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THE INSTITUTIONAL CHILD LOOKS AT THE FAMILY

BY

LEE W. ROCKWELL

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION IN
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY**

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1951

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PREFACE

Countless studies have been made of the Family by students of sociology, and almost every one of the contributions has enriched our understanding of this basic, primary social institution. These studies have included the standard works on the history of familial development, studies of broken homes, the influences of mobility on the institutional structure of the family, the correlation of working mothers and family disorganization, and many others. But in reviewing the mass of literature in the field, it appeared that all of the studies had been made from the point of view of the student who sat as a spectator in a reserved seat, observing the happenings within the structure of this oldest of social institutions and noting objectively the changes which occurred. True, there are a number of studies in which the student attempted to observe the workings of the family through case histories and by using other studies which were available, but the information gleaned from these studies has always been exclusively the observations of the student himself rather than an expression of those constituting the subject being studied.

In this paper my effort has been to present an original research study on the family from the point of view which, until this time, has not been explored. When choosing the subject for the study I was aware, as a result of my experience during the past five years, as Superintendent of Uhlich Children's Home, that children living in institutional settings have some well-defined attitudes toward what constitutes a well-integrated family. But I was also aware of the fact that these expressions of children who come from broken homes had never been clearly defined neither, indeed, had the children themselves been given an opportunity to state, for the record, their reactions to the confused family living to which they had been subjected, nor to express their dreams for the ideal families which they hoped to establish in the future. It was with the assistance of my professor and friend, the Rev. Ralph A. Gallagher, S.J., that the outline for such a study was crystallized and the research was begun.

It was decided at the outset to abandon any pre-conceived ideas we may have concerning the attitudes which might be expressed by the children and to permit our findings, instead, to lead us to whatever truth we discovered. The interviews were to be conducted on an

informal level and were to be held with children now living in Uhlich Children's Home, Lawrence Hall for Boys, Lydia Children's Home, and the Lutheran Child Welfare Association. I am deeply indebted to the Rev. Ralph J. Spinner, Executive Director of Lawrence Hall; to the Rev. R.A. Marquardt, Executive Secretary of the Lutheran Child Welfare Association; and to Mr. N.L. Larsen, Superintendent of Lydia Children's Home for the generous manner in which they cooperated in the study by permitting me to read the official records of the respective agencies and by granting me permission to interview the children.

Forty families were studied for the purpose of this paper. In every instance the interviews required to get the point of view of the child from the broken home being studied were restricted to just one representative of the family. This limitation was set since my purpose was not primarily that of securing more information concerning the family, but in discovering the attitude of the individual toward his own family, an opinion of the contribution the institution was making toward his understanding and appreciation of the family, and his hopes for the future. In some instances it was possible to conduct the interview in the relative formality of an office, but in other instances

the interviews were held in lounges, in a gymnasium, or out in the playgrounds. In some instances it was possible to get all the information desired from just one interview, while in others it was necessary to combine the information gleaned from a number of informal contacts.

No attempt at selectivity was made in choosing the children to be interviewed other than a conscious attempt to choose children who were old enough to make a reasonably intelligent contribution to the study. Two attempts were made to discuss the family with younger children, each of them just seven years of age, but the conversation produced very little more than the pleasure which always accompanies a close association with little children. Consequently, the youngest person interviewed for the purpose was a girl eleven years of age and the oldest were three boys and four girls, each sixteen years of age. In every instance the person being interviewed was encouraged to speak frankly and to express without hesitation his disapproval as well as his approval of the care his family had provided as well as the experience he is now having at the agency. After the interviews were completed with a particular child, the results of the conversation were compiled and then compared with the material on the child's family as it is

recorded in the case records on file at the particular agency. These records are based on the professional observations of the case workers of the Home, on letters from the Juvenile Court, the Chicago Department of Welfare, the Juvenile Protective Association, the Public Aid Commission, and many other agencies, both public and private.

Although the material presented in this paper is factual and can be documented, I have attempted to protect the children who cooperated with me so generously by using, in every instance, names that are entirely fictitious, rather than the real names of the children interviewed.

CHAPTER I
THE WELL-INTEGRATED
FAMILY AS SEEN BY THE SCHOLAR

The family has undergone enumerable changes through the years and has earned for itself the characteristics of an extremely dynamic social organization. Despite the fact that we believe the family to be part of God's divine plan, we acknowledge the fact that the basic task of the family is to serve human needs and that, as the needs differ, the organization and activities of the family will differ.¹ It is because of these social changes that contemporary studies of the family bear statements such as "because of the removal of certain formal functions and activities from the home, many persons have looked upon the family as a declining institution"² or, "Home no longer has the same old sentimental meaning of a specific house or location. It is difficult today to experience realistically the emotions which produced the Old Oaken Bucket, Ben Bolt, or Where

¹Elmer, M.C., Sociology of the Family, Ginn & Co., 1945, page 9.

²Felsom, Joseph K., Youth, Family, and Education, American Council on Education, 1941, page 28.

the River Shannon Flows. Homesickness, as a normal experience, has largely gone out of date."³

All of the studies readily recognize the fact that many changes have occurred in the social structure of the family. The passing of the family which served primarily as an economic unit, as an educational unit, and as a recreational unit, has made substantial inroads into the institutional family as it was known generations ago. The range of opinion as to the effect that this has had upon contemporary family life is almost as wide as the number of studies made. Perhaps the most extreme of these contemporary studies that deal with the transition within the family is that of Professor Ernest W. Burgess who, in his book The Family From Institution to Companionship indicates in the very title of his work that in his opinion a complete change has entered into the status of the modern family and each of its members. In his preface he states "the emphasis in this volume is upon the family as a unit of interacting persons (1) that shapes the personality development of its members and (2) that is adaptable to social change."⁴ It can be presumed from

³Folsom, Joseph K., Youth, Family, and Education, American Council on Education, 1941, page 14.

⁴Burgess, Ernest W., The Family From Institution To Companionship, University of Chicago Press, preface, page vii.

Burgess' second point that he is of the opinion that the family as a social organization is completely at the mercy of the changing needs of society and that it reflects those needs without regard to any basis in natural law. He offers as his definition of the companionship family

The form of the family that appears to be emerging in modern society may be called the companionship family because of its emphasis upon intimate interpersonal association as its primary function. Other characteristics of the companionship family are: the giving and receiving of affection; the assumption of equality of husband and wife; democracy in family decisions, with a voice and vote by the children; the personality development of its members as a family objective; freedom of self-expression which is consistent with family unity; and the expectation that the greatest happiness is to be found in the family.⁵

It is interesting to note that in spite of Professor Burgess' emphasis upon the companionship characteristics of contemporary family life, he continues to recognize some of the basic social qualities of the family as a social institution. He offers in some detail a description of the four characteristics which are common to

⁵Burgess, Ernest W., The Family From Institution To Companionship, University of Chicago Press, page 716.

the family at all times and places and which, in his opinion, differentiate the family from all other social groups. He considers these four characteristics to be:

1. The family is composed of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption. The bond between husband and wife is that of marriage; and the relationship between parents and children is generally that of blood, but sometimes of adoption.
2. The members of the family typically live together under one roof and constitute a single household. Sometimes, as in the past, the household is large, consisting of as many as three, four, or even five generations. Today in the United States the household is small in size, generally limited to husband and wife without a child, or with only one, two, or three children.
3. The family is a unit of interacting and intercommunicating persons enacting the social roles of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister. The roles are defined by the community, but in each family they are powerfully reinforced by sentiments partly traditional and partly emotional arising out of experience.
4. The family maintains a common culture, derived mainly from the general culture, but in a complex society possessing some distinctive features for each family. The distinctive culture of a family arises through the communication of family members in which they merge their individual patterns of behavior. These differential patterns may be brought to marriage

through the different experiences of husband, wife, and children...The family is the merging of cultural patterns transmitted from the two sides of the family which in interaction with outside cultural influences creates the distinctive cultural pattern of every new family.⁶

It is apparent from these four characteristics that Burgess, the exponent of companionship type families, recognizes that even in this liberal approach to the family certain basic characteristics remain. And that greater emphasis is now placed on the social and psychic responsibilities than ever before.

Folsom, as was indicated earlier, also recognizes the changes that have affected the structure of the family but he does not in any sense feel that these changes have lessened the importance of the family as a social institution. Instead, after acknowledging these transitions, he hastens to make this interesting comment:

At the same time, the functions which remain in the home have gained in intensity and importance. Most socially thoughtful persons agree that the family is not likely to surrender these essential function: (1) the physical reproduction of the race; (2) an irreducible minimum of physical care and training of the young child;

⁶Burgess, Ernest W., The Family From Institution To Companionship, University of Chicago Press, pages 7 and 8.

(3) provision of the fundamental sources of mental health and happiness for the great majority of all persons - that is, a sense of personal security, enduring affection, and healthful sex life, according to the age and status of the individual.⁷

Ogburn and Nimkoff, too, acknowledge the fact that there are basic requirements which must be met before the family can become a satisfying experience for its members. They state in their book Sociology that the mark of a good family environment is the manner in which the children adjust, not only to the home, but to society as a whole. They maintain that good homes provide well adjusted children while poorly adjusted children are symptomatic of the poor homes from which they come.

These writers enumerate four basic requirements for a well-integrated home. First, there must be a close affectional tie between the child and the parents, absence of conflict, and a sharing of confidences, all of which contribute to the security and the stability which is basic for well-integrated family living.

Second, the family environment that provides an emotionally satisfying experience with the parents must be

⁷Folsom, Joseph K., Youth, Family, and Education, American Council on Education, 1941, page 28.

based upon an intelligent use of affection and protection. The writers maintain that while under-protection leads to a sense of insecurity, over-affection and over-protection tends to spoil the child if his association with other children does not provide a social corrective.

Third, they acknowledge the need for a steady, moderate discipline which assists not only in controlling a child, but in providing the regularity which, in the mind of children and adults as well, represents security and stability.

Last, they recommend common family activities in order that the family may be an integrated unit rather than an association of disorganized individuals.⁸

Comments such as these are not isolated expressions in studies of the family, but are typical of the many opinions which are advanced as a result of our contemporary studies. In almost all of these modern studies there is a unanimity of thought that the family, with all its changes, must continue to provide for its members, both young and old, and for society as a whole, the basic needs which only the family can contribute. Chief among the changes is the

⁸Ogburn & Nimkoff, Sociology, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946, pages 731 and 732.

fact that now more subtle bonds are required for the solidarity of the family than were required during the period when the family was held together very largely for the purpose of the survival of its members. The emancipation of the members of the family from the necessity of spending the majority of their time in common economic endeavor permits the inter-development of personality and the expansion of the psychic functions which the guild type family could not permit. As stated by Hill in his definition of the function of a contemporary family:

From a psychiatric point of view that family is strong which offers its members emotional security, that is a feeling of stability, permanence, and safety; acceptance, that is, a feeling of belonging and of being welcome for what he is; and freedom for experience, that is, an environment which offers opportunity for trying out his own abilities, interests, ideas, and games, a freedom that includes the right to feel and to express feeling both of affection and aggression.⁹

Therefore, without debating the terminology used by contemporary scholars in defining the role of the family, it is safe to assume that all of them recognize the fact that certain primary social functions remain for the family

⁹Elmer, M.C., Sociology Of The Family, Ginn & Company, Social Science Series, 1945, page 33.

because, if for no other reason, no social organization exists which might perform these functions satisfactorily. It is not the purpose of this study to exhaustively define the family and its functions. Instead, we are concerned with establishing a few of the functions by which we may gauge the statements of the children who were interviewed for, as was stated by Florence Clothier, "A child's personality develops and unfolds against the background of his family life."¹⁰ Therefore, enough of a description of the family against which the opinions of the children interviewed may be reflected shall be considered adequate for the purposes of this study.

In addition, then, to the function of reproduction, the characteristics of the family which should be enumerated are:

1. The family as a socializing agency. The direction which the socializing family will take is largely dependent upon the cultural atmosphere in which the family lives. However, whether the emphasis be economic, social, religious, educational, or any other, the family does have a socializing effect upon its members in order that it prepares each of the

¹⁰Clothier, Florence, Institutional Needs In The Field Of Child Welfare, Social Security Administration, Children's Bureau, Vol. 7, No. 2, April 1948, page 154.

members to participate fully in the social structure in which he lives.

2. Provide emotional security for each of its members. All members of the family turn to it, the basic social institution, for the sense of permanence and stability which is the basic social need of all people. It must be a freedom from anxiety which affords an opportunity for the members of the family to develop normally and without the frustrations which anxieties precipitate.

3. A sense of acceptance. It is essential that the family provide for each of its members a comfortable sense of belonging and of being wanted so that the individuals in the family may feel free to develop within the environment in which he lives, the warmth and companionship which are basic.

4. Freedom for experience. It is primarily within the structure of the family that the members find sympathetic audience for their expressed desires for play, and later, for the expression of their opinions and attitudes.

5. Social control. The informal educational processes, in which the family group is the chief agency, are the greatest factors of social control. Thrift, idealism, materialism, cleanliness, regularity, respect for authority, selfishness, egotism, consideration of others, care of property, of clothes, of books, or of playthings, and the other attitudes established in early life -- all of them tend to become entrenched and their force and direction strengthened through the social control exercised by the family.

It is obvious that these characteristics, basic to a well-integrated family, do not exhaust all of the qualities required by normally developed members of the family, but they shall be sufficient as guideposts against which we can project the expressions of the children, both fact and fiction.

CHAPTER II

FOSTER HOMES AND INSTITUTIONS

One of the most sordid eras in the field of child welfare occurred during the long years of bitter controversy which was waged between the advocates of foster home care and institutional care. It is most unfortunate that, with the advent of most new thoughts, the exponents of the status quo close their ears to potential change and rally their forces to stoutly defend the traditional way of doing things, while the exponents of the new thought hastily and mistakenly claim for their process a panacea for the ills of the world. Such was the chaotic schism which came to pass with the introduction of foster home care as a method for dealing with the needs of dependent and neglected children. The exponents of the new foster home care program and the defenders of children's institutions were equally myopic in failing to recognize that here were two distinct parts of a whole which, rather than forcing an elimination of one or the other, actually complemented each other in attempting to provide care for all needy children. During the long years of the controversy there was scarcely an

institution or a foster home agency which was meeting the standards of performance advocated by the Child Welfare League of America, and yet the energies which might have improved the calibre of service in each type of child care was dissipated in what, in retrospect, was obviously a dispute based largely upon bigotry and a sense of insecurity. The controversy reached such a tempo that the results were almost frightening to the sober-minded social planner. As Howard Hopkirk put it in his very significant work

Institutions Serving Children:

The development of foster family care having gone so far in some communities as to result in the closing of institutions, has led some to infer that institutions for children are both undesirable and unnecessary. The first White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children in 1909 pointed toward an increased reliance upon foster homes and to the need for widows' pensions, a service later expanded under the Social Security Act. A movement among leaders in the social work field in the twenty years following 1910 aimed at completely eradicating institutions by the development of both mothers' allowances and family boarding home care. Some of those responsible for non-sectarian child care in Boston and Philadelphia seemed inclined to the latter practice, as were the leaders in Jewish communities in several of our largest cities.

An interesting expression of the intense feeling aroused by the contro-

versy developed in the form of a conference held in New York City in 1925 by the Child Welfare Committee of America. Sophie Irene Loeb supplied the inspiration for this committee and for this conference, to which each governor was invited to send a representative of the child welfare work of his state. The conference was held to promote, as far as possible, the securing of home life for children in preference to care in institutions. With Miss Loeb's death the field of social welfare, in which she had strong and varied interests, lost a colorful personality, and the Child Welfare Committee did not long remain a factor in influencing opinion throughout the country.

A natural result of such partian-ship as was displayed on the subject was a deluge of unrestrained criticism, the advocates of institutions and of foster homes each painting black the type of care to which they were opposed and about which they usually were uninformed. Both sides were inclined to such blind defense of their own kind of work as led them to ignore the fact that either type of care generally was pretty poor throughout the United States and stood in need of undivided and tenacious efforts to effect improvement.¹

Fortunately, modifying influences began to result in helpful criticism of the entire field of child welfare, regardless of whether the service was given by foster homes or by institutions. Two of the major influences in the national field of child welfare, the United States Children's

¹Hopkirk, Howard W., Institutions Serving Children, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1944, pages 40-41.

Bureau and the Child Welfare League of America, strongly urged that the highest possible standards are equally important in both the institutional and the foster home fields. Emphasis was placed upon the dependent and neglected children who stood in need of service rather than upon the peculiar type of service which the child was receiving. Under the influence of these two national organizations, state departments of welfare began to urge the same sanity among the child caring agencies of their jurisdiction. With the continued pressure of these supervisory agencies, the controversy which had dissipated so much effort in useless antagonism began to subside. Many writers began to concern themselves again with the basic social needs of all children. William Healy provided the child welfare field with this glowing description of the importance of the family.

That basic and most essential unit of social organization, the family, has been studied with great care by many authorities, all of whom, in succession, have discovered that tremendous forces act upon family life. The state and the church, both recognizing its vast importance, join in offering a variety of means for protecting and preserving the family. For hundreds of years the civilization of Western Europe and of the Americas has built enormous bulwarks of safety around the family and has

created a vast idealism centered in it. No other relationship is thought to equal that which reaches its highest expression in the normal family group. The opportunity for the development of the finer qualities of character, for the expression of different and diverse personality types, is most assured in the atmosphere created by the family. The totality of values which it gives to its members is well recognized as vastly outweighing its weaker aspects.

We grant, of course, that the best home for the child should be the home of its parents. The parents themselves should be eager for help in understanding and treating the problems of their children. Some parents, however, are incompetent or demoralized, and will remain unsuitable guardians despite the fact that increasing attention is being directed toward helping them to make their homes better for their children. A long look ahead is required to see the time when there will be no children needing placement in a good foster home which offers, next best to wholesome life in a child's own family circle, the most advantageous background for the right unfolding of the young personality.²

Unfortunately, however, the barbs of antagonism had gone too deeply into the minds of some writers to permit them to wipe clean the acid from their pens. Even Healy, after his lofty paragraph on the family which gave promise of a scholarly, unbiased discussion of the needs of children,

²Healy, William and Bronner, Augusta F., Reconstructing Behavior In Youth, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929, pages 4-7.

reverts to the form of the antagonist as he continues his thesis for reconstructing behavior.

