mean teaching people what they do not know; it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave. It is not teaching the youth the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery and their literature to lust; it means, on the contrary, training them to the perfect exercise and kingly countenance of their bodies and souls." <sup>1</sup>

Reference has already been made to the number of character building activities now being conducted in schools and communities which have recognized the necessity of a well-rounded program for the development of the child and the prevention of later maladjustment.

Among the leaders of the present character education movement there are those who hold that right conduct can be taught in an area of neutral morality entirely apart from any religious belief. If effective, this course should certainly be accepted with great acclaim

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1. Quoted by Richardson, Norman E., in "The Christ of the Class Room," p. 230

in America where such problems as sectarianism and the separation of church and State greatly hamper religious moral instruction. However, although moral instruction of this type has been advocated since before the beginning of this century it has failed to make an appreciable impression on the educational system. Doubtless this is to be accounted for from the fact that such moral instruction lacks the necessary sanction. Indeed, Felix Adler in a presentation of his plan of unsectarian moral instruction has practically put his finger on this weakness. He says,

"It is the business of the moral instructor in the school to deliver to his pupils the subject-matter of morality, but not to deal with the sanctions of it; to give his pupils a clearer understanding of what is right and what is wrong, but not to enter into the question why the right should be done and the wrong avoided." <sup>1</sup>

In refutation of this system it has been demonstrated by recent studies, such as those of Hartshorne and May, <sup>2</sup> that mere formal knowledge of right and wrong does not by any means insure the carrying of such ideas into life conduct in times of moral crises. The child must be given a working motive for right conduct. It is not enough to teach him that "it pays" to be good. When he reads the newspaper and attends the movies he will probably decide that honesty is not always the best policy. Likewise, fear of punishment has not proved successful as a motivation against wrong-doing since youth is constantly mindful of the number of those who "get by".

Another group of moralists aim at character education based

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1. Adler, Felix, "The Moral Instruction of Children," p. 12
2. Hartshorne, Hugh, and May, M., "Studies in Deceit," 1928

chiefly on the formation of right habits, such as habits of honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty to the group, and unselfishness. While it must be conceded that good habits are helpful in maintaining moral conduct, it is doubtful how long a habit which is due to external influence and not backed by a strong controlling motive can withstand the power of temptation. Dr. Sharp of the University of Wisconsin, a leader in secular education, clearly refutes the idea that the habit mechanism can ever insure character. In his book "Education for Character" he maintains,

"If the habit is to stand the test of time, the channel must be made by the ideal. From every point of view, then, the purpose of moral education can be nothing less than fostering the growth of moral ideals, and supplying favorable conditions for the creation and preservation of the habit of obeying them."<sup>1</sup>

Frequent attempts to substitute other motivations have failed and secular educators are being driven to the conclusion that it is impossible to separate morality from religion. This conclusion is supported by the report of the Commission on Character Education which was adopted by the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. While the Commission maintains that it is the responsibility of the public school to develop character they are quick to recognize the religious inferences involved. The following excerpts from their report are appropriate to the present discussion:

"If by 'religion' we connote man's supreme values and deepest loyalties, then no religious man can set up his character values outside of his religion. They may have little to do with the religion which he professes. They are inevitably bound up with the religion by which he lives."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Quoted by Fiske, G. Walter, op. cit., p. 85
2. National Education Association, "Character Education," Tenth Yearbook, 1932, p. 35



"A study of the age-long yearnings and strivings of humanity must tend to make the individual religious in a fundamental sense. Where appreciation of the needs of the world is developed and a desire to share in meeting those needs is created, surely a religious impulse has been gained. The world today needs religion as much as it ever did, perhaps more. This need can be met only by means of religious interpretation and leadership in terms of life as it is today. The schools can do much to prepare the way for such interpretation and such leadership." <sup>1</sup>

From those who advocate "good citizenship" as the aim of character education comes the admission: "It cannot be denied that a powerful motive for good citizenship is to be found in religious ideals and teachings." <sup>2</sup>

A prominent judge of the Juvenile Court recognizes the place of religion in character education when he states:

"As I have said so many times, one of the prime essentials for preventing juvenile delinquency, is a sound foundation in old-fashioned character. There is no agency in the community from which this can better come, than from the churches." <sup>3</sup>

Thus it is apparent that secular educators have begun to realize the inadequacy of mere habit, and the importance of ideals, right attitudes and motives. Religious educators, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, go beyond this position to maintain that the sanction to all morality is God and that man's relation to God is the only rational basis for right living.

This conception of the moral life as based on divine sanction was expressed by Dr. S. Parkes Cadman from The Radio Pulpit recently. He maintains that the carnal ambitions and material interests are deeply embedded in man's character and can never be dislodged by

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1. Ibid, p. 190
2. National Education Association, Research Bulletin, "Crime Prevention Through Education," p. 180
3. Blake, Samuel R., Co-ordinating Council Bulletin, April 1935

rationalism or altruistic idealism. He points out that it is much easier to do away with notorious public wrongs than it is to exterminate their roots in private and debased human nature. He concludes that

"religious training with the signet of love for its seal, a righteous nation as its goal and the conviction that bad morals can never be good economics as its sustaining force is the primal need of the United States and of its educational system from top to bottom." <sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Christian Contribution To Character Education

Christian educators, while they recognize the validity of the above views, maintain that the Christ-centered personality is the highest achievement of all character education.