It is inevitably true that a small percentage of problem children, with habits of delinquency and personality characteristics so fixed that they refuse to recognize authority in a family or in a community, will have to be cared for in institutions; and it is undeniable what a well-directed and constructive policy can accomplish. But just as we now recall with abhorrence the time when in New England fifteen offenses—including witchcraft, blasphemy, presumptuous breaking of the Sabbath, and cursing or smiting one's parents, were punishable by hanging, and as we recall the more recent time when a girl carried through life the stigma of a detected sexual delinquency, so the time may not be far distant when we shall equally condemn the often too frequent employment of so-called correctional institutions as dumping-grounds for children whose cases have been rushed through the courts with all too little understanding of the true problems involved.³

The regrettable part of this statement is not that Healy had the acumen to discern the faults of correctional and other types of institutions, for every agency in the field of child welfare must continue to receive constructive criticism with gratitude. But it is unfortunate that his observations of faults led him to believe that the entire

³Healy, William and Bronner, Augusta F., Reconstructing Behavior In Youth, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929, pages 4 and 7.

program would ultimately have to be eliminated when the truth of the matter is that there is not an area in the entire welfare field which can justifiably boast the faultless execution of a perfect program.

However, one of the most vitriolic blasts against institutional care came from the acid pen of Abigail F. Brownell. Not only does she speak critically of the entire program on institutional care for children, but she extends her bitter comments to a criticism of the church in the welfare field, intimating that the interest on the part of the church is exclusively religious rather than social. In her tirade, Miss Brownell fails to recognize completely the fact that child welfare, bearing the stamp of social concern, originated through the church, and had it not been for the interest of religious people contemporary social workers might well be without a field to criticize so freely. While her comments are not of sufficient importance to be taken seriously, they do demonstrate the low calibre of socially-myopic criticism which has resulted from the long controversy over child care. I shall simply quote two paragraphs from her writings which shall serve to indicate the depths to which unintelligent bigotry can lead.

The people who provide organized help in this field are religious groups,

social groups, fraternal orders, corporate bodies founded and endowed by individuals, and the three units of government: county, state, and federal...The first and oldest pattern is created by religious groups under whose auspices a substantial number of institutions and a lesser number of agencies are carried on. In these institutions are the children of parents who turn in their need to their own religious group, which places first order of importance in a child care program religious training, based on a collective belief about individual immortality. I think that these groups prefer institutional care with its control of the child's person and time because it best insures the accomplishment of their purpose. Some of their institutions also provide secular education. When they do this the child receives his foster care, which is a substitute for the family life he has lost or never had, and his religious training and schooling from one source. He is wholly the child in the social life of the community at large. Other institutions send their children to public schools, keeping for themselves control of his religious training and his foster care. In these institutions the child receives his secular education from another collective group, the government, and so is partly the church's child and partly the government's child. Each group is collective, wants conformity with its own pattern and belief, and emphasizes likeness in this respect among members of the group. The child may have some social life if there are activities of this kind in his school, but he does not have the freedom of choice in this that children living with families are given in their neighborhood.

When it is available many institutions and agencies under religious auspices receive per capita payments for board from

the county of the child's residence. Often the parent who surrenders his personal responsibility for his child to his religious group, concurrently leaves his economic obligation to the public treasury of the county. To the county the child is an economic burden for whom they will pay for food, and sometimes for clothing and medical care, to sustain his existence. They make no effort to secure or retain control of his person, which apparently has no value to them. The religious group which wants the child because he has spiritual value that is related to future life, and the county, which does not want him because he has no political value and is an economic burden, but which is willing to pay for minimum material necessities in order that he may be sustained in this world, represent two collective wills which complement each other in foster care, and together make a pattern that is a whole. The one operates against the child's physical death, the other prepares him for the life after death. The one group does not want him, the other does.⁴

Fortunately, there are many writers in the field of child welfare who do not share the bigotry nor can they be condemned for the short-sightedness which characterize the paragraphs quoted from the work of Miss Brownell. Rather, there are many who very calmly and sanely face the fact

⁴Brownell, Abigail F., The Value of the Foster Child to the Supporting Community as a Determinant in the Form of Care, published in a symposium, Social Case Work With Children, edited by Jessie Taft, published for the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, Haddon Craftsmen, Inc., Camden, N.J., 1940, pages 214-215.

that there are many children who are in need of care, and courageously face the problem with an open mind, hopeful that from the chaos of the lives which needy children have already experienced something good may be developed which will help them in their present and future adjustment to society. It is to writers such as these and to the respect and influence which their thoughts command that we look for an intelligent and practical solution of the enormous problem which confronts those engaged in the field of child care.

An example of such writers is Anna Roe and Barbara Burks who collaborated on a study of seventy-eight children of alcoholic, psychotic, and normal parents who were rescued from their own inadequate homes and placed in foster care. True, the children used in this particular study had all experienced foster home care during the time they spent away from their own families, but the approach which the writers make to the study is most refreshing. Their criticisms are reserved to their own failings which were no more numerous than those found in any child care program. However, one of the finest contributions of their work is the concise and enlightening statement of need which they offer. In their brief paragraph on the need of neglected and dependent children they give this very hopeful statement:

It seems very probable that residence in a home which is a respected part of the community, and the child's acceptance as a member of that community, make possible the formation of an organized ideal derived from the attitudes and forms of behavior of the community which can function as an integrating force, even in spite of unloving and harsh parents. It is conceivable that the basic assumption of our society, the assumption of the dignity and worth of the individual, is sufficiently pervasive that it may offer support even to the child whose dignity suffers attack from his parents. This, together with such good elements as even the poorest heredity must include, are perhaps the answer.⁵

With such a frank, uncontroversial approach to the problem of child care, it is possible to leave, at least for the moment, the area of debate and search earnestly for a basis on which to judge the success of any venture in child care. There was a time when success in any program, whether it be institutional or foster home, was judged solely upon the cleanliness which surrounded the place in which the child lived. There were times too, in foster home placements, when the desirability of the home to be used was judged by the economic status of the potential foster parents. Mere size of

⁵Roe, Ann and Burks, Barbara, Adult Adjustment of Foster Children, published for the Section on Alcohol Studies by the Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, New Haven, 1945, pages 116-117.

population in institutions has at times been considered the yardstick by which to gauge success, as have additional methods of equally questionable merit.

However, from the maze of methods used in critically evaluating any program of child care there seems to be emerging a uniformity of opinion. No longer are the students of child care concerned primarily with the physical conditions in which the child receives his foster care, but they are concerned, instead, with the contribution which has been made to the child during his stay away from his own family, regardless of whether he has spent this period of time in a foster home or in an institution. Edith Baylor's statement is typical of the many comments which follow the same pattern concerning the judging of success. She has written, in her book:

All social work, whether it is with children or adults, should be interested in taking stock of its accomplishments. A convenient point for an inventory is the individual's discharge from care, for it is then possible to observe the effect of treatment and thus to get some measure of the efficiency of techniques employed by the agency.

Miss Sophie Van Senden Theis employed the same

⁶Baylor, Edith, M.H., The Rehabilitation of Children, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1939, page 367.

criterion when making an extensive study of the success of the children placed in foster homes by the New York State Charities Aid Association. Her study concerned the lives of 910 people between the ages of eighteen and forty years who, during their childhood, had been placed in foster homes by the State Charities Aid Association. Miss Theis, who had been with the agency for fifteen years at the time of her study and had served as Superintendent for a period of eight years, amassed a staggering amount of information, only to be faced with the problem of determining a standard by which the success or failure of the placements might be judged. During the opening statements in her report of the study, Miss Theis says:

It was necessary to rephrase the obvious question of success or failure, and the form in which it seemed most searching and most nearly applicable to our problem was to determine in each case -- "has the subject shown himself capable (or incapable) of managing himself and his affairs with ordinary prudence?"⁷

With the diminishing of the controversy between the advocates of foster home and institutional care, and with the emergence of a unanimity of thought concerning an

⁷Theis, Sophie Van Senden, How Foster Children Turn Out, State Charities Aid Association of New York, Publication No. 165, New York, 1924, page 19.

adequate criterion for evaluating the success of any program of child care, the leaders in both of the aforementioned fields of child care have been turning increasingly critical eyes upon their own programs. There can be no doubt but what this trend has been the most heartening and the most hopeful development to occur during the past few decades. The energies which had been so wastefully dissipated in controversy can now be expended exclusively in the further perfection of both foster home care and institutional child care. There are so many indications that this critical trend will continue that it is impossible not to be optimistic about the future. One of the many writers who has succeeded in looking objectively at the successes and failures in the foster home field is Dorothy Hutchinson. In her recent book In Quest Of Foster Parents Miss Hutchinson points very frankly to the questionable practices which were followed in the past in the selection of foster homes. She said that any study of contemporary foster home seeking must be seen against the backdrop of earlier practice, nor can it be seen apart from the development of home seekers as case workers. The increasing knowledge of people which has come to the case work profession places upon them a greater obligation than ever before to use this knowledge in seeking

the most adequate homes possible for the placement of children. Miss Hutchinson confesses that the home-finding field, until recently, remained remote from the rapidly unfolding influence of the case work doctrine. Instead, home-finding had been based upon supplying as many as possible in what became a rather commercial enterprise, or in making a superficial evaluation of each potential foster home almost exclusively on the basis of the condition of the real estate which was to become the foster home. This deplorable state of affairs, Miss Hutchinson believes, resulted from the cleavage between the position of the home finder and that of the case worker who concerned herself with the welfare of the child himself. The situation was, of course, intolerable, since the lack of correlation resulted in an unprofessional approach to care which inevitably created a potentially destructive environment for the child.

Included in her critical statement of the growth of the very important area of home-finding is this particularly frank comment concerning some of the errors which occurred during the early days of the profession.

Each state of home-finding development has been the product of an earlier stage. Its growth has been spasmodic and irregular. Originally home-finding was dominated by a moralistic philosophy.

The unspoken assumption was that foster homes were either good or bad and that the workers were responsible for measuring goodness and badness. These were the days when one descended unannounced, catching prospective foster parents off their guard, and measured goodness by respectability, morality, and cleanliness. Because the worker did not know what to look for, she weighed benevolence by superficial signs. She became adept in skipping the vulnerable spots in favor of the obvious external evidences of honor. This early era of home-finding coincided with the popular belief that children could be redeemed by an environment unblemished by dirt and distinguished by correct deportment. The foster home was considered the vehicle of respectable opportunity by which the poor boy "made good." The selected home was always right, and the child won or lost it according to his ability to throw off old habits and take on the new ones of the foster parents. Thus, at the beginning of this century, homefinders sought largely for evidences of accepted decorum in foster parents, and in so doing they reflected the general mores of the times.

Hopefully, Miss Hutchinson points to the fact that home-finding has now gotten beyond that rather primitive state and has come to identify itself closely with the foster child involved in the placement. This identification has had the expected result, namely that the needs of the child and the potentialities of the home have been as closely correlated in as many placement situations as

possible. There is every reason to believe that this improvement shall remain as a continuing process, giving hope for an increasingly perfect program of child placement in the foster home field. But despite the opportunity for optimism, Miss Hutchinson, in her objectivity, acknowledges that there is still much to be accomplished before the foster home field can enjoy a sense of satisfaction with its program. Miss Hutchinson very succinctly evaluates the current status of homefinding:

As case workers have become more sure of themselves, homefinding has profited accordingly, although it has been slow to scrutinize its function, its methods, and its goals.

Later, psychiatric understanding developed and gradually gave to the case workers in homefinding a growing responsibility not only for knowing foster parents but also using them with insight. Slowly case workers came to realize that foster parents are very human, that whether they develop or not, they do not fundamentally change; and that they are selected and used because of the normal gifts with which they are already endowed. Thus, it was discovered that the crux of homefinding lies in the selection of normally gratified people.

Modern practice in homefinding inherits all threads of past practice. The field is still temperamental in the sense that it is unevenly developed. It is forging ahead in some localities, while in others it remains rigid. In

the broad field, however, it is taking on new dynamics. It is no longer generally subordinate to or isolated from the steady growth of case work, but is case work.⁸

Another of the objective writers in the field of foster home care who has critically studied the success and failure of placement is Sophie Van Senden Theis. In her extensive study How Foster Children Turn Out she very frankly notes the variety of ways in which the children placed through her agency have been able to respond to the type of care offered them. She has discovered, for example, that of the 797 children now grown whose lives she has been able to evaluate, 615 could be classified as capable, that is to say they are law-abiding, manage their affairs with good sense, and are living in accordance with good moral standards observed in their communities; while 182 are classified as incapable or are unable or unwilling to support themselves adequately, are shiftless or have defied the accepted standards of morality or order of their community. Because of her concern over this rather large number of people who must be classified as incapable, Miss Theis has further broken down the category into four

⁸ Hutchinson, Dorothy, In Quest Of Foster Parents, Columbia University Press, New York, 1943, Published for the New York School of Social Work, pages 2-6.

additional areas. Of the 182 considered incapable, 89 were considered to be harmless. These represent the persons who are irresponsible or shiftless. Either they are of limited capacity or inferior character, or they are incapacitated but are not aggressively anti-social. Forty-seven are considered definitely harmful for among the group of people considered incapable, this number is actually in conflict with the law or with the accepted standards of morality. The "on trial" category includes the 26 people who, because of some previous offense against social standards, need special supervision and whose development is not clearly indicated. In the last classification are listed the twenty who are actually inmates of custodial or correctional institutions.

In attempting to further understand the reasons behind the lack of success with such a large number of placements, Miss Theis continued her study of this same sample of people. Turning her attention first to the evaluation of the type of care which these people received as children in foster homes, she found that they did not receive a uniformly excellent calibre of home life. Of the 754 children whose care could be classified as one of three kinds; excellent, average, or poor, the writer found that only twelve percent of the children received what could be construed as

excellent care. It was the children listed in this grouping who received a sympathetic understanding and where his aptitudes were developed to the highest possible degree. Average care, meaning that an ordinary degree of good sense and sympathy was provided in training, was afforded to 68% of the children; while 12% received poor care. Poor care was considered to be that which meant a failure to understand the child's character and needs, care provided in a setting which presented him with a bad example, care through which unreasonable demands were made on the child, or the kind of care which was accompanied by harsh treatment.

With the dearth of really excellent care which was provided this group of children, it is not surprising to note that the relationship established between the children and their foster parents was not uniformly good. Only 60% of the children established a satisfactory relationship with their foster parents which continued after the child had reached maturity. It is interesting to note that Miss Theis found that the largest part of this group, by far, were the children who were placed as infants and who remained with one foster home for the majority of their childhood. Twenty-five percent of the children established only temporarily satisfactory relationships with their

foster parents, being reasonably content during their stay in the foster home but having no apparent carry-over after the arrangement had been terminated. Unsatisfactory relationships were established by the last fifteen percent. Not only did this group of children fail to find the arrangement permanent or satisfying, but Miss Theis feels that they may actually have lost something of their confidence in people and of their own self-reliance. She points out very frankly that the child who fails to get along in several homes comes to regard himself as a failure in everything or else he becomes defiant and hardened.⁹

It is heartening to find that the objective students in the field of child care are becoming increasingly frank in the searching studies they are making in the particular type of care they are providing neglected and dependent children. Not in any sense can this increasing objectivity be construed as a prediction of the decline of a particular type of child care, but, rather, it points hopefully to the time when in each of the areas of the children's field there shall evolve a more intelligent and a more effective program than we are now making available. Serious students in the foster home

⁹Theis, Sophie Van Senden, How Foster Children Turn Out, State Charities Aid Association of New York, Publication No. 165, New York, 1924.

field, for example, are now the first to acknowledge that foster homes are not the answer to the needs of all children but that they are limited to just those children who can adjust in the rather intimate environment of a foster family group. Dr. Healy listed numerous examples of children for whom foster home care failed. Among the thumbnail sketches which he presented were the following:

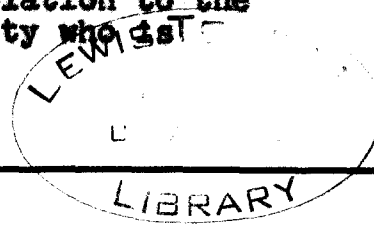
Mrs. T. is a woman who had made her homekeeping her god and has sacrificed herself to it. Her nervous breakdown was brought on by incessant care of her home. It is small wonder that she failed with the warm-hearted Italian girl.

A girl who dwelt on the fact that she did not have a real home of her own was placed in a home where she sleeps on a couch in the dining room. She says that when Mr. J. is home, he lies down on the couch in the evening and she cannot go to bed until he gets up.

The Judge Baker Foundation feels that the foster mother has very great patience with the boy, but unfortunately he got into sexual habits with R., another boy placed in the home.

From a Judge Baker Foundation report: When six years old, in one of the first foster homes, Helen learned masturbation from two girls already in the home. She has practiced it ever since.

It is evident that Ruth has an inferiority feeling in relation to the other girl from the Society who is



placed in the same home. This girl who is brighter mentally than Ruth, looks down upon her. Ruth often remarks, "I don't want to go along with her. She does not want me. Nobody wants me."¹⁰

On the basis of these brief statements it is obvious that the placement of these children in their particular foster homes was extremely unfortunate and that a change in planning was required to provide the kind of care that would prevent further damage being done to the children involved. Judged by the criterion for successful placement, namely whether or not the subject has developed to the point where he is capable of employing a normal amount of prudence in making his decisions, it is all too apparent that the placement of these children in foster homes resulted in complete failure.