"If the love of Christ is really in the heart of youth, the Christ ideal, concrete, personalized, powerful, will dominate his imagination, control his imagery, and motivate his conduct. There is no other sure basis for Christian character." <sup>2</sup>

It is comparatively easy to state the great claims and affirmations of the Christian Faith in theological and ecclesiastical terms but it is a much more complicated task to put into concrete form a discussion of the contributions of Christianity to character development. The following statement approved by forty-three Protestant denominations is helpful in an understanding of the function of Christian education in character development.

"Education in the broad sense is the process whereby individuals develop in personality through their interaction and relationship with their environment--material, human, and divine-- and whereby society renews its life and brings about its enrichment and progress. Education becomes religious when it recognizes the

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1. Radio Pulpit, Feb. 23, 1936, Radio Station W.E.A.F.
2. Fiske, G. Walter, op. cit., p. 87

controlling place of the divine in the environment of the individual and society through which renewal and enrichment come. Education becomes specifically Christian when it realizes the interaction with a divine power as fellowship with God, who is revealed through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and who, through the Holy Spirit, releases his creative and redemptive energies into human life and society for the building of his kingdom." <sup>1</sup>

In harmony with this statement there are certain unique functions which the Christian religion seeks to perform in the development of character. Since education is a process of growth which takes place through experience, Christian education concerns itself with the experience of growing persons. The International Council of Religious Education, after giving careful consideration to the principles and objectives of Christian education has framed seven comprehensive objectives which may be stated in very condensed form as the attempt to develop in growing persons God-consciousness, loyalty to Christ as a personal Savior and Lord, Christ-like character, recognition of social obligation, participation in the church of Christ, a Christian philosophy of life, and the acquisition, assim-<sup>2</sup>ilation, and use of the race heritage of religious experience.

It is immediately apparent that in these objectives there is involved the three-fold relationship--the relationship to God, that within one's own personality, and the relationship to one's fellowmen. Christianity has a unique contribution to offer to character education in each of these three great areas of human experience.

The first unique possession of Christianity is the dynamic

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1. International Curriculum Guide, Book One. "Principles and Objectives of Christian Education." p. 7
2. Cf. Ibid, pp. 10-15

of the righteousness of Christ which is the most desirable outcome of any program of Character education. The personal Christian experience is not composed of an exhaustive list of "Thou shalt's" and "Thou shalt not's" which lead to a legalistic, and powerless attempt at righteousness. It offers a dynamic righteousness by the grace of God through the spiritually creative and redemptive power of Christ. Through this personal relation with God the individual is enabled to be an overcomer in the moral struggle. The juvenile delinquent needs this supernatural grace and power more than anything else. It is this that is missing in his home and environment. He knows wrong but he lacks the power to resist. The personal experience objective of Christian education--the personal relationship to God--is the controlling power beyond character education.

The second unique contribution of Christian education to character development is inseparable from the first since it is the creative living-out in everyday experiences of the spirit, attitudes, ideals and responses of a Christ-like character. Christian education brings to moral instruction the uniquely superior principle of personality integration, with Christ as the organized center for human personality. This conscious responsibility of the human to the divine lends the most effective sanction to character.

"It is this high God who makes binding our convictions of conscience and our moral laws. Superior Christianity not only anchors character in the universe, but it becomes the essential condition of more ambitious adventures of character. It provides compass for 'the life of faith'." <sup>1</sup>

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1. Cole, Stewart G., "Character and Religion," p. 183

The mystical, luminous, dynamic symbolism of Christian worship and liturgy dramatize character-making processes. Stewart Cole explains this function of religion when he says:

"It elevates ordinary acts into extraordinary relations, human and cosmic, and makes of simple moral deeds the vehicles of exalted spiritual service. A rational view of character in accord with this age of science is translated by the magical touch of religion into a beautiful craft of living." <sup>1</sup>

Christian educators realize that their contribution to character education must not end with the achievement of personal Christian experience and character. The individual must maintain satisfactory relationship with his neighbors, his community, and the world. He must be able to "participate in and contribute constructively to the building of a social order throughout the world, embodying the ideal of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." <sup>2</sup> At the heart of such an ideal society there must be a Christ-like church, the purpose of which is to mediate the Christian message and its values to the world.

One of the great problems of modern character educators is how to bridge the gap between the code of ideals taught to children and that which is practiced by adults in home, school, national, and international life. The social implications of the Christian gospel, when fully accepted in any community, will affect the moral and social patterns of adult life and thus make possible to the children the highest type of social environment and influences for character development.

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1. Cole, Stewart G., op. cit., p. 184
2. International Curriculum Guide, Book One, op. cit. p. 13

### 3. Instances Showing the Effect of Christian Education on Character

The first article of the Children's Charter, promising "For every child spiritual and moral training to help him stand firm under the pressure of life," implies a belief in the effectiveness of religious education on the part of members of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.

However, very little has been done along the line of comprehensive investigation to determine scientifically the exact degree to which Christian Education is effective in moral character and conduct. Studies conducted by the Bureau of Research of the International Council of Religious Education could not be supplemented by observations, interviews and case-studies and therefore have not been conclusive one way or the other.