Even more pointed are the case histories which were made available to me by the Reverend Father John H. Houlihan, director of the Catholic Home Bureau of Chicago. These are the histories of fifteen children who were placed in foster homes but who failed completely to find there the help which they needed for the solution of their particular

¹⁰Healy, William and Bronner, Augusta F., Reconstructing Behavior In Youth, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929, pages 128-133.

problems. In every instance, the children were ultimately transferred from foster home settings to institutions where, according to the sketchy information that concerns the institutional placement, they succeeded in making satisfactory adjustments. It is interesting to note while reading the summary of these cases the variety of reasons expressed for the failure of the children to adjust to foster homes, and the hopeful way in which the children were then transferred to an institution for care.

Jack is a ten year old boy, the second of two children born out of wedlock to his mother. He has spent much of his young life in foster homes. He lived for six and a half years in the first one and was removed only because of the death of the foster father. When the foster mother found it necessary to work in order to support herself, Jack was moved to another foster home. In his second foster home, Jack was very uncooperative and was unwilling to take directions from his foster mother. After only four months he was moved to his third foster home where after two months his foster mother stated that Jack was so stubborn that she was unable to cope with him. He was moved to his fourth foster home where his adjustment was even worse. His foster mother characterized him as being

negativistic, refused to wash, didn't change his clothes, made a poor adjustment, disliked sports, had no friends, and spent most of his time alone. It was suggested that he be transferred to St. Mary's Training School with the hope that he might make a better adjustment with this different method of treatment. Although the record of his placement in that institution is not complete, entries in the record following his transfer indicate that his initial adjustment was very good and that he responded well to group living.

Nick is the oldest of three children. His father drank excessively with the result that there was a great deal of marital discord which led to the neglect of the children. Both parents were characterized in the record as being extremely unstable and unwilling to accept the burden of caring for the children. In addition, the mother was considered as an inadequate personality with schizoid trends. She was promiscuous and preferred the satisfaction of her own desires to the care of her children. Nick lived in four foster homes during one year and in each case had to be removed because of illness in the home. His great mobility during that year gave him an opportunity to play his new associates for as much as he could with the result that by the end of the year he was forward, aggressive, and

tormented older children. It was decided that he needed kind but firm supervision and guidance so he was sent to an institution. A later report stated that Nick had made a good adjustment in the institution and that much of the anti-social activities that had characterized his foster home living had disappeared.

Carl is seven years old, one of three children. His mother is employed and the whereabouts of his father are unknown. Though he is only seven years of age, Carl has been in seven foster homes prior to his placement in an institution. His first placement came when he was just a baby but he was removed two months later because of neglect on the part of his foster mother. From there he went to five successive foster homes and was removed from each one because of his behavior. Carl was described as being extremely stubborn, is destructive around the home, and developed the habit of biting and kicking his foster mothers. After these unsuccessful placements Carl was transferred to St. Joseph's where he made a good adjustment. After eight months he was transferred to St. Mary's Training School where, for the past year and a half, he has found it possible to adjust to the group living which the institution affords.

Gerald, who is thirteen years of age, was the

fourth of six children. After the breakdown of his family his one brother was sent to Dixon while his four sisters made satisfactory adjustments in foster homes. Gerald, however, failed in his foster home placement. During the year that he spent there he was charged with exposing himself to the foster mother's daughter, truancy from school, theft of clothing from a store, failure to try in school, and theft of candy from other children in his class. He was transferred to St. Joseph's where his behavior, under close supervision, changed completely. He was later sent to St. Mary's Training School where his good adjustment has continued.

Richard and his sister were placed in an institution after their home was broken. Richard failed to adjust properly so he was transferred to a foster home. Both Richard and his foster mother were dissatisfied with the arrangement and after he was there a month he was changed to a second foster home. He remained in the second foster home for a year, but was very unhappy. It was discovered that he did not receive the same food or care that was provided for the other children. At the recommendation of a psychologist Richard was transferred to a third foster home. Here he was made to work very hard and was given what was considered insufficient spending money. In rebellion against the

situation Richard ran away and, when found, was placed in the home of his aunt. Here he was happy for a while for he seemed to feel that living with relatives would compensate for the lack of his own parents. For about a year he adjusted well, both at home and at school, but at the end of that time he began running away again. The first two times he ran away he returned to the home voluntarily. The next two times he was returned by the police and when he ran away the fifth time his uncle refused to have him returned to the home. He was sent to the Detention Home where he spent three months and was then transferred to the Mission of Our Lady of Mercy, a work home, where he has made a good adjustment. His school work has improved remarkably and he feels relaxed and comfortable in the more impersonal setting of an institution.

Pat is a thirteen year old boy who was born in Chicago of illegitimate parents. Although the present whereabouts of his mother are unknown, she is known to have been a ward of the Juvenile Court when she was a child because of her incorrigibility and immorality. Through the Juvenile Court she was placed in the House of Good Shepherd from which she was ultimately released. After her release from the House of Good Shepherd, she became pregnant and was sent to

Geneva. When released from Geneva she abandoned Pat and disappeared. Pat's paternity has never been established and there are no relatives from whom visits can be expected. Pat was placed in a foster home at the age of one and was removed from that home a year later when the foster mother found it necessary to secure employment. He stayed another year in a second foster home but had to be removed from that one because of the illness of the foster mother. His longest foster home stay, covering a period of four years, was in his third foster home but his stability there was dissolved by the fact that the foster parents moved to California. During the next four years Pat was placed in seven foster homes but failed to make a satisfactory adjustment in any of them. The standard complaint received from each of the seven foster homes was that Pat lied, stole from the foster parents as well as from people in the community, that he was stubborn and exhibited a display of temper whenever he failed to approve of the requirements which were made upon him. After his seventh unsuccessful foster home experience, Pat was placed at St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless where he gave evidence of being able to make a satisfactory adjustment in an institutional setting. A few months later he was sent to St. Mary's Training School where his adjustment became complete.

Pat has lived at St. Mary's for the past two years with no reoccurrence of the maladjustment which was evident during his stay in the last seven foster homes.

Robert is a nine year old boy who has three brothers and one sister. At the age of eight he was apprehended breaking into a liquor store and was placed in the Juvenile Detention Home. A social study of Robert's background discloses that he had been completely rejected by his mother and that because of her lack of interest in the boy she found it impossible to control his behavior. Robert was placed in a foster home where he remained for only one month. During this month the mother visited the home and stated flatly that she wanted no further contact with him. The mother's rejection aggravated Robert's anti-social attitude with the result that he became a serious behavior problem in the foster home and in the school. Because of his belligerence he lost many friends that he had succeeded in making and the foster mother refused to keep him any longer because of his impudence and incorrigibility. Robert was sent to St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless where, with an absence of antagonisms, he began to adjust himself. On the advice of the staff psychiatrist he was then transferred to St. Mary's Training School where, in the relaxed environment of the

Home, he has given no evidence of the behavior problems that had characterized him while at home and in the foster home placement.

Joan is a thirteen year old girl, the eldest of three children, all of whom are living in institutions. The whereabouts of the mother are unknown and the father is incarcerated in Joliet as a result of a charge of armed robbery. Joan was placed in four foster homes over a period of three years but because she failed to adjust herself satisfactorily, it was necessary to remove her from each one and to seek other placement. A fifth foster home was sought for her in which she stayed for five years, not because she made a good adjustment, but because the extremely fine foster parents made every effort to correct her anti-social behavior. However, during those five years she continued to steal from the foster parents and from people in the community. She also absented herself overnight on numerous occasions and lied to the neighbors saying that the foster parents had gone away for several days at a time leaving her on her own. In spite of heroic efforts made by the foster parents, they finally reached the point where they could no longer permit Joan to live in their home. Joan was transferred to St. Mary's Training School where she received

the help of consistent psychiatric treatment and professional observation from other members of the staff. The records of the Catholic Home Bureau indicate that after a year at St. Mary's, Joan is making a satisfactory adjustment for the first time in her life.

Catherine is a fifteen year old girl who had lived with her father and step-mother until she reached the age of eleven. Her life with the step-mother was very unhappy for she administered such severe beatings to Catherine that it was necessary to remove Catherine from the home for her own protection. In attempting to provide Catherine with the care that she failed to find in her own home, she was placed in nine foster homes over a period of two and a half years. In each of the nine foster homes Catherine failed completely to adjust herself. In spite of the lack of security which she had experienced in her own family setting, she consistently refused to accept any of the foster families as her own. After failing to adjust in any of the nine foster homes, Catherine was placed at the St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless where she has lived for the past year and a half. Here, in the impersonal setting of an institution Catherine has found the kind of atmosphere in which she can be most happy. She shall continue to live at St. Joseph's until one

of her sisters is in a position to provide a home for her.

Paul is a ten year old boy of illegitimate birth who came to the attention of the Catholic Home Bureau when he was an infant. His mother abandoned him and the father was never known. He was placed in a foster home where he lived for seven years. He made such a satisfactory adjustment in this foster home that it was quite apparent that he was receiving all of the affection and security that he needed. Unfortunately, the foster father died and the foster mother found it necessary to seek employment. Paul was removed from this foster home and placed in a second one where he stayed for only four months. His removal there was based upon his complete inability to adjust to a new setting which he demonstrated by his refusal to accept direction and his consistent uncooperative attitude. His stubbornness continued in the third foster home where he was able to stay for only two months. His fourth foster home provided him with care over a period of two years, but even here his attitude was negativistic. He refused to keep himself clean or to change clothing regularly. He had an extremely poor school record and always failed to cultivate friends. From this bewildering situation he was transferred to St. Mary's Training School where, according to the record, he has been

able to find himself in the routine of institutional living.

George, age thirteen; Charles, nine; and Raymond, seven, were three brothers who came to the attention of the Catholic Home Bureau because their father had deserted them and because their mother not only was ill, but was a degenerate type of individual. The three boys obviously needed protective care and were placed in a foster home that was felt by the Bureau to be in a position to provide it. However, their mother came to the foster home during the foster mother's absence and removed the boys without permission, returning them to their own home. The boys were placed again in another foster home but again the mother interfered, making the success of the placement impossible. Because of her determination to have the boys at home, arrangements were made to secure Aid to Dependent Children in order that she may be assisted financially in providing the boys with care. However, due to the complete lack of discipline which the mother provided, the boys were again removed from the home and were placed in St. Mary's Training School where they could receive care and where it would be quite impossible for the mother to interfere with the protective program which was provided for them. The boys have been living at St. Mary's Training School for almost a

year and have benefited immeasurably by the protection which they have received.

John, whose parents are divorced, is seven years of age. He has an older sister and a younger brother who have made satisfactory foster home adjustments. John, however, was in six foster homes and failed to adjust in any of them. He was removed from his first foster home because "of the conditions found in the foster home." He was removed from the other five because of the behavior problem which he presented. He was characterized as being extremely stubborn. He was also said to have displays of temper, that he was destructive around the house, and that he made a practice of hitting and kicking his foster mothers. He was placed in St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless at the age of five and was transferred to St. Mary's Training School when his improved behavior indicated that continued adjustment might be expected in an institutional setting.

Mary is a seven year old girl of illegitimate birth, one of eight children who are being cared for by Catholic Charities. Mary was placed with her natural mother at the time of birth but was removed in a short time because of neglect. Mary was then placed in ten foster homes over a period of six years. In some instances Mary was removed from

foster homes because of foster parents' illness but in the others she was removed because of her behavior problems. Mary was "unable to settle down because she never felt that it would be permanent, she felt that good or bad she would probably be moved." Mary was sent to St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless where, after a period of five months, she came to understand that in an institutional setting she could receive the security and stability that she sought. Having reached this understanding, Mary was ready to be transferred to St. Mary's Training School, and, because of her enthusiasm for the transfer, has made a very satisfactory adjustment in the institution.

Frank, nine years of age, and his brother, Joseph, are children of divorced parents. Although their mother has never proved herself to be capable of providing the care required by the two boys, the divorce was really precipitated by the excessive drinking engaged in by the father. Their only home was a very unhappy one and eventually led to the imprisonment of the father and the subsequent divorce. After the dissolution of the home the boys were placed in five foster homes. Joseph, the younger boy, was always well accepted and adjusted, but Frank consistently failed to get along in a foster home setting. His provocative behavior

was the cause of the many transfers which were made. An attempt to solve the problem was made by placing the boys in separate foster homes but both of the boys were so lonesome for each other that they were reunited in their fifth foster home placement. Here again, however, Frank failed to adjust. It was the opinion of the foster home parents that Frank's hatred for his father made it difficult for him to relate to the foster fathers with the result that a recommendation was made that the boys be placed in a more impersonal setting. Both boys, because of the Bureau's desire to keep them together, were transferred to St. Mary's Training School where, in the more impersonal atmosphere of the agency and with the controlled routine which was offered, both boys have found it possible to live harmoniously with the rest of the group.

William is a ten year old boy of illegitimate parentage who has spent approximately eight and a half years in foster homes prior to his institutional placement. His first foster home placement was a successful one and he spent seven years in that environment. A change was made only because the foster mother found it necessary to move to Florida. William then stayed in four foster homes over a period of one year and three months. After a year in the

first foster home it was necessary to remove William since the foster mother needed hospital care. In each of the next three foster homes he stayed only one month and was removed from each of the homes because of his asthmatic condition which required more care than the foster mothers were able to provide. Each of the foster mothers stated that their families were kept awake all night because of his condition. since they seemed unable to clear up the difficulty, they felt that William should be placed where he would receive more consistent and adequate medical care. William was transferred to St. Mary's Training School where the desired medical care was available and, according to the records of the Catholic Home Bureau, his two year stay there has been a successful one in terms of care and in terms of his own adjustment to the institutional setting.

These sketches of children who failed to make satisfactory adjustments in a foster home setting are just a few of the many examples available. The truth of the matter is that foster homes, despite the significant contribution which they have made to the field of child care, are not the only type of program required to successfully meet the needs of contemporary children. Certainly the program is still too young to have completely refined the technique which is

employed. Dr. Healy, in a critical but objective statement concerning the foster home program, writes:

These who have claimed perfection for the foster family type of care, however, have done it more harm than good. The overstatements and misstatements as to the actual accomplishments have often been due to the fact that those who made them really did not know what was happening -- which is further proof of the necessity of keeping careful records. If the foster family is to be used for the training of children, especially for those presenting personality and conduct problems, it must be used in a far more scientific way than many agencies in the children's field have used it.¹¹

With the critical studies which have been made of foster home care, there has developed a new appreciation for the potential contribution which can be made by institutions to contemporary children who are in need of care. Now that the controversy between foster homes and institutions has subsided, we are able to see for the first time the truly broad perspective needed if we are to intelligently understand the requirements of all children. No longer do we look to one type of program as superior to the other. At last we have reached the point where we look at the child

¹¹Healy, William and Bronner, Augusta F., Reconstructing Behavior In Youth, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929, page 10.

and, on the basis of a careful study and interpretation of his problems, determine the type of care which will best serve his needs. The trend toward this more intelligent method for the placement of children has so completely captivated the minds of workers in the field that a professional approach which was not possible during the period of controversy has now made its appearance. Writers in the field have crystallized this trend and have set the pattern for thoughtful students to follow. In quoting again from Dr. Healy we find this intelligent statement concerning the approach to be used in the placement of children:

The decision whether a child must be cared for in a foster family or in an institution will be determined by the whole body of material assembled in the course of the inquiry -- and upon this is based the diagnosis. To repeat, there can be no quarrel between the advocates of either type of care if all of the interested parties agree that there must be, first of all, a thorough understanding of the child's situation. For the child whose own home does not offer him the conditions to which every normal child has a right, the effort should be made, even though he presents a behavior problem, to give him an environment which insures individual care and affection.¹²

¹²Healy, William and Bronner, Augusta F., Reconstructing Behavior In Youth, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929, page 114.

From England comes an indication of the fact that this changing thought is not confined to the program of child welfare as it is conducted in the United States. D.M. Dyson, in his book The Foster Home And The Boarded Out Child also makes an intelligent and forth-right statement concerning the considerations involved in the matter of the placement of children.

The great majority of the children living away from their own relatives must be cared for in Homes or foster homes. Neither form of care is in itself better or worse than the other, though either may be better or worse for the individual child. For some only Home care is possible, and for others it is desirable, while for some only foster home care will allow the full development of their gifts. The touchstone lies not in the excellence of the Home care over foster home care, or vice versa, but in the choice for each of that form of care which will best suit him. Every organization, statutory or voluntary, responsible for large numbers of children should be able to make the choice in the light of each child's needs and capacities, and not according to preconceived ideas and policies.¹³

And, as Edith M.H. Baylor says in her very off-hand statement concerning the need for exercising intelligence in

¹³Dyson, D.M., The Foster Home and The Boarded Out Child, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1947, page 13

planning the placement of a child: "The selection of anything should be in terms of what is thought may be accomplished by that thing, be it a foster home, an institution, a washing machine, or a radio."¹⁴

With the acknowledged failure of foster homes to supply the needs of every child and, with the newly-found appreciation for other types of care, we can now turn to the field of institutions for an examination of what that area has to offer the neglected and dependent children who are in need of care, guidance, and protection.

The objective self-criticism which has made itself felt in the foster home field has also become increasingly evident among those who seek to improve the calibre of care offered by institutions. The serious student of institutions recognizes that during the long history of that type of care, many mistakes have been made. Howard Hopkirk, in writing about the origin of institutional care says:

Within the Christian tradition there are indications concerning the care of dependent and neglected children that go back to the dim beginnings of church history. In his book, *The Institution for Children*, the Reverend A.T. Jamison mentions the Council of Nicaea of 325 A.D., under

¹⁴ Baylor, Edith M.H., The Rehabilitation Of Children, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1939, page 312.

the authority of which hospices were organized for the care of travelers, the sick, and the poor. These shelters were perhaps the first Christian agencies to care for destitute children. An article appearing in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science takes up the theme as follows: "In the Middle Ages the monastic tradition established the institution as the training place par excellence for Christian character. Quite naturally this idea was applied to the upbringing of children who because of parental shortcomings or other misfortunes were forced to depend on other shelter than their own homes. If the monastery and the convent were of benefit for the Christian culture of men and women who might, if necessary, cope with the world, obviously similar institutions under religious auspices were adapted to the saving of children who would perish or at least grow up in miserable surroundings if not taken into places of shelter. This development in the Roman Catholic Church undoubtedly carried over to the other Christian bodies and established a tradition widely followed in this country.