Statistics indicate that a large percentage of cases appearing in court involve youths who have not been connected with the Christian churches. Of the 14,000 juvenile delinquents in the Los Angeles County courts in three years sixty-eight per cent had no affiliation with any church, Sunday School or church club of any kind.<sup>1</sup>

Supreme Court Justice, Lewis L. Fawcett, of Brooklyn, N. Y. reports that in eighteen years of experience while handling the cases of 4,000 youths under twenty-one years of age he found only thirteen of these who were members of a Sunday School at the time of the commission of crime. He gave suspended sentences to 1,092 with the requirement that each should attend church or Sunday School. He

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1. Scudder, Kenyon J. & Beam, Kenneth S., "Who Is Delinquent?", p. 10

indicates the following results:

"In virtually all of the suspended sentences the reform was quick and I believe, permanent. If we could keep the youths of America in Sunday School during the period of character formation, or at regular attendance upon religious worship, we could close the criminal courts and jails. There would be no raw material to work on." <sup>1</sup>

A juvenile court judge states his evaluation of the influence of the Week Day Church Schools of Marretta, Ohio thus: "You will perhaps be interested to know that after careful investigation of our records I find that juvenile delinquency has decreased materially in this county since religious education has been established in the day schools." <sup>2</sup>

In a recent investigation made by the Co-ordinating Council of Los Angeles County of the work of the churches among the underprivileged children of the city and their influence on pre-delinquent boys and girls, the Vacation Church Schools project was shown to have distinct value as a means of preventing delinquency. It provided useful, directed effort for the idle hands and brains of the children and held their interest during the vacation days when they most needed such help. As a result, "the youngsters learned good sportsmanship, clean citizenship, and through active cooperation in a fellowship in real living-together, they gained a realization of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." <sup>3</sup>

The experience is related of one minister who was doubtful about there being any problem of delinquency in the neighborhood for

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1. Cf. White, J. Campbell, "The Cure For Crime."
2. Quoted by Lotz, P. Henry, in "Studies in Religious Education," by Lotz & Crawford, p. 292
3. Whitehead, Hubert, Report on the Vacation Church School and Co-ordinating Council, 1935, of Los Angeles County, p. 1

which he was planning a Vacation Church School. However, in order to check on the situation he visited all the local merchants and was shocked to discover that their stores were frequently invaded by a gang of local boys engaged in petty thieving. On a second canvas of the merchants made at the close of the school, which had proved unexpectedly popular and successful, he found to his amazement that the thieving had stopped entirely during the school term.<sup>1</sup>

#### D. Summary

The recognition of juvenile delinquency not as the result of any one factor of heredity or environment but as the child's way of responding to his life situation causes delinquency to take its proper place as a problem of the moral character--which must be treated by means of character reconstruction and development. Non-religious character education has been shown to have limitations which must be overcome by the introduction of religious ideals, sanctions and loyalties. It is therefore apparent that there exists a vital relationship between character development and Christian education which makes unique contributions in all areas of human experience. The fact that Christian education has a powerful influence over the moral character and conduct of youth has been substantiated by the testimonies of judges, court statistics, and reports of investigators.

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1. Cf. Ibid, p. 3



CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM  
FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

"Youth today is challenging the Church, and upon how we as a church and as individuals meet that challenge depends, humanly speaking, the future of youth and the future of the Church. Youth calls upon us for sympathetic understanding, for adequate leadership, for worthwhile instruction, for inspiring ideals, for experience in service, for training in leadership and, above all, for a vital Christian faith. We must not fail them."

--Leon C. Palmer, in "Youth and The Church"

## CHAPTER IV

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM FOR THE PREVENTION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

#### A. The Responsibility of the Christian Church to Provide an Effective Program for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

Vital religion must be recognized as a unifying influence in personality and a basic factor in character development. Secular agencies at work for the prevention of delinquency have not hesitated to make use of the potential power of religion in the shaping of the child's character. The cooperation of the church has been sought by juvenile court judges, probation officers, social case-workers and school officials in their attempts to readjust and reeducate delinquent children. Most of the efforts of these educational, social welfare and character building agencies are the natural results in society of the influence of the Christian Gospel which emphasizes the worth of human personality, and upholds the Kingdom of God ideal. Indeed, a number of the community character building agencies are founded upon a certain basic spiritual idealism and include definite religious elements in their programs. Examples of this tendency are apparent in the "reverence" and "duty to God" clauses of the Boy Scout law, and in the National Education Association's recognition that the school must participate in giving to the child certain fundamental religious impulses and experiences.

The church--the body of Christ--who inspired men to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," can be satisfied with

nothing less than the highest ideals of human existence and relationship. Church members--followers of the Master who came proclaiming "the abundant life"--must awaken to their responsibility to those who have no conception of their birthright as sons of God. An honest recognition of past failures and a determined effort to discover and accept the challenge of present opportunities and responsibilities are essential tasks facing the modern Christian church.

#### 1. Past Failures

The isolation of religion from the daily experience of life has resulted in the progressive disintegration of individuals and society. That the Christian Church has failed tragically in its responsibility to youth is apparent from the fact that children and young people of America are so largely denied dynamic religious training as a part of their total educational experience. At the present time less than one-half of America's sixty million children and adolescents are enrolled in schools teaching religion, and three out of every five Protestant children receive no definite religious instruction at all. It is a well-established fact that these youths are teachable. Nothing can keep them from learning. "They are born disciples . . . Whose disciples they will become depends on the Christian church." <sup>1</sup> Statistics show that a large majority of juvenile offenders have had no contact with spiritual agencies. Many of them who have church affiliations have attended mechanically and religion has never been interpreted to them in terms of every day conduct.

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1. Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, "The Pastor and Christian Education," p. 4

Fellowship with God is the foundation of moral character. The Bible is the supreme source and guide book leading the individual to God. Dr. S. Parkes Cadman recently expressed his belief that the national character has been profoundly affected by the relaxation of the religious bond and the spread of pagan secularism. He concluded,

"How could it be otherwise? The Bible at its best, insists on right conduct. No literature in the world equals it in this particular. Yet in few supposedly enlightened lands are the people so ignorant of the Bible as they are here. About one-half of our population belongs to no church and seldom attends any devotional services. Millions more take their vows of membership very lightly."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most shocking failure of the church is evidenced by the narrow and prejudiced attitude often taken toward children who have been before a court or in an institution for juveniles. Frequently the church which is supposed to be concerned over the weak, helpless and lost almost turns its back upon these unfortunate children. It seems to fear contamination if the doors are opened to such dirty, uncouth, and wild youngsters. As a result, religion plays little or no part in the lives of these children who need her ministrations most.

However, the failure of the church to cooperate in delinquency prevention programs is not always due to an unwillingness to work with delinquents. Many churches are greatly handicapped by a lack of funds and by the difficulty of finding leaders capable of holding the interest of the maladjusted child who craves excitement and change. Well-equipped churches have failed to find the children and groups most needing their activities, while churches situated in slum areas frequently

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1. Cadman, Dr. S. Parkes, "Religious Education," Radio Address, W.E.A.F., Feb. 23, 1936, in report issued by The National Broadcasting Company.

lack facilities for social and recreational programs by means of which the boys and girls can be helped to a constructive use of their spare time.

Francis D. McCabe, formerly a minister and now director of probationary forces of Indiana, who has made a study of the attitude of the church to the community probation program, makes the following appraisal:

"Can it be possible that the church is so busy saving its own soul that it hasn't time to save the souls of delinquent boys and girls and anti-social men and women? Did not our Lord say, 'He that loseth his life shall save it, and he that saveth his life shall lose it'? Paradoxical as that statement appears to be, it is the basis for the only program that can assure the church of future existence. Smug, self-satisfied indifference to the call of those who are drifting down the broad road to destruction, will sound the death knell of the church, just as surely as the touch of frost blights the flower."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Present Movements in the Protestant Christian Church Toward the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

The advance of the science of psychology has brought to educators in all fields a better understanding of the development and needs of youth. Christian leaders are beginning to realize that the vigorous physical and mental power, fresh moral insight and enthusiastic idealism of youth make it imperative that they be given increasing opportunities for self-expression and participation in solving moral and social problems.

It is a matter of common knowledge that youth is the period of greatest susceptibility to religious influence. The personal loyalty to God through Jesus Christ brings to the youth transformation and

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1. "Church Participation in a Probation Program," in Yearbook, National Probation Association, 1935, p. 189

high idealism. To him religion means not the conservative, tranquil worship experience of the adult but a high moral vision and an absorbing challenge to strive for ideals. Often he is sharply disillusioned when faced with the world of competition which is devoid of high ideals. The attempt to solve problems of adjustment sometimes leads to the loss of all ideals, despondency, unwise choices, anti-social conduct, or suicide.

a. America's Christian Youth Movement

Challenged by this understanding of youth, the Christian church has begun to realize the inadequacy of its youth program. As a result a new united youth movement, "Christian Youth Building a New World," is being developed cooperatively by Protestant Evangelical forces of the United States and Canada through the International Council of Religious Education. This movement is the outgrowth of the Christian Youth Council of North America which first met in Toronto, Canada, in June 1930. In facing their life problems as Christians these young people proposed to follow the trail which leads "from a wooden cross on Calvary among the hills of Jerusalem down across the burning sands and deserts of the world."<sup>1</sup> They recognized the presence along the trail of "deep shadowy valleys" and mountain peaks whose "rough and jagged sides have torn the weary traveler's feet as upward he pressed." They saw among the goals to be achieved "Christian Unity" and "a Christian society".<sup>2</sup>

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1. "Our Share in Building A New World," International Council of Religious Education, p. 3
2. Ibid

At the second meeting of this Youth Council held in 1934 leaders of youth from Protestant denominations, various state and provincial councils of religious education, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., Christian Endeavor movement, and others came together as representatives of ten million youth. They sought a unity of spirit and purpose in facing the problems of practical Christian living and issued the summons: "For us there is no alternative, we give ourselves, and invite others to join us--Christian Youth Building a New World." They chose six phases of life which must be made new, namely: "A New Person, A New Home, A New Church, A New Community, A New Nation, and A New World."

By means of other conferences and committees of youths and their leaders, the program has been developed more fully, the cooperation of other agencies has been secured, and pamphlets for guidance and source materials have been published. A number of definite projects have been mapped out for the consideration and action of the youth united in the movement. These are:

1. Developing a Program of Personal Religious Living.
2. Helping Other Young People to Be Christian.
3. Assisting in Bringing about World Peace.
4. Working to Help Solve the Liquor Problem.
5. Helping Build a Christian Economic Order.
6. Providing a Constructive Use of Liesure Time.
7. Being Christian With Other Racial and Cultural Groups.
8. Preparing for Marriage and Home Life.
9. Developing a Christian Type of Patriotism. <sup>3</sup>

b. The United Protestant Program for "Reaching the Unreached."