Confining our view to the United States, it was the nuns of the Ursuline Convent in New Orleans who were the first to undertake the care of children separate from needy adults. An Indian massacre in 1729 brought newly orphaned children to be cared for by the sisters, thus emphasizing the fact that the emergency needs of children in time of war and disaster have always stimulated the founding of institutions for their care.¹⁵

¹⁵Hopkirk, Howard W., Institutions Serving Children, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1944, pages 2-3.

From earliest times the humanitarian impulse expressed in the efforts of religious and fraternal organizations was to be seen as well in the attempts of government to care for homeless and neglected children. The early history of the government's attempt to meet the problem, which is believed to have followed the original work done by the church, can be traced in this country to the undertakings of local governmental groups. The care provided needy children by the government at that early date was primitive in the extreme. If a child were not sold or indentured, he shared the fate of impoverished adults, the mentally deranged, and the delinquent by being treated almost like cattle -- herded together for such shelter and food as the almshouses or even the prisons of the day afforded. Unquestionably, the history of institutional care in the United States contains many black passages, as is true of institutional care all over the world. In spite of developments over the years and the constant improvements which have occurred since the end of the last century, there continues to linger in the minds of those acquainted with the history of earlier methods a certain amount of association with the morbid mass care of the almshouse days.

By the middle of the nineteenth century dis-

satisfaction with care of children in almshouses, usually operated by county supervisors of the poor, had already stimulated many private undertakings for their relief, some of which were given grants of public funds. Somewhat later such dissatisfaction became great enough to lead to the enactment of state laws and the appropriation of local funds for the establishment of separate county homes for children.

It is unfortunate that institutions, despite their earnest efforts to improve their programs have been so reluctantly received as an important part of the total field of child welfare. Cecelia McGovern writes concerning this reluctance:

Even after segregation of children from the aged took place, and special buildings were built and programs inaugurated for dependent and neglected children, and for delinquents and the mentally retarded, institutions still maintained their odious reputation. Not even the progress evidenced by the movement from orphanages to schools or Homes helped to dispel the opprobrious attitude toward these traditional programs. The latest and most progressive step of converting these homes into community centers or children's villages also met with some resistance as recently as the early thirties. There still are some workers in the child welfare field whose honest conviction it is that

all children's institutions should close and that the children should be placed in foster homes, in homes of relatives, or in their own homes with adequate allowances from the Federal-State program of Aid to Dependent Children.¹⁶

It is true, of course, that the improvement in the institutional care field did not come as quickly as it might. Many years of bungling mistakes passed before the contemporary standards were achieved, but this is not sufficient reason for the condemnation of institutions as an avenue for child care. In fact, as Hopkirk points out, much of the criticism for the tardy improvement can be laid at the feet of many of those who criticize the methods of institutions.

The lack of widespread and critical interest on the part of the community accounts for much of the backwardness that characterizes many of our social institutions. This is especially true of any organization serving those who are dependent upon society for all or part of their care; it applies to institutions for adults as well as to those caring for children. One reason for this apathy lies in the fact that governmental officials and most taxpayers, together with those who support community chests and independent agencies, are not among those who use charitable

¹⁶McGovern, Cecelia, Services To Children In Institutions, Ransdell, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1948, page 1.

institutions. They do not expect their own children to live in a child caring institution and therefore it is not so real to them as are public schools and hospitals which serve them personally. Mr. American watches with some attentiveness his schools and hospitals, knowing that they are constantly needed in these days by his own family and the families of his friends. But he is relatively indifferent to the question of efficiency in establishments, such as child caring institutions and schools for dependent, delinquent, and those physically and mentally handicapped; hospitals for the mentally diseased; homes for the aged; prisons and jails.¹⁷

Regardless of the causes for delay in the improvement of institutional care, the important thing is that improvements have been made which has elevated the contribution which institutions can make to dependent children to a far higher level than has ever been known in history. The quality and training of institutional personnel is far better than was true in the past. The untrained matron on twenty-four hour duty and the executive who was chosen simply for his ability to operate the agency as cheaply as possible is giving way to well-educated men and women with special knowledge and training in the field of child care who are

¹⁷Hopkirk, Howard W., Institutions Serving Children, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1944, page 208.

allowed to live relatively normal and full lives even though their work makes it necessary for them to reside in an institution.

The improved institutional executives making their appearance today are contributing to a higher standard throughout the field. In several states welfare officials responsible for licensing institutions have had splendid cooperation from institutional executives in drafting standards to be published by state welfare departments. Executives more than any others have intimate acquaintance with the problems of child-caring establishments, and as their work is put upon a professional level we can expect from them much of the vital leadership needed to improve this field of welfare work. In addition, more and more institutions have standards sufficiently high and leadership sufficiently intelligent to permit them to invite and use thoughtful criticism from outsiders. Consultants are increasingly in demand whose professional competence is greater than that of any member of the board or staff.

Another important change has been in the names used by many of the child-caring institutions. More and more of them are beginning to use the word home and, what is even more important, are building their program to give the most

home-like atmosphere possible to the children who live in the agency. The modern trend toward cottages rather than the large congregate dormitories is indicative of the desire to make the institutions as congenial to normal childhood as possible. In many instances where this complete change has not been possible, adaptations have been made to modify the "institutional appearance" as much as possible.

The number of children under the care of any one houseparent in an institution has also been radically reduced. Where formerly large numbers were emphasized and effort exerted to keep every bed filled lest financial loss might eventually lead to extinction, today there is a new security abroad in this field. Reduction of numbers is freely discussed, and there is no sensitivity about this trend because institutional workers do not associate it with the idea that the institution as a method of care is on the wane. Institutional workers reflect this new security in their free discussions about the weakness of their own programs. Everywhere plans are under way for improvement in physical facilities, reorganization of programs and activities to meet the needs of the children served, and in training of personnel to cope with the more difficult children now admitted.

But perhaps the most significant change that has come into being in the institutional program is the intelligent use of group therapy for the solution of the problems presented by some of the children under care. No longer is the institution simply a place for a child to spend his youth simply because he has no other place to go, but rather it has become a place in which the needy child can receive therapeutic treatment as well as room and board. Mr. Hirschbach describes this area of service by writing:

With some justification, children's institutions have been likened to hospitals and have attempted to approach the setting and the philosophy of hospitals. Institutions, too, are centers devoted to diagnosis and treatment; the illness which they combat are maladjustment, emotional troubles and the wounds inflicted by life's tragedies. The various activities within the institution -- school, social service, recreation, vocational programs -- are being directed and coordinated toward one purpose; the improvement and the recovery of the child.¹⁸

Miss McGovern, in writing of the history of this significant contribution to institutional care, outlines the

¹⁸ Hirschbach, Ernest, A Changing Direction For Children's Institutions, General Secretary, United Charities, West Hazleton, Pa., Published in Child Welfare, the Journal of the Child Welfare League of America, Inc., March 1949, page 12.

steps that were involved in the evolution of group therapy as a method of treatment.

The fact that man is by nature a social being and thinks, acts, and lives with considerable consciousness of the emotional, social and physical proximity of his fellow beings is by no means a newly discovered actuality. Man's gregariousness has always been recognized but only during the present century has it been deliberately utilized to influence his adjustment.

The first therapeutic use of the group was educational and dates back to 1905 when Dr. J.H. Pratt, in an effort to conserve time, requested a number of his tubercular patients to gather in a group meeting at the Boston Dispensary for instruction in personal hygiene. The physician immediately recognized the emotional values involved and recorded the fact that these patients were encouraged by the experience, received help from one another, and enjoyed the heartening effects. He continued the meetings, writing detailed descriptions of the preparations and facilities necessary for successful results. His method was widely publicized and used advantageously by many clinics in the treatment of various chronic diseases.

The next conscious use of the group for therapy was for cases of mental disturbance and Dr. J.L. Moreno is usually credited with this development. In 1911 in experiments conducted in Vienna, he treated children with a method he termed psychodrama or the spontaneity theatre. The fundamental principle involved was to let the children act out their fantasies on a fairy tale level. There were several

other experiments of the use of the group for mental patients carried on throughout the twenties and thirties in this country.

Achievements have been most outstanding in the Jewish field of child welfare in the use of group therapy for children presenting difficult problems. The experiments of S.R. Slavson with groups of children treated under the auspices of the Jewish Board of Guardians, New York City, since 1934, have received wide attention and the publications emanating from the study of these children in controlled groups have proved helpful to all those engaged in the field of social adjustment.

Slavson's use of the group has a recreational approach. In small groups he welded together the aggressive and the withdrawn child, devising ways through which children of both extremes could find satisfaction. Slavson has found that the child by actually living out his frustrations and aggressions and coping with real life situations in the group gets his bearings and finds a new perspective.¹⁹

With the self-criticism which institutions have turned upon themselves, and with the many changes which have occurred in facilities, programs, and personnel, it is only natural that institutions have given much thought to their new-found role in the welfare field with the result that they more clearly understand their function now than ever

¹⁹McGovern, Cecelia, Services To Children In Institutions, Ransdell, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1948, page 51 and the following.

before. That the institution has a vital role to play is clearly understood, and the contributions it is in a position to make are many. Henrietta L. Gordon in her book Foster Care For Children lists one of the many functions of modern institutions.

Children starved for affection, with such personality difficulties for problems concerning their own parents that they are unable to enter into a vital new relationship in foster homes should enter institutions. These children when placed in an institution may learn to live away from their own families until such time as they may be ready to take on new relationships in other family groups, if by that time their own parents still cannot take them home. Placed directly in foster family homes, such children have been found to require frequent placements. Often each succeeding replacement leaves the child less able to accept a foster home and even more difficult to treat in an institution.²⁰

In addition to this function, more and more applications are being made for the placement of adolescents in institutions. This is the period when children normally break loose from parental ties and get their satisfactions not so much from close relationships with adults as they do

²⁰Gordon, Henrietta L., Foster Care For Children, Published in the Social Work Year Book 1949, Margaret B. Hodges, Editor, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1949, page 211.

from the spirit of camaraderie and loyalty which develops among fellow group members.

Frequently an emotional situation exists where the parent remains strongly attached to his child and where institutional placement seems preferable to foster home care. Such a parent may resent any transfer of the parental role to a foster mother, especially if, even through a long period of institutional care, he can continue with satisfaction to himself to nourish the child with affection by visits and letters. This type of parent, unless badly disturbed, will accept the housemother in an institution as a reasonable substitute, and will cooperate with her.

Another group of children for whom institutional placement succeeds are those who are so physically or mentally constituted that placement elsewhere is impossible. Children of illegitimate birth are numerous in this group as are those who were available for adoption in early childhood but not eligible because of low mentality, physical deformity, and general physical and social unattractiveness. The institution provides many activities in which they can engage and makes possible a number of fairly close relationships among staff members and individuals interested in the work of the institution. Despite their mental

backwardness these children often measure up very well under careful supervision and with training geared to their own level of understanding.

Children who are in need of training are also being placed in institutional settings with success. Not long ago the routine of institutional living was criticized from all sides as being harmful to the growth of the child, but today this same routine is found to fulfill a special function for many children. Perhaps it is due to the fact that institutional personnel have learned to put across more cleverly and pleasantly the methods for carrying out those tasks that can be drudgery if enforced in a mechanical way. Whatever the reason for the success, it has been adequately proved that children in need of training can learn the fundamentals of basic cleanliness, neatness, the importance of keeping appointments, cooperative responsibility, and the rest in an institutional setting.

Children with behavior problems are finding treatment in institutions. Formerly, if an emotionally disturbed child was admitted, he was frequently dismissed from the care of the institution just as soon as his behavior caused any disruption in the group. During the past decade, however, group therapists have pointed to the values of

group-living programs in discerning causes of behavior and also in treating it. The nature of the group lends itself to treatment by the fact that members can be used to help one another in the solution of their individual problems.

Relationships and attitudes can be spotted in group activities more quickly than they can be perceived through individual contacts. Both the aggressive and the withdrawn child can be helped toward a better adjustment through this group experience. With proper understanding these children can be made a part of group activity with the result that inhibitions can be developed and social potentialities can be exploited to their fullest extent.

Youngsters who need only a brief period of care away from their families also find institutional care best suited for their requirements. The strains of developing a relationship with members of the foster home, while remaining related to their own parents, may be too taxing to warrant the effort for a brief period of time.

And last among the many positive contributions institutions are capable of making is that of maintaining family groups and conserving sibling affection. It is important when determining the type of placement required for children to try to understand the degree of dependence

upon one another by the brothers and sisters involved. In the old days much damage was done by child-placing agencies and institutions in separating siblings who had affection for one another, affection often deepened by the experience which removed them from their mother. Hopkirk tells what he says is an authentic story of such childish distress dating about 1810, when a little New Hampshire boy was separated from his family and bound out in accordance with the prevailing custom when there was no breadwinner. Later, he wrote in his recollections of his childhood that to comfort himself during the separation from his brothers and sisters he used to tell their names over to himself at bedtime "like beads on a rosary". Perhaps Hopkirk's illustration is sentimental, but at least it is indicative of the depth of despair to which a child can descend when separated arbitrarily from his brothers and sisters. In the expansive scope of the institution this trauma can be avoided.

There is no doubt but that the modern children's institution has come into its own and has found a secure place among the great methods available for the care of needy children. Mr. Hirschbach has summarized as well as anyone the role of contemporary institutions when he wrote:

The new children's institution
should emerge as a bastion of security

to its children. While continuing to develop the best specialized services of all kinds, these services should be merged and blended into an atmosphere of acceptance and belonging and guidance. The child in this institution should feel that after all the rejection, the failures, the troubles which he has encountered, he is finally entering a place that will not let him down. While he will not find a home or parents, he will find the essential qualities that make for a home: warmth, direction, consistency, and security.²¹

With this confidence in the role of the modern institution we can proceed to a review of the backgrounds of the children who have contributed to this study of the family.

²¹Hirschbach, Ernest, A Changing Direction For Children's Institutions, General Secretary, United Charities, West Hazleton, Pa., Published in Child Welfare, the Journal of the Child Welfare League of America, Inc., March 1949, page 15.

CHAPTER III

A GLIMPSE OF THE BACKGROUND OF THE FAMILIES STUDIED

Francis Bacon once said, "Happy are the families where the government of parents is the reign of affection, and obedience of the children the submission of love." Indeed, Bacon's observation was correct, but unfortunately in every generation there were families which did not succeed in attaining the lofty ideal which Bacon held high before them. The problem of broken homes is as old as man -- only the forms have changed, and with that change has come an improvement in our understanding of the social ill and of its many implications. Back in 1919 the Russell Sage Foundation published as one of its Social Work Series a study by Joanna C. Colcord entitled simply Broken Homes. Miss Colcord at the time was the Superintendent of the Charity Organization Society of the City of New York. In the preface to the book, Mary E. Richmond, editor of the Social Work Series, hailed Miss Colcord's work as a brilliant milestone along the road to understanding family disorganization. In glowing words Miss Richmond writes:

No less thoughtful a critic of men and manners than Joseph Conrad has remarked recently that a universal experience "is exactly the sort of thing which is most difficult to appraise justly in the individual instance." The saying might have been made the motto of this book, for in its pages Miss Colcord-- with all the eagerness of the newer school of social workers, bent upon understanding, upon making allowances -- seeks that just appraisal to which Conrad refers. Marital infelicities and broken homes are not universal, fortunately, but some of the human weaknesses which lead to them are nearly so.¹

After such an encouraging preface, I turned with real interest to the table of contents in order that I might get a quick look at the sort of information Miss Colcord had to contribute to the understanding of the causes of broken homes, and I was amazed to see that the study which had been so enthusiastically acclaimed considered the male of the family the only significant contributor to the creation of broken homes. The chapter headings included such provocative statements as "Why Do Men Desert Their Families?" "Finding The Deserting Husband," "The Home-staying Non-supporter," and "The Details Of Treatment." So certain was Miss Colcord that broken homes were the result of the infidelity of men alone that she listed twelve contributing factors and

¹Colcord, Joanna C., Broken Homes, Russell Sage Foundation, 1919, page 1.

accompanied each with an expressive case history, indicating how in each instance at least one man she had studied had succumbed to temptation and had yielded to his desires rather than adhering to the righteous, though perhaps less exciting, responsibilities of family life. The contributing factors which Miss Colcord listed, some of them not very complimentary, were actual mental deficiency, faults in early training, differences in background, wrong basis of marriage, lack of education, occupational faults, wanderlust, money troubles, ill health and physical debility, temperamental incompatibility, sex incompatibility, and vicious habits. However, even though her study indicated most of the men from broken homes were degenerate and without a shred of moral responsibility, she did rally briefly to their defense by acknowledging the fact that there were contributing factors in the community which, although they did not justify man's actions, did at least make these anti-social actions a bit more understandable. Factors such as the interference of relatives, racial attitudes toward marriage, community standards, lack of proper recreation, the influence of companions, and the expectation of charitable relief were listed and properly documented through the use of illustrative case histories.

Despite this concession on the part of Miss Colcord, her work, to the modern student, seems archaic almost to the point of being ridiculous. While contemporary newspapers are filled with the lurid stories of family difficulties as they are aired in our courts, Miss Colcord writes blithely that to "take men to court is treason against the intangible bonds that still hold between them." But there was one statement in the book which indicated that the writer suspected, somewhat reluctantly, that the fault of the broken home might not always be laid at the feet of the man of the family for she writes, "Another great change in emphasis has been upon the question of interviewing the man, and of being sure that his side, or what he thinks is his side, has been thoroughly understood."²

Today we know that broken homes result from the inability of both men and women to adjust to the requirements of normal family life -- that the desertion of the father does not at all cover the many anti-social conditions which destroy the family setting. In a recently published Annual Message of William N. Erickson, president of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois, a part of the section devoted to the report of the Juvenile Court listed

²Ibid, page 55 (the underscoring is mine.)

the reasons for the referral of cases to the Complaint Division of the Court. A total of 7,839 cases were referred for the year October 1, 1947 to September 30, 1948 and of these cases 1,664 were listed as having been brought to the attention of the Complaint Division as the result of "lack of adequate support or care from parent or guardian."