The Christian Church is becoming concerned over the vast

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1. Op. cit., p. 4
2. Ibid
3. General Guide to Youth Action, Christian Quest Pamphlet, No. 17, p. 4
4. Robinson, Dr. Harold McAfee, Conference, "Juvenile Delinquency and Christian Education," p. 3



number of boys and girls who are spiritually neglected. Challenged by the rising tide of revolt, crime, and hatred which has menaced society since the World War, earnest Christian leaders question whether the problem of paganism versus Christianity has not become more essential to the promotion of the the Kingdom of God than Fundamentalism versus Modernism. The church is beginning to turn her face outward toward the problems and needs of the delinquent, underprivileged and unchurched boys and girls of America. This movement has arisen simultaneously within many of the Protestant churches with the result that the ecclesiastical, missionary and educational forces are being directed in a nation-wide effort to introduce the unreached millions of children and youth to Christ.<sup>1</sup>

As an outgrowth of this movement there has been organized the National Commission on Christian Character Building of which Russel Colgate is chairman. This commission, which is in reality a committee of the Board of Trustees of the International Council of Religious Education, has the cooperation of national Protestant councils, and denominational boards of Christian Education and Home Missions. The commission is charged with developing and promoting a united Protestant movement on national, state and local levels. It does not propose new organization and machinery nor the raising of a large central fund but seeks rather "to vitalize and change, if need be, the established agencies of the Christian church and coordinate their efforts toward this central need of the unreached children and youth."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Cf. White, J. Campbell, "20,000,000 American Children Need Christian Teaching," Church Business, November-December, 1935
2. Cf. Report of the Conference on "Juvenile Delinquency and Christian Education," p. 5

In order to face the problem in a comprehensive manner, the Commission on Christian Character Building has recognized several classes of those who are "unreached" by the Christian message. The first group is made up of juvenile offenders the great majority of whom have been shown to be singularly untouched by religion. Then, there is the large class of underprivileged children and youth who have been cut off from wholesome influences because of their environment. To these must be added a vast number of middle-class boys and girls for whom Christian teaching has been entirely inadequate due to the unsolved relation of Church and State in education. It is evident that economic privileges and cultural opportunities are often accompanied by an alarming degree of religious illiteracy. Hence the more privileged youth form a fourth class of the "unreached". Finally, viewing the situation realistically as a problem of the influence of adult social and moral patterns upon the life of the child, it is seen that the program must be extended to reach the unchurched adults.

With these various classes in mind, the united Protestant program is undertaking several avenues of approach, most of which are still in the initial stages of development. In order that the Church may gain a more adequate conception of its function in the nation-wide movement to prevent delinquency, a study of causes, treatment, and prevention of crime and delinquency is being undertaken and the churches are encouraged to cooperate with the courts, probation officers and social agencies in the work of rehabilitation and prevention. Summer projects are being carried on among underprivileged children and youth in city slums, rural districts, mining centers, migrant sections,

mountaineer and negro communities. These programs of Christian character building include recreation, Bible study, music, worship, handicrafts and health.<sup>1</sup> Plans to reach the middle-class boys and girls are being developed through participation in the Coordinating Community Councils where the Church works in cooperation with the home, the public school, Boy Scouts, Y.M.C.A., and others in a character building program which includes weekday religious education for all children. The Commission is also cooperating with the Committee on the United Protestant Youth program with the hope that through it there will be presented a new challenge to the more privileged youth. A cooperative adult movement is being undertaken to increase church attendance and vital religion among adults. Radio religious education is proving to be an effective means of reaching the unreached. The "Radio Pulpit" which is broadcast regularly over a national chain, as well as many religious programs over local stations, have aided in this great effort.

B. Basic Principles to be Included in an Effective Christian Educational Program for the Prevention of Delinquency

In a recent discussion of modern scientific methods used in prison administration, Sanford Bates, Director of the Bureau of Federal Prisons, emphasized the fact that spiritual and moral factors must be considered in the preventive program when he said, "We have revitalized health and scientific methods; it is now time to revitalize religion. We look to the churches of America for this help."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Cf. Program leaflet of Conference on "Juvenile Delinquency and Christian Education."
2. Quoted in Report of Conference, Op. cit., p. 2

The growing concern of the Christian church over this responsibility is shown by the willingness to recognize past failures as well as by the present active movement toward a program of Christian education for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. In view of the acceptance of the responsibility it will be expedient to take up the consideration of basic principles to be included in such a program of Christian education.

1. A Unified Local Church Program

The essential unity in character and personality is definitely recognized by modern psychologists. The child acts, thinks and feels as a unity in any given situation, and his whole personality is influenced for good or for evil by the response which he makes. The importance of introducing the principle of unity into the religious program is becoming apparent to Christian educators.

The excessive multiplication of organizations designed to promote Christian life is an outstanding weakness of the present Church program because it results in such evils as wasteful duplication of effort, mounting expense, inefficiency, an inadequate social program and disintegration of personality. Organization must be recognized not as an end but as a means to the realization of objectives.