These cases were broken down as follows:

611 cases	Neglect
219 cases	Broken Homes
146 cases	Mental or Physical Illness of Parents
113 cases	Guardianship Disputes
108 cases	Unmarried Mothers
98 cases	Custody Disputes
97 cases	Housing Difficulties
79 cases	Domestic Difficulties
57 cases	Rejection of Children by Parents
39 cases	Economic Stress
27 cases	Parents Arrested
24 cases	Non-support
20 cases	Mother Employed
26 cases	Other ³

The wide range of reasons for the breakdown of homes outlined above show all too clearly that either of the parents or both are frequently the cause of family breakdowns in our contemporary society. Each of the difficulties listed represents a threat to normal family living and the category listed "Broken Homes" is in reality the number of cases in

³Erickson, William N., Annual Message, Board of Commissioners of Cook County, Illinois, 1948, page 205.

which actual separation or divorce has already occurred.

A later report, covering nine months of the year 1949, showed that a total of 7,596 children had been referred to the court during the period January 1, 1949 to September 30 1949. Of this large number of children, 1,423 required the assistance of the court because of "neglect." This "neglect" is described as abandonment or desertion, abuse or cruel treatment, living under conditions injurious to morals, or other conditions of neglect not specified. It is in the reflected gloom of this sordid report of the Juvenile Court that we turn to a consideration of the backgrounds of the families under study for the purpose of this paper.

A series of tables have been devised for the purpose of providing a rapid analysis of the families from which the forty children interviewed have come. Table I indicates the age and sex distribution of the children studied.

TABLE I. AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN STUDIED

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
11 years of age	1	0	1
12 years of age	4	4	0
13 years of age	9	7	2
14 years of age	10	6	4
15 years of age	9	5	4
16 years of age	7	3	4

This table obviously shows that of the forty children interviewed, twenty-five were boys and fifteen girls. The large proportion of boys resulted from the fact that Lawrence Hall provides care exclusively for boys and, consequently, the ten children interviewed there were all of that sex. Of the total children interviewed, the median age was 14.1 years. For the boys the median age was 13.7 years while for the girls it was 15.0 years. While it is apparent that the children were in their early to middle teens, many of them showed amazing discernment concerning their personal problems and were able to offer intelligent observations concerning their present status and their hopes for the future. Their stories, presented later in this paper, bear out this opinion.

The second table of interest deals with the size of the families from which the children have come. Because the statement is so frequently made that there is a direct correlation between large families and an inclination toward dependency among people of certain social and economic classes, this table is of great interest. Particular attention should be given to the crude mode, which shows a cluster at only two children per family.

TABLE II. SIZE OF FAMILIES FROM WHICH THE CHILDREN HAVE COME

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
1 child	4	2	2
2 children	10	7	3
3 children	6	3	3
4 children	7	3	4
5 children	5	4	1
6 children	4	3	1
7 children	2	2	0
8 children	0	0	0
9 children	2	1	1

As this table indicates the average family from which these forty children have come has 3.7 children; the families of the boys have a slightly higher average with 3.9 children while the girls' families average 3.5 children. More children both boys and girls come from families with only two children than from any other group. This is particularly interesting since so much has been said of the large families of children which at one time found their way into institutions. Economic necessity was frequently given for seeking the assistance of institutions, but obviously that is no longer true. While it is true that of the children studied, two families did have nine children and another two had seven, the remainder of the children came from families which, while they can no longer be considered as the accepted thing,

can certainly be described as desirable in size. It is quite apparent that the size of the family alone does not contribute to the dependency or neglect which is experienced by the children.

Of interest, too, is a glimpse at the known employment of the parents of the children interviewed.

TABLE III. KNOWN EMPLOYMENT OF PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN STUDIED

	Total	Fathers	Mothers
Total	80	40	40
Housewife	17	0	17
Skilled Tradesman	16	14	2
Unskilled Laborer	12	11	1
Factory Worker	7	1	6
Office Worker	6	1	5
Clerk	3	1	2
Unknown	8	8	0
Other	8	4	4
None	3	0	3

Despite the rather detailed breakdown in the classification of employment, inevitably there were eight which fell into the category "other." Of the four fathers in this group, two were truck drivers, one was an entertainer, and the other was a farmer. Of the four mothers two were domestics, one a pharmacist, and the other a prostitute. The three mothers listed with no occupation included two mental patients and one who is deceased.

It is interesting to note that in these forty broken homes, more than half of the mothers, 57.5%, had an employment other than that of housewife. And that was despite the fact that there were, of course, children in every family. Thirty-five percent of the fathers were listed as skilled workmen such as mechanics, pattern makers, electrical workers, printers, steam fitters, and so forth; while 27.5% were unskilled laborers. Not one father was listed as a professional person, the only professional in the forty families represented being a woman pharmacist. While a sample of forty families is too limited to permit the drawing of any definite conclusions, the valid observation may certainly be made that few children come to institutions from the homes of professional people while the great mass come from families in which the parent or parents are employed either as tradesmen or as laborers.

The religious preference of the families also sheds enlightenment upon the subjects of this study. The lack of religious preference on the part of many people making application to social agencies has long been common knowledge. It is of interest, though, to see the actual facts involved. The lack of religious preference helps to explain the obvious familial instability.

**TABLE IV. RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE OF FAMILIES FROM WHICH
THE CHILDREN HAVE COME**

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
Active Protestants	10	6	4
Inactive Protestants	11	8	3
No Preference	19	11	8

It is not surprising that no Roman Catholics or Jews were listed among the forty families since the four agencies used in the study care for children of Protestant or non-sectarian people. Of the total families studied, 47.5% indicated no religious preference whatever. The families of the boys showed 44.0% with no preference while the families represented by the girls interviewed indicated that an even higher number, 53.3%, had no preference. Only 25.0% of the families were considered active Protestant families. It is almost certain, however, that this figure is exaggerated since one agency requires membership in the church as a condition for entrance, but the director of the agency freely admitted that not all of the memberships on the part of the parents were active. More accurate, in this matter, were the opinions of the children. There were only four children, ten percent of the total, who felt that he had a meaningful church experience prior to his placement in an

institution.

The information provided by this table is clear. While the sample is small, a general and valid observation can be made that the absence of a religious experience in a family does, indeed, deprive that group of an understanding of the meaning of life; and contributes in a positive manner to an inability to function in a manner conducive to the strong moral and social character required in the establishment and continuation of well-integrated families.

A great deal concerning the problems of the children is revealed in an evaluation of the housing which they used prior to their entry into the agency. Some difficulty was experienced in preparing this table since the line of distinction between the various grades of housing can become very subjective. Almost all of the records gave an indication of the type of housing used by the particular family, but the evaluation was given in narrative form and had to be reduced to a standard for measure. The following classifications were used with the stated results. Those indicated as non-ascertainable represent children of long-term placements where records on this subject were very sketchy.

**TABLE V. CASE RECORD EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S HOUSING
PRIOR TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
Poor	17	11	6
Fair	5	4	1
Good	11	4	7
Not Ascertainable	7	6	1

Obviously, the table is not as detailed as one might like, nor does it reveal the degrees of blight in which some of the children lived. However, this much may be stated, that those conditions which found their way into the category of poor housing were conditions at the lower fringe area or below of housing that might properly be used as human habitations. The housing considered fair was that which, while it served the purpose of providing reasonable shelter, did not provide the privacy or the elusive extra bits of comfort which most people consider normal. The good housing was not at all composed of housing which was entirely desirable, but rather consisted in the main of accommodations which were adequate for the needs of the occupants.

With this understanding of the table, we become increasingly concerned over what it reveals. Of the total known accommodations, 51.5% were considered poor while only 33.3% were considered good. Families represented by the boys

were found living in the worst situations for 58.0% of their homes were considered poor, 21.0% were fair, while only 21.0% were rated as good. The girls fared somewhat better with 42.9% considered poor, 7.1% fair, and with 50.0% good.

Since almost all of the children came from urban Chicago, and since over half of them came from situations where the housing was definitely considered poor, we are confronted directly with the stark picture of blighted housing, tenement stench, filth, insufficient privacy, and the rest of the physical, social, and moral handicaps which accompany existence in such surroundings. While we cannot condone the alcoholism, desertion, and other anti-social behavior which contributed to the breakdown of the families from which these forty children have come, we can understand better the social deterioration of the parents and the resultant disintegration of the families.

Accompanying the table on housing is some information which was secured from the children and from the case records regarding the mobility of the families. A long recognized fact relates excessive mobility to family instability. The facts below indicate the appreciable movement to be found in many of the families studied.

TABLE VI. MOBILITY OF CHILD'S FAMILY PRIOR
TO PRESENT PLACEMENT

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
No changes of address	5	1	4
1 change of address	0	0	0
2 changes of address	4	4	0
3 changes of address	6	3	3
4 changes of address	2	0	2
5 or more changes of address	13	9	4
Not ascertainable	10	8	2

From this table we find that 43.3% of the known thirty families moved at least five times or more, while only 16.6% did not move prior to placement. There were an average of more than 3.3 moves for each of the thirty families whose mobility was known prior to the placement of the children.

Two important characteristics of the families can be drawn from this information, each having a direct bearing upon the children who were involved. First, since the median age of the children studied was fourteen years, and since the median stay for the children at their present agency, as will be shown later, is almost four years, the table on mobility indicates that each child had an average of more than three moves prior to reaching his tenth birthday. And this does not take into account the fact that about four-

fifths of the children spent an additional three years in another foster care setting prior to their entrance to the institution where they were living at the time the study was made. Obviously, this reduction of time spent with the parents in their natural home would increase the rate of mobility considerably.

The other important bit of information to be gleaned from this table lies in a relationship between the rate of mobility and the kind of housing occupied by the families at the time of the placement of the children. Since over half of the children came from circumstances where the housing was considered poor, and only one third from housing that was sufficiently adequate to be classified as good, it is apparent that the mobility did not accomplish an elevation of the status of the individual families. Instead we can see this mobility as an aimless drifting from one unfortunate circumstance to another, each time subjecting the children involved to the frustrations and the sense of defeat which dogged the families of which they were a part.

With this understanding of the character of the families involved, we turn with interest to the evaluation which the children placed upon their own parents. The children, as always, were encouraged to speak frankly and

did so with amazing candor.

TABLE VII. CHILDREN'S EVALUATION OF OWN PARENTS

	Total	Fathers	Mothers
Total	80	40	40
Good parent	25	8	17
Generally poor, unstable	13	9	4
Alcoholic	12	10	2
Doesn't remember	11	5	6
Fair parent	6	2	4
Brutal	4	3	1
Deceased	3	1	2
Deserter	3	2	1
Rejecting, neglectful	1	0	1
Mental patient	1	0	1
Promiscuous	1	0	1

According to the children, 31.2% of the parents could be considered good, 20.0% of the fathers and 42.5% of the mothers. The largest category in which the children were critical of parental behavior was the one called "generally poor, unstable." These were the parents whom the children felt had failed to measure up to what might reasonably be expected of an adequate father or mother, but whose behavior could not be limited to any one complaint. 16.2% of the total parents fell into this classification, the fathers far in front with 22.5% considered generally poor while 10.0% of the mothers were similarly indicted.

The children acknowledged that alcoholism played a

part in many of the families too. Of all the parents, 15.0% were listed as alcoholics by the children, with the fathers again running ahead of the mothers, 25.0% to 5.0%. Eleven children couldn't remember enough about their parents to give an evaluation and the rest felt that their parents fell into the additional categories included in the table.

As the next table indicates, the evaluation made by the children of their own parents was not entirely accurate, the error always lying in the charitable attitude taken by some of the youngsters toward their fathers and mothers. This is understandable since many of the children tried to create a picture of the kind of family they wished they had. More important, though, was the frank and intelligent manner in which the majority faced the reality of their family situations and accepted the conditions so objectively that they were able to discuss the matter with one who was almost a stranger to them without undue discomfort.

A more factual picture, though, concerning the character of the parents was gained from the evaluations which were made in the records by professional observers. A glimpse at the table below shows clearly that the facts did not always agree with the stories which the children related.

**TABLE VIII. CASE RECORD EVALUATION OF KNOWN PARENTS
PRIOR TO CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

	Total	Fathers	Mothers
Total	80	40	40
Good parents	13	2	11
Generally poor, unstable	9	2	7
Alcoholic	21	18	3
Brutal	3	3	0
Deceased	3	1	2
Deserter	8	5	3
Rejecting, neglectful	6	6	0
Mental patient	7	0	7
Promiscuous	7	2	5
Not ascertainable	3	1	2

Here the largest single group of parents were not good parents, as the children had indicated, but were alcoholic. Over a quarter of all the parents, 26.2%, were considered alcoholics. This number was divided between 45.0% of the fathers and 7.5% of the mothers. In addition to this appalling number of alcoholics, many more had alcoholism listed as a contributing factor to their poor status as a parent. Certainly, the knowledge that almost half of the forty children had been subjected to an alcoholic parent is not a fact that can be accepted comfortably.

The case workers who compiled the official records found that only 16.2% of the parents could be considered good. An extremely low 5.0% of the fathers and a slightly better 27.5% of the mothers merited this classification.

This evaluation of the eighty parents places only half as many parents in the category of "good" when compared with the 31.2% which the children evaluated in that manner.

Interesting, too, is a comparison on the figures concerning desertion. The children had spoken of only three, two fathers and one mother, while the record indicates there were actually eight, five fathers and three mothers. The children also reported only one mother as being a mental patient, while in reality there are seven. It is entirely possible, however, that some of the children had not been told of the condition of their mentally ill mother.

The record also indicated the rate of known promiscuity on the part of the parents. While the children had acknowledged that one was promiscuous, the records indicate that seven had engaged in that particular form of anti-social behavior.

A close comparison of the two tables shows clearly that the children were protective concerning their evaluation of their parents, but it must be said again that the children showed great courage in facing the reality of their situations in so many instances. This frank understanding certainly provides firm basis upon which constructive assistance may be given.

After the youngsters had had the opportunity to give an evaluation of their parents, they were asked for an opinion as to the evaluation of their total family experience. While they were encouraged to speak at length concerning their experiences, an effort was made to bring the conversation to a conclusion in which the opinion could be considered as generally happy, reasonably happy, or unhappy. The results of this part of the interviews are recorded below.

TABLE IX. CHILDREN'S EVALUATION OF THEIR OWN FAMILY EXPERIENCE

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
Unhappy	21	11	10
Reasonably happy	5	2	3
Happy	9	7	2
Doesn't remember	4	4	0
Not ascertainable	1	1	0

Fifty-two and five tenths percent of the forty children felt that their family experience had been unhappy. This number was divided into 44.0% of the boys and 66.6% of the girls. These children felt that they had received poor care, inadequate comfort, had been subjected to strife and abuse, and had failed, generally, to receive the gratifi-

ations which they might normally expect from a good family. Only 12.5% considered their family experience sufficiently bearable to be considered reasonably happy. Each of the children in this group felt that the family could have been improved substantially had the parents made an effort to do so. Eight percent of the boys felt that their family experience could be considered as "reasonably happy," while 20.0% of the girls classified their experience in this manner. Less than one fourth, only 22.5% of the total children felt that they had benefited by a happy family experience. Twenty-eight percent of the boys had been happy, but only 13.3% of the girls. Four children couldn't remember enough of their home to make an evaluation and one boy was so hostile to his placement and to the idea of an interview that he refused to speak.

It is interesting to note that while an alarming number of children, over half, lived in conditions that they considered definitely as unhappy, two-thirds of the girls had this recollection of their own family life. While some effort was made to determine the reason for this fact, no clear-cut observation can be made. The reason given over and over was, however, that the boys required little from their families other than a reasonable amount of affection, care,

and comfort with sufficient opportunities to engage in neighborhood sporting events. It might be assumed that the girls, without the inclination toward sports which seemed to characterize the boys, would require more from the family directly before they could consider their experience as having been happy.

The last table dealing with the backgrounds from which the children had come deals with the primary reasons for the breakdown of the families studied. This was perhaps the most difficult table to prepare. So many factors contribute to the disintegration of families that it is almost impossible to isolate one which had contributed the most. Yet, in the interest of trying to understand fully the backgrounds of the children, and to present the material in a summarized form, it was necessary to make some such classification. The following table offers these observations. The reader will readily note that many of the primary reasons given for the breakdown of the families are inter-related. It will also be noted that many other factors, not here listed, entered in. However, the table submitted is the one which best combined simplicity with faithful reporting.

TABLE X. PRIMARY REASONS FOR BREAKDOWN OF
FAMILIES STUDIED

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
Alcoholism	16	9	7
Desertion	8	5	3
Neglect	5	3	2
Incompatability	5	4	1
Death of parent	4	2	2
Promiscuity of parent	2	2	0

It is apparent, from a glance at the table, that the chief reason for the breakdown of the forty families studied was alcoholism. It cannot be too forcefully stressed, however, that alcoholism played a part in far more families than this. Three quarters of the forty families were so seriously affected by alcoholism that it was either the primary reason for the breakdown or was one of the chief contributing factors. However, in sixteen cases, or 40.0%, alcoholism was unquestionably the chief reason for the failure of the family.

Twenty percent of the families were destroyed by the desertion of one of the parents, while in 12.5% the children required the assistance of the institutions because of neglect. Obviously, the category of neglect would have included those children whose parents were alcoholic, but of the five listed in the category "neglect", alcoholism had not

played so important a role as the fact that the parents simply did not choose to provide the children with the minimum amount of care necessary for decent existence. The additional figures included in the table speak for themselves.

With this brief description of the background of the families, we turn now to a report of the stories as told by the children. Limitation of time and space, together with a similarity of many of the stories, precludes the presentation of each interview in full. However, the ten stories which follow in the next chapter are typical of the many stories which were told.