The present situation must be remedied by means of greater cooperation among boards, committees and other organizations in the church, a careful correlation of the various programs and an integration of all the objectives and activities. In the local church unity will

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1. Cf. Harper, W. A., in "Studies in Religious Education," edited by Lotz and Crawford. pp.603-609

be promoted by the use of the single board of Christian Education with the pastor and director of Religious Education as chief executives. The Worker's Council is an important means of securing integration of purpose and correlation of activities of the program. A careful consideration of objectives is essential if there is to be unity in the work of the church. An effective program of Christian education for the prevention of juvenile delinquency must begin in a well unified local church.

## 2. A United Protestant Program

While the local church will always be the unit in the Christian educational program, there are many functions which it can never perform alone. Only the cooperation of Protestant forces can achieve certain objectives. It will be recognized that within Protestantism itself there are certain differences of theory, creed, and practice as well as historic positions which prevent free and complete cooperation. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that these differences are in reality superficial and insignificant in comparison with the great common spiritual possessions of the Protestant churches. In addition to this great body of common ideals and purposes, the Protestant churches share a great responsibility--that of interpreting the Christian message to the world. Cooperation, which can never be coerced by law, will grow out of mutual interest and activities in sharing the common responsibility. Interdenominational cooperation does not necessarily imply complete participation by all groups in every proposal but each group should be encouraged to participate within the limits of its interests and tradition. Opportunity for such cooperation is provided

in local, county, state and national Interdenominational Councils of Churches and Christian Education.

If the Protestant church is to function effectively in the prevention of juvenile delinquency there must be interdenominational cooperation in a program "Combining the lay, ecclesiastical, mission-<sup>1</sup>ary and educational leadership and resources of the Churches."

### 3. Inter-Faith Fellowship

There are certain matters of common concern to all organized religions. Recent years have witnessed a growing unity among Jews, Roman Catholics, and Protestants who have been challenged by such forces as atheistic communism, the totalitarian state, secularized life, pagan materialism, and the mechanistic philosophy of life. Such problems as the relation of Church and State in the education of the child, and new interfaith problems which arise from the movement to reach the unchurched can only find a satisfactory solution in some plan acceptable to all three great faiths.<sup>2</sup>

The Coordinating Councils of Los Angeles recognize the importance of inter-faith cooperation in the problem of reaching the delinquent child. In a pictorial chart representing the various agencies participating in a community program of prevention, the artist has drawn the church with a Catholic steeple, a Protestant roof, and a Synagogue dome to indicate the necessity of the religious groups getting together to center their activities on the problems surround-

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1. Program leaflet of Conference, Op. cit.
2. Refer to Appendix II for suggested elements in a program of inter-faith cooperative study and experimentation.

ing the child.<sup>1</sup>

4. Coordination of the Program of the Church with Secular Preventive Agencies

The organization of an effective agency to combine all groups fighting crime into a concerted community effort to prevent juvenile delinquency is being urged by leaders of social and civic agencies.

It is the conviction of officials in Los Angeles County courts that,

"We must insist upon a new social plan which will bring about a closer integration of the forces of the community."<sup>2</sup> The New York Crime Commission speaks of coordination within the community in the following

statement: "The ultimate crime prevention task is that of guiding the development of childhood behavior. The work unit must be large enough to deal with the forces that are primary in character education.

That unit is the neighborhood."<sup>3</sup>

Christian leaders are beginning to realize the importance of coordinating the program of the church with the public schools, Boy Scouts, Y.M. and Y.W.C.A., Boy's Clubs, and other community character building agencies. They believe that the problem of prevention of crime and delinquency can never be solved apart from religion, but they also realize that the church cannot do it alone. The rehabilitation of the juvenile delinquent and the promotion of specific preventive measures necessarily require technical knowledge and professional skill. The average Protestant church has not adequately developed the skill necessary to deal with the problems of the socially maladjusted

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1. Scudder, Kenyon S., Beam, Kenneth S. "Why Have Delinquents?" p. 25

2. " " " " "Who Is Delinquent?" p. 19

3. Quoted in Report of Conference op. cit., p. 3

youth, and should be willing to participate in this area of service in coordination with the recognized governmental and social agencies.

In many places the Protestant churches are cooperating with worthwhile social, educational and welfare agencies in planning for the total life of the community. In such a relationship the church has an opportunity to introduce a higher spiritual idealism into the entire program and make vital religion available to the whole group.

"The superficial distinction between 'sacred' and 'secular' is supplanted with the realization that constructive activities of all agencies contribute to the building of the Kingdom of Love. The great gulf between organized social work and organized religion is bridged by mutual understanding and cooperative effort in the interest of the 'Child in the Midst'." <sup>1</sup>

5. A Drastic Extension of Systematic Christian Education to Reach All Children

Realizing that religion is the vitalizing power behind any effective program of character education, and that the prevention of juvenile delinquency is a problem involving the moral character of youth, the Christian church faces the necessity of extending systematic Christian education to reach all children.

The neglect of the Christian training of one-half of the 34,000,000 boys and girls between the ages of six and eighteen in America has resulted in lowered moral standards and has ushered in a great wave of child crime. In every community Christians must be called upon to unite in an effort to reach every child with the Gospel which alone can avert disaster. The united effort should begin with a thorough survey of each community in order to ascertain the actual

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1. "The Church in Coordination With Community Agencies", Ohio State-National Commission study, I.C.R.E., p. 30



extent of Christian instruction. Such a survey would reveal the necessity of a drastic extension of systematic Christian education to be carried on in weekday religious instruction and summer vacation schools. Churches which are not now being used to full capacity would be opened wide to become religious "Community Centers" providing club rooms for children, youth and adults, and affording gymnasiums, libraries and music rooms for all.