CHAPTER IV

THE STORIES OF TEN CHILDREN -- FACT AND FICTION

The reverse side of the American dream is woven of trouble.¹ If there is any truth to this statement of Robert S. Lynd, then certainly it is true that the lives of many of our American children, victims of broken homes, are indeed woven of trouble. Such was the experience of many of the children interviewed for the purpose of this study. Although the study is being conducted on a case work basis, the limitations of time and space do not permit a presentation of each interview. In addition to these limitations, such a similarity was found in some of the interviews that a repetition of the stories would provide nothing unusual or of special interest. However, the following stories are typical of the frank manner in which the children cooperated during the interviews and, in addition, provide a glimpse of the technique employed in securing the desired information.

The first story is that of a boy twelve years of age whom we shall call Richard. Richard had come to Uhlich

¹Koos, Earl Lomon, Families In Trouble, King's Crown Press, 1946, page viii.

Children's Home four years ago, and during that time I had been fortunate in establishing a good rapport with him with the result that our conversation concerning his family was made in the relatively formal atmosphere of my office.

Richard, whose concern for his family is almost always uppermost in his mind, sat comfortably as he spoke of his past, and when speaking of his little brother and of his father his voice took on a quality of affection that was not apparent at other times. His account of his family began with his experience while living in Bellwood, Illinois, some six or seven years ago. He was almost wistful as he described the happy days when his family boasted comparatively luxurious living quarters, four rooms, in a building that used to be a store. As Richard said, they "lived good" while in Bellwood. The father, who had broken his hip some years before, stayed at home to take care of the house and the children while the mother went to work. During the time the family lived in Bellwood, the mother regularly brought her money home, and everyone had enough to eat. Boy friends were plentiful and they took full advantage of the large field next to the four room house in which Richard and his family lived. The entire neighborhood seemed to cooperate in helping to create a pleasant environment in which play

facilities abounded, and Richard and his little brother were delighted to avail themselves of this opportunity. Richard's little brother, Charles, was always part of the gang who went to the field for play, and Richard clearly remembered the warm feeling that he had when he saw his father sitting near the window, watching the boys. But for Richard, the joys of living in Bellwood terminated all too soon. He wasn't sure just why, but he did know that when he was still quite young the family moved to a place in Melrose Park. Things had been "coming along fine" in Bellwood, and Richard could see no reason for the change. His fears for the future were justified at an early date after the move had been completed for, as Richard put it, when they moved to Melrose Park "everything went."

The house in which Richard's family lived in Melrose Park wasn't nearly so fine as the one they had occupied in Bellwood. But of even more importance to Richard were the social and economic changes which had occurred just after the move had been completed. The wonderful field and all of the friends were gone and now Richard and his brother Charles had to find their recreation by playing in the coal bins near the railroad tracks. Richard's mother was gone a lot of the time now, sometimes not coming home for a week at a time,

and even then, it was rare when she brought food or money with which to buy food. Even at that early age, Richard recognized his responsibility in caring for his invalid father, his younger brother, and himself, so he found a job -- dumping cans for twenty-five cents a day. Richard also had an older sister with whom he associated very little in Bellwood, but in Melrose Park he hardly saw her at all. He felt that his little brother, his ever-present father, and himself were pitted against the rest of the world. The family had lived in Melrose Park just a short time when, on one of her infrequent appearances at home, Richard's mother spoke earnestly with the father about the financial straits of the family. Richard didn't understand too much of the conversation, but he did know what the mother meant when she spoke of the danger of being evicted. Determined to do his part, Richard got a job cutting lawns and brought all of his earnings home. The boys owned only two prized possessions, Charles a rocking horse and Richard a desk, but the rocking horse had to be sold. It was difficult, facing the reality that would require the disposal of the few physical reminders of better days, but there was no choice. But with all of the efforts the family made, the eviction came. The furniture was placed in storage, a futile attempt was made to find a

place to live, and the two boys and the father reluctantly moved into the park. The mother, who was a practical nurse, went to live with the family for whom she was working, but she came each day to visit the father and the boys and bring them food.

It was about a week from the time the family was evicted until they found other housing, and the experience, trying as it was, seemed to bring Richard and his father even closer together. As Richard said, with a sense of warmth, no matter when he would wake up at night, his father was awake, watching so that the boys would be safe. The mother came daily to bring food, but that was Richard's only contact with her. She never had time to stay, nor did she seem to be very interested in how her little family was getting along.

At the end of a week new housing was found but, consistent with the pattern the family was establishing, this was worse than any place in which they had lived. It was space under a house with no conveniences whatever and the responsibilities of Richard's father were even greater than before for the place did not easily respond to his determined efforts to keep the home and the family clean and healthy. In this home Richard experienced some of his greatest unhappiness, and he was almost crushed the day his father

slipped on a baseball bat and "split his head open." Fortunately the mother, a practical nurse, was at home, and she sent Richard to the corner grocery store for medicine. With this medicine, a rarity in Richard's household, the mother "fixed Dad up" and he eventually recovered. However, with his father injured again, Richard wished more than ever for the good times he had known at Bellwood. Here, in their basement home, their joys were few. He remembered only once when they seemed to have an abundance of food. That was on a day his mother came home "with about a hundred dollars worth of food" but otherwise he didn't know what she did with all the money she earned. The other big meal that he remembered in this home was the Thanksgiving when the people for whom his mother worked gave them a pot full of turkey soup. It was far and away the best Thanksgiving dinner Richard had eaten until he came to Uhlich where there was more turkey than he had ever seen. But, unfortunately, there was no recurrence of the "hundred dollars worth of food" or of the turkey soup.

Ordinarily, Richard made the rounds of the stores, getting the baked goods which had not been sold the day before.

Richard stoutly defended his father's efforts to provide for the boys -- there was always bread and jam in the house, and often there was stew. But there was never too much of either.

Richard and Charles always had enough clothing, even when they lived in their basement home, for when their wardrobe was depleted, his father would go to "a big building downtown" and get more. As Richard said, they knew his father there, and that's why it was possible to get clothing even though they had no money with which to pay. But these were difficult days. Richard's mother took him and Charles to the show once and on one other occasion bought them some pop, but that was all, and Richard was constantly concerned about the fact that his father could get out so seldom. Things were "pretty rugged" until one day a lady came to the house. She argued with the father and the mother, and when they were through talking, the lady took Richard and his brother to the Juvenile Detention Home.

Strangely enough Richard and Charles didn't stay there long, and their release occurred through a misunderstanding on Richard's part. A man came and talked to him one day and asked him a number of questions. One of the questions was whether or not he had a godmother. Richard said yes, thinking that a godmother was the same as a grandmother, and was amazed to find that Charles and himself were released. When they returned to Melrose Park and to the basement they called home, their father was delighted to see

them, but their mother wanted to know how he could be so stupid as to confuse godmother with grandmother. Their stay in Melrose Park didn't last long, though, for they were returned to the Juvenile Home and, some months later, were transferred to Uhlich.

And now, in retrospect, what did Richard remember as being important during the years that he had spent with his family? It was then that Richard answered like a small boy talking to the head of the institution in which he lived. He spoke first of his father's instructions concerning courtesy. His father had advised him always to be courteous and never to swear. And cleanliness, being next to godliness, was high on his father's list of musts. Just as the father spent so much of the time keeping the home in good order and the clothes neatly washed, so he advised Richard and Charles to keep themselves clean, always. Thrift was important, too. From the time he was a small boy, Richard was told that he should save his money and that the best way was to bring it home to his father. This practice Richard followed religiously but he never saw his money again. His father smoked and drank beer, "never very much," and perhaps that's where some of the money went. Richard didn't know what happened to the rest of it, but it didn't seem to matter.

His dad took such good care of him and Charles that he couldn't bring himself to blame his father, even if he did use all of his savings.

And what about his religious education? Well, Richard didn't know whether his mother ever went to church or not, but his father, of course, was never able to go. It was always necessary for him to stay at home and take care of the boys. The only contact Richard had with religion was when his father read to him from the Bible, the only real book they had in the family. When Richard came to Uhlich and was given the opportunity to go to Sunday School and Church he liked it, and now wishes that his father were well enough to be able to attend, too. He supposes his father still reads the Bible, but he wonders about his other reading. When Richard was still at home his father spent most of his spare time reading comic books. Not because comic books were his father's choice, Richard hurried to add, but because it was the only reading matter available. Richard regularly went through the neighborhood in Melrose Park exchanging the comic books his father had read for others, and the success of his bartering was always accurately judged by the reaction of his father when he returned with the books.

Did Richard's family life give him everything that he

wanted? Richard answered honestly and said that there were a number of things that he missed. The first thing that he mentioned was that it would have been far better had his family had better housing. He would like to have had a different mother, too. He wouldn't exchange his father and his brother Charles for anyone, but he would like to have a mother who was more interested in him and who would take care of his father. At the present time Richard doesn't know the whereabouts of his mother and he said that if he were big enough to be on his own, he would spend some time trying to locate her. When he was asked what that would accomplish, he thought, and then decided that under the circumstances, perhaps it was better that he didn't see her again. He felt that there should have been more food, too, so that the daily struggle for survival might not have been so difficult for his father. The interview ended by Richard stating that when he was old enough to go to work he was going to get an apartment and give his father the things that he deserves. After the sacrificial life that Richard's father had led, certainly nothing could be too good for him.

On the basis of the interview, it would appear that Richard, his little brother, and his father, were the victims of a long series of misfortunes. Unfortunately, however, for

Richard and his brother, most of the misfortunes, by far, were the result of the actions of his mother and father. The records of Uhlich Children's Home, based on the referral sent by the Juvenile Court of Cook County, correspondence with the Illinois Public Aid Commission, the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, and the observations of the agency's case-workers reveal the sordid story of two parents, delinquent in their responsibility to their children, to their home, and to each other. Richard's description of his mother was fairly accurate, and the records bear testimony to the fact that most of the criticism Richard heaped upon her was justified. She was not a practical nurse as Richard charitably described her but a housekeeper in the homes of elderly bachelors in the community, and she did desert the family regularly. It is also known that she drank, sometimes to excess, and evidenced little interest in the members of her family. After Richard and his brother came to live at Uhlich his mother, typical of delinquent parents, began to show a little more interest in the boys, but even here she failed to live up to expectations. On one occasion she wrote to the boys, "I would of come to get you Sunday but I have been very sick and had to stay off my feet but feel better now. I hope you are a good boy. I miss you and Charles. Don't think I forget you

er Charles. I think and pray for you all the time. I will call the home and see if I can come and get you on Sunday. If there is anything you and Charles need please let me know. I am sending you and Charles a package. Will see you soon. Lots of love. Mother." Neither the package nor the mother ever arrived at Uhliah!

But it was in the person of the father that the greatest discrepancy between Richard's story and the truth was found. It is true that the father had suffered a fractured hip some years ago which never mended properly, but apparently it was not sufficiently serious to restrict his actions completely. Our records indicate that "in addition to his health factors, he was described by the police of his district and by the relief agency officer as being addicted to alcohol. This condition of drinking also applies to his wife. In fact, they were frequently picked up by the police in a drunken condition in the park, usually with one of the younger children." Although this alcoholism was never verified by Richard during the interview, the younger brother, Charles, inadvertently disclosed it during a visit with a family who had taken him for Thanksgiving Day in 1947. During his visit he noticed a whiskey bottle in one of the rooms and asked what it was. While the hostess was searching rather

desperately for an answer Charles commented, "Oh, I know. That's a whiskey bottle. My father drinks whiskey all the time."

The record indicates that the family moved many times, far more than Richard had remembered, or at any rate, acknowledged. References in the record are made to the fact that the family received Aid to Dependent Children and at other times received assistance from the Illinois Public Aid Commission, but the financial help could not be consistent because both agencies frequently found it impossible to locate the family. Each time the family was located the conditions in which they were living were described as ranging from "extremely poor housekeeping" to "indescribably filthy." As a result of the filth in which Richard and Charles lived, both were treated for scabies while at the Juvenile Detention Home and came to Uhlich with their heads shaved.

But it was in the recollection of his father's kindly and generous personality that Richard focused most of his dreams, and yet, even there, the record offers no evidence to indicate that Richard's loyalty was well-founded. On the contrary there are many references to the father's lack of ability to command the respect of those with whom he came into contact. Even those who befriended the father and the

rest of the family fared no better and, what seems to describe him at his lowest ebb, the father was taken into custody on the day before the boys were sent to the Juvenile Detention Home because he became abusive with the people who, on a previous occasion, had permitted Richard's family to move in with them. There is not one shred of information in the record which might indicate that the father had ever assumed the role normally expected of parenthood.

On the basis of Richard's story and the record, it is difficult to know just how much of Richard's fabrication should be attributed to his earnest desire to possess a family like other boys, and how much must be credited to that happy faculty of most children -- the ability to remember only the pleasant things about people who in any measure have befriended them. Certainly we can say with assurance that Richard keenly missed the decent housing that he had been denied while living with his parents and we can be equally certain that decent housing would not only have meant comfort, but the social status that Richard still craves. His almost pathetic affection for his father, too, is an expression of his desire for the stability and security that a father should be expected to provide. For Richard, his father did represent the only stable adult he had known prior to his

entrance into Uhlich Children's Home. In spite of his many faults, the father was the only one who was at least physically present at all times. That is why Richard not only could forget, but could become intensely protective about his father's excessive drinking, his shiftlessness which required that Richard seek employment at an early age, his part in the poor housing and lack of food that they all experienced, and his failure to maintain a decent standard of basic cleanliness. It helps to explain, too, why Richard so bitterly resents his mother and the fact that she deserted his father so frequently. For Richard his father is his family, and he resents anyone or anything that challenges his father's comfort or status. Richard didn't experience any social control, any real security, or even a satisfaction of his physical needs in his own home, but in his sordid surroundings he found the vestiges of family life and recognized their importance to him. It was only after entering Uhlich that he was able to actually experience these satisfactions, even though they were apart from the natural family that he missed. His participation in group living in a comfortable, wholesome environment has crystallized and emphasized their importance to him.

That is why, even at his early age, Richard was able

to project his thinking to the time when he will establish his own family. He emphasized again the fact that his family would provide an opportunity for caring for his devoted father, but, in addition, he stated that he also was looking forward to the benefits that such an ideal family would have for him. Some rather definite opinions characterized his thinking about his future family, namely that there would be children, that he would endeavor to find good employment, and that there would be no dissipation of the money he earned through drinking. He stated very simply that living in the Children's Home had taught him that he could have these things, together with comfort and plenty, if he tried.

* * * * *

A youngster interviewed at an agency which we shall call Institution A was a High School Junior, a girl of sixteen whom we shall refer to as Velma. Velma is one of five children and, because she has spent thirteen of her sixteen years in Institution A she can remember very little of her life in her natural home. Strangely enough, the only three things she could remember were associated with unpleasantness. Her first recollection concerned the relationship which existed between the members of the family. She recalled

ruefully that they lived in very poor surroundings and that the family never seemed to be able to get along together. Evidence of this difficulty was dramatized in her recollection of the day when her mother and older sister literally threw dishes and a coffee pot at each other. Her second recollection was of a rat bite her brother suffered while asleep in their home, and her last recollection was of the spring in the sofa that continued to poke its way through the upholstery. Scarcely enough to make her feel that her childhood or her home had been either a comfortable or a happy one.

Since coming to the institution Velma has learned that her parents were divorced and that her father has disappeared completely. Velma has not seen him since she was three years of age, nor has she seen her mother since she was about eight, for at that time her mother was committed to a mental hospital in Southern Illinois. Until her commitment, the mother visited Velma regularly at the Home, and it is because of those visits that Velma still thinks kindly of her.

The agency has never chosen to tell Velma the true story of her background, though the case records indicate that it was a very sordid one. Both her mother and father

had been married several times before choosing to live together, and their pattern of instability and failure to accept responsibility and decent standards continued to color their lives. Because of their rowdiness and their neglect of the children the situation came to the attention of the Juvenile Protective Association who, after making an investigation, referred the matter to the Juvenile Court of Cook County. The report of the Juvenile Protective Association showed that the father was an irresponsible alcoholic and that the mother practiced prostitution in the many taverns which line both sides of West Madison Street. Frequently, when deserting the children for a period of time, the mother arranged to leave the youngsters with another woman who was also known to the authorities as a prostitute. The writer of the referral, apparently at a loss for adequate, descriptive words simply stated that the conditions of the home, both physical and social, were deplorable and that the family was constantly rocked by the fights engaged in by the two parents. The Juvenile Court, on the basis of the investigation, chose to remove the children from the home and to place them in Institution A for protective care.

In thinking back over the many years she has spent in the institution, Velma felt there were many things for

which to be grateful. Not in the abject manner in which gratitude used to be extracted by paternalistic members of the Board, but in a mature acknowledgement of the advantages she had received. She appreciated, first, the fact that three of her four brothers and sisters had spent several years in the institution and that the Home had afforded an opportunity for the children of the family, at least, to stay together. This was very important to Velma for it was obvious that she clung to the vestiges of familial ties, even though a normal family life had been denied her. She also appreciated the comfortable manner of living which the institution provided and, she volunteered the information, she was sure that her own parents would never have managed to provide the facilities which she enjoyed at the Home. She was glad for the many other children who lived with her, too, for she felt that their close association had gone a long way in helping her understand and acquire the art of getting along with others. And last of all, she was grateful for her introduction and her continued contacts with the church. Velma pointed out very warmly that she knew many of the boys and girls at school who came from homes which were unhappy, and in every instance the parents failed to practice any religion. She emphasized this fact because she felt strongly

that there was a correlation between the two.

Of course, Velma did not find everything to her liking, but before she would enumerate her dislikes, she wanted to assure me that the advantages of living at Institution A far outweighed the disadvantages. However, Velma did confess that she frequently wished that she might spend more time with her mother. She realizes that her mother is in a mental hospital and that a close association is not possible, but she stated rather wistfully that she felt there was much to be said for living in a normal family if the members of the family contributed toward making the experience a happy one.

She also said that she wished the Home in which she lived were more broadminded concerning the friends she chose. Obviously, it would be desirable for Velma to have the privilege of inviting her friends to the Home for an occasional dinner or to go to the homes of her friends for an evening, but apparently the agency, operated by a conservative religious group, asked the friends so many questions concerning their religious preferences and their choices of recreation that it represented an embarrassment to Velma. She said she frequently declined invitations for parties simply because she would not subject her friends to the "red

tape" which the agency required. She felt very strongly that the Home might be more considerate of the children when setting the policies which governed the children's social activities.

Her last objection to the institution was a very personal one. During the thirteen years that Velma has spent in the agency she has matured into a very attractive, intelligent girl. Many of the children who have come to the agency during the years Velma has lived there have come at a later age and, consequently, have been subjected to more physical, social, and emotional damage prior to their entrance. As a result many of these children have not accomplished the stable attitudes which now characterize Velma and her actions. Now Velma is pointed to with pride by the staff of the agency as a glowing example of what can be accomplished with a child and, while the experience might ordinarily be considered a flattering one, Velma finds it most distasteful and shrinks from the feeling that she is felt to be the "private property" of the Home.

Despite this long history of institutionalization, Velma has come to accept some very definite feelings toward normal family living and has set her heart on establishing one of her own when the proper time comes. When encouraged

to project her thinking to the day when she would find it possible to create such a family of her own, Velma mentioned four qualities which she hoped her family would have. With no suggestions from the interviewer, Velma stated that she felt religion was a primary part of any good family. Not simply because it was popularly considered the proper thing to do, but because she sincerely believed that it provided the one means of knitting the family together through a common ground for thought. Religion, she felt, was the one force which could elevate family living to its highest potential plans.

Her second desire for her family of the future was that there be no drinking in the family. From her own vague recollections she knew the part that drink had played in the disorganization of her family and she stated that she would do everything possible to avoid a reoccurrence of the same tragedy in the family she hoped to establish. She felt that the home of her childhood might have been much more comfortable had the money which was spent on drink been spent on providing a higher standard of living.

Third in importance was the presence of children in the family. Reflecting the observations she had made of the homes of her friends, Velma said that she would want to give

herself to her husband and her children. She stated flatly that she would not resort to baby sitters as did the parents of many of her friends for she felt that everytime a baby sitter was employed "you leave a part of you behind with the sitter."

Velma's last desire for her future family was that the members learn to understand each other and respect each other's wishes and opinions. She couldn't see how happiness could be obtained unless the respect of the members of the family was a mutual one. She spoke warmly of how she would plan things with her children in order that they might feel their importance, and the interviewer couldn't help but come away earnestly hoping that she might get her wish.

* * * * *

Perhaps not as dramatic as the story of Richard, but of equal poignancy, is the story of Madeline, a girl of fourteen who also came to live at Uhlich. Madeline is a large girl for her age, is annoyed and embarrassed by a speech defect, and is retarded mentally. Madeline was born of illegitimate parents and, at the age of fifteen days, was brought to the home of the couple who became her foster parents. Madeline's real mother said that she wished to

board the baby, but after the child had been placed, the mother was never heard of again.

At the time the child was placed it was noticed that she had large sores on both her face and her stomach which, when examined by a physician, were diagnosed as acid burns. This indication of near tragedy in the first fifteen days of Madeline's life, together with the couple's real affection for children, made them decide to keep the youngster. The adoption papers were prepared but, for some reason that is not related in the record, the papers were never filed. However, the child remained in the home and the man and wife tried to fill the roles of mother and father. When this fifteen day old girl was taken into the family the newly found mother was forty-eight years of age and the adoptive father was fifty-four.

Madeline's earliest recollections begin about the time she was five. Her memory of the person she called mother was not clear but she did remember some of the kindnesses her mother provided. She could remember helping her mother with the baking and, though Madeline admitted that she wasn't really of much help, it was pleasant to share this part of her mother's work. She remembered even more the fact that her mother permitted her to keep pets. It was through

her mother that Madeline acquired some rabbits, some baby chicks, and, the best present of all, a young lamb that she was permitted to care for. Madeline's eyes shone when she spoke of the animals who grew up under her care, and well they might, for it represented one of the few experiences she had ever had that bordered on real love. However, aside from the animals and the sharing of the chores, Madeline could remember no instance when she and her mother shared any form of recreation together.

During these years that Madeline grew up in the company of her mother, her father spent very little time with the family. These were days of depression and the father was employed by the W.P.A. and was unable to return home before nine or ten o'clock at night. The family was living at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin at the time, and the distance the father traveled to and from work made his coming home any earlier impossible. But Madeline's demands were relatively small, and her association with her mother seemed to meet all of Madeline's modest needs.

When Madeline was just seven years of age her mother died but, because Madeline was so young, the loss meant very little to her. For the next two years Madeline and her father lived alone, Madeline spending much of her time after

school with the children next door while the evenings she shared with her father, looking after the requirements of the home. Madeline said emphatically that she and her father never played or took hikes together. They just worked together and occasionally shared the retelling of their experiences of the day. Because Madeline had never been taken to Sunday School or Church, the experiences that she had at school, with the neighbor children, and the discussions she had with her father who at the death of her mother was sixty-one years of age, represented her entire socializing experience. Certainly it was a barren existence for a girl just past seven years of age.

After two years of this social sterility, the father, who did love the little girl in spite of his inability to provide the affection that a little girl needs, decided that it was necessary to have a woman in the house to help with his responsibility. To meet this need he invited Mr. and Mrs. H, the brother and sister-in-law of his deceased wife, to live with Madeline and himself. This had been the wish of his wife just before her death, and, although he had put it off as long as possible, the father felt that the time had come to seek assistance. But the hopes that the father cherished concerning the change that would come into the

little household never materialized. From the day Mr. and Mrs. H came into the family, trouble began. Madeline related that her father and the H's had agreed to share the expense involved in operating the home, but the H's constantly insisted that Madeline and her father ate more than half of the food which was prepared and, consequently, should pay a larger share. The father, who felt the charge was ridiculous, stood his ground, but unfortunately for Madeline, Mrs. H "took it out on her" during the time her father spent away from home. When she spoke with her father of the injustices being heaped upon her, Madeline discovered that it simply made the situation worse and that Mrs. H made things even more difficult on the following day. It seemed to Madeline that things were as bad as they could possibly be, but she underestimated the H's. Every opportunity was exploited to make Madeline's existence as unpleasant as possible. When she failed to bring a book home from school she was beaten and, according to Madeline, she was sent to bed at least half of the time without her supper. Her father tried to defend her, but he found the situation almost as bewildering as did Madeline. Frequently, when Madeline was sent to bed without supper, the father would attempt to bring food to her, but almost always he was intercepted by Mrs. H and the

food taken away. Madeline could remember that at such times her father sat on the edge of her bed and talked to her and, although that companionship helped immeasurably, it was the only close experience that she and her father shared.

Madeline was almost ten now, unloved by Mr. and Mrs. H and confused in her relationship with her father.

It was when Madeline reached the age of ten that the father recognized the futility of trying to continue with things as they were. Though he felt incapable of providing a home for Madeline, he knew that she must be given an opportunity for more normal living. A canvass of all the known relatives was made but none had the room nor the inclination to take Madeline and finally, through a relative in Chicago, Madeline's father was told of Uhlich Children's Home. He and several of his relatives visited Uhlich one day and made application for Madeline's admission. It may seem strange to those who are not familiar with what is provided by a modern children's home, but Madeline liked what she found at Uhlich. Uhlich provided companionship with children her own age, it gave her security and affection, and it afforded an environment which lacked many of the inhibitions that had made her earlier life such a problem. Madeline said that she missed her father at first but "after she got

organized" she seldom thought of her father or of her old home in Lake Geneva.

Of course, there were some things that she missed while living at Uhlich. Madeline missed the open spaces that she had known when she lived near the lake. When I asked if she missed the pets that she used to have she replied that she was very hesitant about ever having pets again. Just after her mother died her father had killed all of the pets except one rabbit, explaining that they were too much to care for. Madeline seemed to understand the necessity of this action, but was grateful that she had been left the one rabbit on which to shower her attention and affection. However, after the H's came to live with her, Mrs. H released this last rabbit because Madeline didn't clean the pen promptly enough on one occasion. The disappointment at losing this last pet so impressed Madeline that she has had no desire for a pet since.

It is a strange life that Madeline has led during these fourteen years, for in all of her experience there has been no real family life. She was abandoned by her real mother, taken in by an affectionate couple but by one too old to share vicariously in the joys and the dreams of childhood, left alone at the age of seven with a father who was then

sixty-one years of age, subjected to the ire of a couple who had presumably come to help rear her, and placed in a children's home by the time she was ten. It isn't surprising, then, that Madeline was hard pressed to answer when she was asked where, if she could make any choice she pleased, would she choose to live. After reflecting thoughtfully on the question, and almost completely without the enthusiasm for choosing frequently evidenced by children living in an institution, Madeline made her choice. First of all, she said, she would like to live with her father. Here at last seemed a direct expression of a desire for some semblance of family living but when questioned further, Madeline said that one of the chief reasons she would like to live with her father was that she remembered the kindness of the neighbor children and she thought she would enjoy playing with them again. Her second choice was to live with an "aunt" and "uncle" she knows here in Chicago. The chief attraction there was that she was allowed to take care of two small relatives, one four and the other seven, when they visited the home. Of equal importance was the fact that the uncle "kids around a lot" and makes Madeline laugh. Her third choice was Uhlich because of the pleasant times that she had here during the past four years.

Feeling certain that there was some desire, as yet unexpressed, for the type of living experienced by children in normal homes, Madeline was questioned further, but she continued to reply negatively. Her only desires were for friends her own age, the regularity of meals and comfortable surroundings, and the care of interested adults. Whether that adult care came from a mother figure in the intimate circle of a normal family or from a housemother in the more impersonal atmosphere of a children's institution seemed completely immaterial. Here was the social phenomenon of a girl, fourteen years of age, who had never really experienced family life and who was so completely lacking in an appreciation of what it had to offer that she did not even long for it. It is true that she felt a need for some of the basic requirements of life which are normally afforded by the family, but for Madeline, if these requirements were forthcoming in a situation completely divorced from family living, it made little or no difference.

It is not surprising that Madeline has been unable to think concretely of her own family of the future. She said she had thought of it since she loved children but her planning had not progressed beyond that point. Obviously, Madeline will have to be assisted to a much greater appre-

ciation of family living before she can employ that appreciation in her own planning for the future.

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Marilyn, sixteen years of age at the time of the interview, is one of nine children. She, her four brothers, four sisters, and parents lived happily together in a normal, well-integrated family. Although there was a range of twenty-seven years between the youngest and the oldest child, each one contributed something to the warmth of the intimate family circle. Marilyn regretted that her father had to work rather long hours and couldn't spend as much time as they would have liked with the rest of the family, but his work resulted in an adequate home and sufficient food and clothing to keep the large family comfortable. As a little girl Marilyn helped her mother with the ever-present housework and occasionally went shopping with her on Saturdays. As she spoke of these experiences it was easy to see that they represented some of the most pleasant associations that Marilyn had with her mother. Something was always happening in Marilyn's household and, when the nine children exhausted all of their own ideas for activities, the children in the neighborhood who streamed in and out of

the house supplied fresh suggestions.

By the time Marilyn was eleven, all of the nine children had matured and left home with the exception of four, but the pleasant, warm atmosphere of a happy home continued. It was during that year that the home was broken up by the sudden and unexpected death of Marilyn's mother. A family conference was held to determine the best plan for caring for the father and the children who remained at home. Unfortunately, those who had left home and established families of their own had neither the money nor the room to take care of their younger brothers and sisters so, after lengthy discussion, it was decided that the four children should remain with the father. Marilyn was the oldest girl at home so upon her fell the responsibility of keeping house for her father, her two brothers, and her younger sister, as well as continuing in school. Marilyn spoke with some pride of the fact that she handled all of the money and paid all of the family's bills. It was a valiant effort that she made and, for a girl of eleven years of age, a successful one, but the responsibility was too great. Things didn't go as smoothly as they might and the children didn't get to school promptly and regularly. After a year's time Marilyn's father decided that something would have to be done in order

that the future of the children be protected. It was then that Marilyn's father placed her and her younger sister at Uhlich Children's Home while the two boys were placed elsewhere.

During the four years that Marilyn has spent at Uhlich she has made a good adjustment. Her contacts with her father have continued with regularity and her only anxieties were concerned with her younger sister who has since been placed with one of Marilyn's older sisters. It is not surprising, then, that when asked what she missed while living at Uhlich that Marilyn could think only of the fact that she missed her family. She hurriedly added that what she meant was that she missed the regular, intimate contacts that she had known and enjoyed so much when her mother was still alive and the family was together.

When asked what she would want when the time came for her to establish her own family, Marilyn spoke very enthusiastically and with real maturity. She listed four prerequisites for what she considered to be a good home. First of all, she said it would be necessary to have adequate housing and a sufficient income to provide a comfortable existence. She stated that her conception of a good home did not require wealth or many luxuries, but she felt that a

certain economic standard had to be maintained if the family were to be comfortable and maintain a desirable social status. For Marilyn this standard of living was important for it determined, in some degree, the pattern that the rest of their experience would follow.

Second, she spoke of the necessity of having real understanding exist between both of the parents and between the parents and the children. Because of her happy early life, Marilyn could conceive of no well-integrated home unless the harmony and happiness, which her home was to have, was deeply rooted in sympathetic understanding. Her eyes shone with warmth as she spoke of this understanding, reflecting the pleasant memories of her childhood at home.

Third, she spoke of the place of religion and, without even knowing the word, made a strong case for endogamous marriages. Marilyn said that she thought people should choose mates from members of their own faith and for several very good reasons. She felt that it would preclude prejudices which might creep into the family circle, would make family devotions easier, and would remove the possibility of having the children confused by preventing them from being subjected to different beliefs. Marilyn said that she felt family worship was essential, that all of the

members should attend church together on Sunday and that it would be well if one of the many devotional books available was used after dinner each day in the privacy of the family circle. She felt that it would strengthen their faith, remove all vulgarity from the home, and would set a standard that would require of them their best.

And, last, Marilyn said she thought it was very important to make the children feel that they filled a vital and necessary part in the family. She said that the children in her family had always been permitted to participate in the family conversations, whether there was company or not, and that she would certainly see to it that her children had the same opportunities. She said it was one of the best ways she knew of letting the children know that they really "belonged."

Marilyn's account of her home and family experiences was almost completely accurate. There are references in the record to the discord which occasionally expressed itself among members of the family but, from a charitable point of view, these may be considered reasonably normal among a family of this size. But there is one reference in the record which cannot easily be forgotten, the one which describes the frequent difficulty in which one of Marilyn's

brothers found himself. So acute was this difficulty that, for a period of time, Marilyn's father sought the assistance of the Parental School in dealing with the boy. Marilyn's reluctance to speak of this part of her family obviously stemmed from her desire to paint as serene and perfect a picture possible of her own family. Not so much for the purpose of misrepresenting the truth, for she was completely aware that the records were available to the interviewer, but because her brother's actions did not fit comfortably into the picture of a well-integrated family which she desired. It is upon the good part of her own family experience, together with what she has assimilated at Uhlich, that Marilyn has been able to project into the future the kind of family which she hopes some day shall be hers.

And what part of Marilyn's appreciation of the family had she gained in the institution? She had always enjoyed plenty and comfort in her own home, so it was not in the institution that she came to recognize the importance of these things. Nor did she have to wait until she entered the Home to appreciate the importance of sympathetic understanding between the members of the family. But it was in the institution that she found the importance of religion in the life of a good family. Marilyn saw that it provided

depth and meaning to the other elements of the family that she had known and appreciated. So important was this discovery to her that Marilyn stated with confidence that the members of her future family would, indeed, share her enthusiasm.

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One of the brightest and most enthusiastic youngsters to be interviewed was little Anni, an eleven year old girl who has spent the last three years at Uhlich. Anni was one of a large family, three boys and three girls, and spoke with some mixed feelings concerning the family life that she had known before entering the Children's Home. Anni was only three months old when her mother died -- tuberculosis and heart failure according to the record -- and for the first seven years of her life she lived without the benefit of consistent care from "a woman in the house." Sensitive to the efforts made by her father during their difficult period, Anni spoke rather warmly of the attempt her father made to provide care for her and for the rest of the children. According to Anni her father employed several housekeepers who managed to keep the home in some semblance of order which to Anni, fulfilled all of the needs she had. The help of a

housekeeper was continued until she, the youngest of the children, was six years of age and could attend school. By that time the father felt that the older brothers and sisters could care for Anni from the time she returned from school until the father got back from work in the evenings. It was during these afternoons together that she became especially close to her brother Ludwig, to whom Anni refers affectionately as Louie. When asked why she preferred Louie to the rest of the children, Anni spoke enthusiastically of the fact that Louie permitted her to join in the games of cops and robbers, even though she was younger than the rest and six years Louie's junior, and that he frequently took her along when taking walks through the neighborhood in which they lived.

When asked what part her father played in the family circle, Anni again spoke warmly of her affection for her father. She remembered vividly the many times her father had taken her fishing in the lagoon at Lincoln Park and how, frequently, they had gone swimming together. Anni thought her father's willingness to take her swimming was particularly generous since she could not swim at the time and felt that her father was sacrificing his pleasure in order that she might have the benefit of an outing. She remembered, too, with apparent gratitude, that her father had always provided

the family with adequate housing and with sufficient food and clothing to make them all comfortable.

Anni was asked if there was anything about her early home life that she wishes might have been changed and she immediately spoke of the fact that her drank and frequently came home drunk. She assumed an attitude of protectiveness toward her father, even though she knew his drinking was wrong, by saying that he drank because he was so upset as a result of his wife's death. She went on to explain that her father was really a good man, but that on pay day, which occurs every two weeks, he meets his friends and comes home drunk. Anni offered no reason for her father's continuing to drink excessively as a result of being "upset" six years after his wife passed away.