In promoting such a movement on a nation-wide scale, the Reverend W. C. Schaeffer says,

"With deserved support this ought to develop into the epochal religious achievement of our day. Potentially it has everything. It has the Word of God as a base and the means. Its method is approved educational processes. Its application is to the formative period of youth. Its objective is character-building in Christ. Its ultimate goal is a redeemed society--through the child first and then the family and the home." <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>

### C. Summary and Conclusion

The Christian church is faced with a great responsibility toward the children and youth of America. In many ways it has failed tragically in this responsibility. Children and youth have been denied dynamic religious training to an alarming extent, and the religion offered them has been isolated from the daily experiences of life. They have been left in ignorance of the Bible, the knowledge of which is basic to righteous character. The church has been guilty of a prejudiced attitude toward delinquents which has resulted in neglect and failure to cooperate in a program of prevention. The future ex-

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1. Cf. White, J. Campbell, "The Cure for Crime."
2. "America's Coming Evangelism," Church Business, November-December, 1935, p. 68

istence of the church depends upon its ability to accept the challenge of this responsibility, overcome past failures, and provide an effective program of Christian Education for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. The united Protestant youth movement, "Christian Youth Building A New World," and the organization of the National Commission on Christian Character Building with its program for reaching those now unreached are important steps in the right direction.

There are certain basic principles which must be included in the Christian educational program if it is to be effective in the prevention of juvenile delinquency. The foundation of the program must be a well unified local church cooperating in a united Protestant movement which combines lay, ecclesiastical, missionary and educational forces. There must be inter-faith fellowship in matters of common concern to all organized religion. The Christian educational program of the church must be coordinated with community character building organizations and other secular preventive agencies. Finally, it must involve a drastic extension of systematic Christian education to reach all children.

**CHAPTER V**

**GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

## CHAPTER V

### GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### A. The Problem and Procedure Restated

The problem of this investigation has been to discover the contribution which the Christian church may make in an effective program for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. The study is believed to be of special significance at this time when organizations concerned with human welfare are realizing the inadequacy of past attempts to control crime and are searching for new means to save youth from a career of crime.

As a background for the investigation it was necessary to make a general survey of the present situation with relation to juvenile delinquency. In the first chapter the study was centered around the present nature and extent of delinquency and the causal factors which have contributed to this condition. Juvenile delinquency in America was revealed as a problem of vital concern to the welfare of individuals and society. A very noticeable decrease in the age limit of offenders and a corresponding increase in the intensity of crimes was discovered to be an alarming development in the problem. The consideration of contributing causes showed a great number and variety of factors which arise in every phase of the child's life, produce insecurity, conflict and frustration, and result in delinquency.

In the second chapter, the investigation of the present situation was carried further to discover what preventive measures are being conducted by secular agencies and to estimate the degree of their effectiveness in relation to the whole problem of juvenile delinquency.

This survey revealed a great number of agencies at work improving conditions in the home, school, and community, introducing preventive measures in court procedures, and offering programs for character education. However, an estimation of the total results of secular preventive measures led to the conclusion that the problem of juvenile delinquency is not being adequately solved.

Following this, a study of the relation of Christian education to juvenile delinquency was undertaken in order to justify the presentation of Christian education as a means of prevention. Juvenile delinquency was shown to be a problem of the moral character demanding treatment by means of character reconstruction and development. It was pointed out that religion is basic to any adequate program of character building and that Christian education has unique contributions to make in all areas of life. That Christian education does exert a powerful influence on the moral character and conduct of youth was revealed by statements of experienced judges, reports of investigators, and court statistics.

The concluding chapter was given over to a discussion of the responsibility of the Christian church to provide an effective program for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and to the selection of basic principles to be included in such a program. Certain failures of the Church to meet its responsibility to youth were reported together with movements which have taken definite steps toward solving the problem. In view of the Church's acceptance of its responsibility in this direction, it was necessary to consider basic principles to be included in a program of Christian education such as would be effective in the prevention of juvenile delinquency. As a result of this consideration

the following principles were selected: a unified local church program, a united Protestant program, inter-faith fellowship in matters common to all religions, coordination of the church program with secular preventive agencies, and drastic extension of systematic Christian education to reach all children.

#### B. Implications of the Findings of the Present Study

From this study certain implications have arisen which will be summarized in the following paragraphs.

Juvenile delinquency, in view of its present nature and extent, is recognized as a problem of vast importance. It cannot be ignored nor can the task of its prevention be taken lightly. The present widespread interest in the problem evidenced by the prominence which it has been given in newspaper headlines, periodicals, motion pictures, lectures, as well as in the proceedings of social welfare agencies, indicates that the time is ripe for the introduction of an effective program for the prevention of delinquency which would likewise eventually solve the problem of adult crime.

The problem of juvenile delinquency is made more acute at present because of economic distress, unemployment, and the fact that adolescent boys and girls are growing up in a world which apparently has no place for them, gives them nothing to do, and asks no contribution from them but expects them to become socially adjusted.

While a great multiplicity of causes must be recognized as contributing to delinquency, there is danger of overemphasizing the importance of some single causal factor such as illiteracy, poverty, or bodily defect. Recent years have witnessed a rapid change in theories concerning these causes. Delinquency is now seen to be a problem of

the individual moral character involving personal adjustment to the ordinary experiences of life.

In spite of the great number and variety of secular agencies and methods for the prevention of delinquency, it is clear that the problem is not being adequately solved. There remains an enormous gap between the needs of youth and the provisions being made to meet those needs. Frequently the preventive agency builds its program to combat one cause of delinquency and neglects entirely other causes. There is a distressing lack of coordination in the work of the various agencies with the result that the most needy children are often overlooked, certain age groups are almost entirely neglected, and others are involved in a number of unrelated programs.

The failure of the Christian church to provide religious teaching for almost half the children and youth of America and her apparent inability to make religion meaningful to many of those who have been taught has greatly handicapped youth in the struggle for adjustment and therefore in character development. The spiritual lack of youth as a cause contributing to delinquency places a grave responsibility at the door of the Church whose only adequate answer can be the extension of vital Christian education to include all those now unreached.

Because of the effect of Christian education on the character development of youth, the Church has a greater contribution to make to the prevention of delinquency and crime than is generally realized even by Christian people. The Christian message provides the dynamic which is lacking in the secular programs of character building.

The Christ-centered personality is the highest achievement of all character education. Since the Christian church possesses the Word of God and the message and power of Christ, it is her responsibility to make her contribution toward the prevention of juvenile delinquency. Her future existence depends upon how well she meets this great responsibility.

Coordination is basic to success in preventing juvenile delinquency. The discovery that no single institution can be blamed leads to the conclusion that no single institution can bring about eradication. While it is believed that prevention can never be successfully accomplished apart from the Church, it is certain that the Church should not attempt to solve the problem without the cooperation of other worthwhile agencies. The principle of unity in personality and character demands that the Christian program for prevention of juvenile delinquency shall be permeated with the spirit of unity, cooperation and fellowship beginning in the local church and community, and extending to the relationship of Protestant denominations and of different faiths.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the Christian church has a very definite contribution to make toward the solution of the problem of delinquency. That contribution is Christian education which, through the development of Christian character, offers an effective program for the prevention of juvenile delinquency.



APPENDICES

Appendix I

SOME DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS

FOR CHURCHES

\*Some Definite Suggestions For Churches

1. Make the church the social and recreational center for the young people of the community.
2. Make church facilities available for groups of underprivileged or neglected children under adequate supervision.
3. Make special provision in the church program for young people from sixteen to twenty-five who would normally be employed, but who are unable to get work and who often do not know how to make constructive use of their leisure time.
4. Be represented on both the Character-Building and Environment Committees of the Coordination Council and secure the active cooperation of the church in this work--particularly in all efforts to remove destructive influences in the community.
5. Participate in the parent education movement by having special study groups for parents in the church or by cooperating with other parent education classes in the community.
6. Make clear to all the parents in the church that no home is meeting its responsibility to the children (no matter how regular their attendance at Sunday School or church services) if the following conditions are found in the home, because it is such conditions as these that lead to juvenile delinquency:
  - (a) If the parents neglect their children during the week.
  - (b) If the parents do not provide adequate supervision and discipline.
  - (c) If the parents provide too much supervision and discipline.
  - (d) If the parents give too much freedom.
  - (e) If the parents are constantly quarreling and fighting.
  - (f) If the parents make the child feel that he is not wanted.
  - (g) If the parents set the wrong example.
  - (h) If the parents fail to give adequate instruction in sex hygiene and in the relations that should be maintained between the sexes.
7. Since the church is the institution that places its blessing on many marriages, the church should see to it that the young people under its care are adequately prepared for marriage, and for assuming the responsibilities of parenthood.

\*From "Who Is Delinquent", Scudder and Beam, p.41

Appendix II

SUGGESTED ELEMENTS IN A PROGRAM  
OF INTER-FAITH COOPERATIVE STUDY  
AND EXPERIMENTATION

**\*Suggested Elements In A Program of Inter-Faith Cooperative Study and Experimentation**

1. Re-statement of the interests, rights and responsibilities of organized religion in the education of the members of their respective constituencies; the importance of more universal religious training; "equality of religious educational opportunities for all children and youth"; the necessity for some satisfactory integration of religion and education without violating the principle of separation of church and state.

2. Affirmation of the right for Churches and Synagogues, as agents of the parents, to share in the "time of the child" allocated for this formal education. This is not the state's time, nor the public school's time. It is the child's time. A mutually satisfactory adjustment of schedule can be discovered which will provide the equivalent of at least one half day per week for religious education, as soon as the religious forces are prepared to provide trained leadership.

3. Development of high standards for leadership, educational procedures and supervision of the work of religious education by Jews, Roman Catholics and Protestants. Our responsibility to the child rather than any condition laid down by the state demands such standards.

4. Establish satisfactory relationships with Courts, Probation officers, and organized efforts of other governmental and social agencies in crime prevention and the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents.

5. Participation in community recreational and leisure time programs.

6. Through Inter-faith fellowship and joint social action, change conditions detrimental to moral character and spiritual growth such as indecent motion pictures, etc.

7. Encourage community coordinating organizations representing the homes, churches, schools and other character building agencies for the cooperative study of the common needs of children, youth and adults.

\*From "The Church In Coordination With Community Agencies", by the Joint Committee on Vacation and Weekday Church Schools, International Council of Religious Education p.24

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