It was when Anni was seven years of age that her father remarried, this time a widow with one daughter. From the very beginning the marriage was unsuccessful. Anni's step-mother deeply resented the frequent and excessive drinking on the part of her newly-acquired husband and the home was frequently rocked with bitter arguments. In evaluating the source of the difficulties, Anni guessed that it was the fault of each of the parents, the responsibility being about evenly divided. But regardless of the cause of

the family discord it was apparent, even to little Anni, that the family could not stay together under the circumstances. Anni's older brother Mike, who was nine years older than she, felt that it would be best for Anni and her sister, who is four years Anni's senior, to be placed in an institution where she could get good and consistent care in a more desirable atmosphere than the family provided. According to Anni, it was through Mike's efforts that she was placed, with her sister, at Uhlich.

As Anni looked back in retrospect upon those first days and weeks at Uhlich, she could remember missing only one thing, sleeping close to the sister who had also come to the agency. At home Anni and her sister had shared a bunk bed but now the sister, because of her age, had been placed in a different department. Anni hurried to add, though, that in a very few days that she took to become acquainted with the rest of the girls in her group, that she got over her lonesomeness for her sister and now, three years later, is completely content. Since coming to Uhlich, Anni continues to visit both her father and step-mother monthly. Strangely enough, the parents occupy separate apartments in the same building, but which are reached by separate entrances. Anni said that she likes to visit her step-mother and does visit

her except when her father is drunk for then he forbids her to do so. Anni said, and with some resignation to the situation, that on those occasions, she leaves the father's home as quickly as possible and either attends a movie or returns immediately to Uhlich. She said that she is often tempted to "tell her father off when he is under the weather" but has never done so for fear of the consequences.

Anni was asked what she felt would be the important factors in any good family, particularly in the one she would establish in the future. Her replies were so rapid that it was quite obvious that the troubles of her own family had made a deep impression on her and had prompted her to think in terms of a better future rather than her disappointing past. She rates as the number one consideration the fact that she would never marry a man who drinks. Anni said that she couldn't stand the smell of beer or wine and that she was sure that there could be no happiness in any home where the husband and father drank. Secondly, she said that she would try very hard not to allow anything to enter the family circle which might upset or spoil the home. Again she was reflecting some of the attitudes which she had developed in her own inadequate family. She said, too, that she would want her home to be cozy and defined that term as including a

decent place to live, enough food and clothing so there would be no worry, and a spirit of love and understanding between the members of the group. She also mentioned the importance of children in the family for to Anni, who is extremely affable and affectionate, it is essential that she have someone for whom she can care. In summarizing, Anni said that she would like to have in her own family the kind of atmosphere and "good feeling" that she has had since entering Uhlich.

It is not difficult to understand why Anni, in her account of her own family life, found it difficult to completely defend her father and the way in which he provided for his family. There is no doubt that Anni does have a strong affection for her father and that she has exaggerated the truth in describing her experiences at home, but she could not completely conceal the fact that she has often regretted the inadequacies which her father has so consistently displayed. The case record shows these inadequacies in all of their stark reality and indicates all too clearly that many of the kind statements made by Anni about her father were purely imaginative. It was four years ago that the Family Service Bureau of the United Charities of Chicago wrote to Mr. Harry Hill, Chief Probation Officer of the

Juvenile Court, asking that something be done for Anni and her brothers and sisters. The letter begins "We are referring these children to the Juvenile Court for protection because of neglect and gross lack of supervision on the part of the father ... In view of the seriousness of the situation we feel that authoritative steps are needed for the protection of the children." The letter goes on to explain how the marriage failed after six months, how the step-mother had been locked out of the house, how Anni's father had beaten Louie with a poker, and how the older brother, Mike, had left home at the age of fifteen "disgusted with the situation and has been self-supporting since that time." The letter also explains the housekeepers which Anni had described as being employed by the father, as having been placed in the home through the Aid to Dependent Children program. It seems that it was through one of these housekeepers that Anni and her sister were referred to the clinic for medical examinations and for "delicing." The housekeeper described the conditions as filthy and very over-crowded, the entire family sharing two bedrooms. The housekeeper stayed for a very short time, according to the record, and left because of Anni's father's excessive drinking and abusiveness. The letter concluded with the indictment "Since our own experience and the various

reports point out that the father is incapable of giving his children proper care and supervision, we believe that the court's protection is needed for the children."

After the Juvenile Court had entered the picture, application for Anni and the next oldest girl were made to Uhlich Children's Home through the Court. The father agreed to the placement with a great deal of reluctance, stoutly maintaining that he provided a decent home for the children, that placement was not his idea, but that if the girls came to Uhlich it might not be too bad. Just prior to coming to Uhlich, Anni and her sister spent several days at the Juvenile Detention Home where they were bathed and where their heads were shaved because of the excessive amount of nits and lice which were found there.

Now that Anni and her sister have spent three years at Uhlich, Anni's affection for her father has changed. Instead of being aggressively protective, as she was at the time she entered, her references to her father are softened by separation and, though she candidly admits that his excessive drinking is still a glaring shortcoming, she feels he has done the best that he could. In spite of the connection that she continues to maintain with her father and the sordidness which characterizes his way of living, it

is interesting to observe how Anni becomes almost completely detached when speaking of the things she wants in her future home. Forgotten are her attempts to justify her father's lack of provision for an adequate home and she lists, instead, all of the qualities which typify a well-integrated home. Out of the reality of the sordidness in which she lived, together with the ideals which Uhlich has provided, Anni has had the strength and the insight to choose wisely and to set her sights on a goal which is higher than the one she had experienced in her early childhood. Because of the earnestness of her convictions there is reason to be hopeful that Anni's children shall be blessed with a more desirable environment than the one with which Anni was confronted.

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The story of Melvin is one which presents a long history of unfortunate experiences, which have resulted in Melvin's complete divorcement from the desire for living in a normal family setting. He was born fourteen years ago, one of six children. When Melvin was just five years old, his father deserted the family, leaving the responsibility for supporting and rearing the children to Melvin's mother who at that time was very ill. The magnitude of the responsi-

bility, together with her sickness, caused the death of Melvin's mother just one year later. In speaking about his family and those early years, Melvin could remember nothing of his father and could remember only vaguely the fact that he was present at the time of his mother's death. He could, however, remember nothing of his mother's personality nor of any experiences of work or play that he had shared with her during the first six years of his life.

Being cognizant of Melvin's youth at the time his mother died, the Chicago Department of Welfare felt that it would be best if he and some of his brothers could be placed under the care of a good foster home but, unfortunately, Melvin lived in a series of such inadequate foster homes that the experience had a very negative effect upon him and upon his attitude toward family living. Initially he and four more of the youngest children in the family were placed in one foster home. This placement was made in order to keep a large part of the family together. In his conversation with the interviewer, Melvin stated that he could remember nothing about this first placement, but the record indicates that the foster mother felt, shortly after the youngsters came to live with her, that she would be unable to handle all five of the children. As a result Melvin and his brother Virgil, three

years Melvin's senior, were moved three months after this first placement to another foster home. This placement lasted for only eight months, and again the foster mother complained of an inability to adequately supervise the activities of the two boys.

It was during the month that he was removed from this second foster home that Melvin and Virgil and another brother Jack, were placed in a third foster home setting. It was at this home that Melvin remembered some of his earliest experiences, probably because he spent three years and two months in this home, taking him up to the time he was eleven years of age. Unfortunately, Melvin's recollections of this foster home are all bad. He remembers vividly that he and his brothers spent most of their time working, either in the house or in the fields of the farm which the foster parents operated. He remembers, too, that he was severely beaten on a number of occasions and once described the method used as being laid over the fender of the truck and beaten. The record points out the complete inadequacy of these foster parents by saying "These foster parents were overly strict and seemed to have a very punitive attitude toward foster children." The punitive actions of the foster parents naturally caused a feeling of resentment in Melvin and during

the last six months that he lived in this foster home he was blamed officially for, and probably with good reason, "Breaking neighbor's windows, lying, stealing, setting fires in foster home and relatives' homes, destructive of clothing and property, and a constant school problem."

During the summer following this placement, Melvin was freed briefly from the very poor foster homes in which he lived and spent several months at Arden Shore Camp. During the pleasant summer that he spent there he verbalized his disgust for foster home living and expressed a sincere desire to be placed in an institution. It is not at all surprising that Melvin rebelled against a continuation of the kind of living which had brought him nothing but unhappiness but it is extremely difficult to understand why the agency supervising his care placed him, after camp, in yet another foster home which proved to be no better than the rest. Melvin was eleven when he was placed in his fourth foster home in four years and clearly remembers some of his experiences there. He said that he had never felt that he was wanted. He was actually asked to get a job "junking" in order that he could earn enough money to go to the movies and, in this way, stay out of the house as much as possible. It was the foster mother who asked that he spend as little time at home as

possible. Notations made in Melvin's case history at Uhlich Children's Home verifies Melvin's statement that he had every reason to feel insecure during the time he spent in this fourth foster home. One observation made by the case worker from Uhlich Children's Home during a visit to the foster home was "The foster parents have a nine room house, the third floor of which seems to be set aside for the foster children. Worker gathered from the foster mother's conversation that these children come to the living room only by invitation and that they do not participate in family life at all." On another occasion the worker from Uhlich spoke with the worker from the agency who at that time was providing foster home care for Melvin. In discussing this fourth foster home the worker supervising Melvin's care stated that she and her agency felt "great disgust with the foster home and said that her agency is hoping to discontinue using it as they feel it is unsuitable and that the foster parents are interested only in the collection of the board. However, because of the shortage of good foster homes, it is taking them longer to remove the children than they hoped would be necessary."

When Melvin was offered an opportunity to come to Uhlich, he said that he preferred to live with the foster parents but explained, after seeing Uhlich and what it had to

offer, that the foster parents had told him that institutional life revolved around a continuous program of work and abuse.

In evaluating his reactions to his foster home experience, Melvin stated emphatically that he wanted no part of foster homes in the future but that, if he could, he would prefer to remain in an institution until he was ready for college. He said that he could remember nothing but work and abuse in the foster homes and that Uhlich was the first place he had lived since he was six years of age in which the head of the house did not repeatedly tell him that he was not wanted. He tried very hard to remember some pleasant experiences during these years of foster home living, but could think of none. He was particularly bitter about the planning which caused his separation from his brothers and sisters for the past five years, but now has very little feeling left for his family. Actually, Melvin has had very little contact with his disinterested brothers and sisters since coming to Uhlich, but has found the other friends he has made sufficient compensation for the loss of his own family.

Since coming to Uhlich Melvin has made a good adjustment and apparently has found, for the first time in his life, the security and sense of well-being that he had lacked for the first twelve years of his life. It was

shortly after coming to Uhlich that Melvin showed the case worker from the Chicago Department of Welfare through the agency and, for the first time in any of his places of residence, he referred to the property as "ours" and to his particular articles as "mine." He is especially pleased with the fact that he occupies an important place in the institution and is treated with dignity and respect. He elaborated by saying that he has felt at Uhlich that he can relax in comfort without feeling that he is shirking a responsibility to his foster parents. He is particularly happy about the fact that he has an opportunity to engage in sports, which claim much of his time and interest, and has developed into a very good athlete. He is already looking forward to playing High School and College football and hopes that he will be able to enter professional football when his school days are ended. He also spoke warmly of the young man who serves as his housefather, and said that he was sure that his housefather has given him everything that his own father could have provided.

Although Melvin's very unfortunate foster home experience has made him determined never to return to one, it has not destroyed his desire for social experience. He had made many friends while living at Uhlich and participates

comfortably in a group setting. He has also been pleased with the interest shown him by a young married couple who occasionally take him to Wrigley Field or into their own home. This young couple is devoted to sports which provides a natural tie between them and Melvin. But in all of these associations, Melvin shows a studied lack of interest in a relationship more intimate and personal than the one he now enjoys. For the present and the immediate future, Melvin could not adjust in a family in the normal sense of the word, and yet he did, during his interview, enumerate many of the basic qualities of a good family. He spoke wistfully of the need for being wanted which was not satisfied in the four foster homes in which he lived, of the relaxed atmosphere which he now enjoys, of the opportunity for expressing the desires that are paramount in his mind, of the plenty which he enjoys, and of his easy relationship with those in authority who control some of his actions and assist him in reaching decisions. Melvin, like Madeline, had spent the first years of his life, particularly since the death of his mother, completely without a satisfying social experience, and for that reason is hesitant about entering a family situation. However, with the values he has already placed upon the essentials of good family living, and the

wholesome atmosphere in which he finds himself at the present time, there is reason to feel that he can be prepared for a normal family experience in the future.

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Charlie, who is fifteen years of age, spoke very frankly about the extremely undesirable family from which he came. Charlie lived with his parents only until he was six years of age and his entire recollection of that period of his life was the excessive drinking in which both parents indulged and the brutal beatings which they gave each other. Charles remembers times when his parents were actually incapacitated as a result of the fights which accompanied each of their drinking bouts. During these first six years of his life, Charlie spent most of his time with an aunt who lived "downstairs." He can remember nothing of the location of his home but remembers that all of the fun he enjoyed up to that time was provided by the aunt who apparently showed a genuine interest in him. As he reflected upon these first six years he was certain that his aunt liked having him with her, for he felt that only under such circumstances could she have given him the affectionate care he received.

At the age of six Charles was sent to live with

another aunt and a year later spent a few days in a foster home before being sent to Uhlich Children's Home. He doesn't remember anything of his life in these settings and he doesn't know why the moves were made. Most of his memories, by far, are concerned with the experiences he had had during the eight and a half years he has spent in the institution. He remembers how grateful he was, when entering the Children's Home, that another boy his age entered the same day. This new companionship helped to relieve the sense of bewilderment which usually accompanies the entrance of a youngster into an institution and helped Charles to make a good adjustment at a reasonably early time. His only negative comment about his first years at Uhlich concerned the personality of one of his early houseparents. He felt that she was unjust in some of her actions, but the changes which were made in staff corrected that matter.

At the present time Charles is in High School and is living under the supervision of a house father, a college student who spent several years at Uhlich as a boy after the death of his father. Charlie feels completely content in this environment, has taken a healthy interest in sports of all kinds, and feels completely comfortable. He spoke with real feeling of the chances he had to speak freely on

anything that concerned him and was especially aware of the importance he placed upon the fact that he would always receive sympathetic attention. He verbalized the fact that he felt secure, that he was well fed, and occupied a comfortable room. He spoke of the many friendships he enjoys but failed to mention that most of his good friends were attracted to him on the strength of his very pleasant personality.

Although Charlie is not bitter about the failure of his parents, he is very disappointed with the fact that they have failed to do the things for him which might be expected of reasonably good parents. His mother, who now lives in the East, occasionally sends him spending money, but Charles said that he would never live with her. He stated, with no more reluctance than he would demonstrate in quoting any fact, that she was living with a man to whom she was not married, and that he would not be party to any such arrangement. His father is, at present, in a hospital where he is being treated for tuberculosis. Charles visits his father several times a year and, though he said that there conversations are not strained, he has no really strong attachment for him. Charles has looked forward to his father's success in quitting his excessive drinking many times but,

in spite of the intentions of the father, the drinking continues. The boy feels that the father may be slightly improved now because of his hospitalization, but hesitates to think of what will happen when he again is released from the hospital. Charles said that he would live with his father when he is released from the hospital if his father quit drinking altogether, but that under no circumstances would he continue to live with the father if he persisted in drinking even a moderate amount. He does not want to live with his aunts or with any foster family. He said that his only reason for wanting to live with his father is because "after all, he is my dad," but if that plan is not feasible, he prefers to remain at Uhlich. Charles stated emphatically that he felt he had lost nothing by living here because, as he put it, "this has really been a home to me."

The records indicate that most of the facts of Charlie's account were correct. In a History Sheet prepared by a probation officer of the Juvenile Court the statement is made "The maternal aunt made a complaint alleging that both parents are drinking excessively, and the child is neglected. On January 30, 1940 both parents were arrested by police, and a complaint of contributing to delinquency of their child was filed against them on the charge that they

were sending the boy to a tavern for the liquor. The tavern keeper was also arrested, but he was discharged in the Court of Domestic Relations as the evidence showed that he sold the liquor to the child on authorized notes from the parents. The case of the parents was continued and they were referred to Doctor ----- for a mental examination. The mother has been drinking excessively for a number of years, and the habit is now beyond her control." In March 1940 another History Sheet was prepared which contained the following statement: "Charles was placed through this court in the home of his paternal aunt. The aunt is now asking to have another plan made for the boy as she is no longer able to care for him. In February 1940 the parents were arrested on the charge of 'contributing to dependency' due to excessive drinking. At the hearing in C.D.R. both were referred to Doctor ----- at whose suggestion mother entered Manteno State Hospital, as a voluntary patient shortly afterward. Mother remained in the hospital two months and has since been with the father. June 5 the landlord reported mother's drinking heavily for several days. Father was absent from work for a few days at that time on account of drinking." Later correspondence with the executive of the hospital indicated that at the time of the release of

Charles' mother her prognosis was considered to be very poor.

During the years that Charles has lived at Uhlich his mother has written quite regularly and her letters have been surprisingly intelligent. However, there have been many instances when she has failed to show a realistic approach to her son's needs. Since the second year that Charles has been living at Uhlich, his mother has been promising to remove him from the Home and take him with her. Because this started long before Charles knew she was living with another man, he looked forward to this reunion with his mother, but, of course, it never occurred. The closest Charles came to living with his mother was on the few visits he had with her when she came through Chicago. Unfortunately, though, there were many times when Charles' mother arranged to come and see him but failed to do so because she met old friends and immediately began drinking with them. Naturally Charles became more and more disappointed with her.

Sometime after Charles' mother was known to be living with another man a letter was received by the Children's Home from his mother which said in part: "Will you kindly not ever write a return address of Uhlich Children's Home on any mail to me. I have no doubt the custodians in places where I live examine carefully every bit of mail received.

While I know that the Home is one of the best anywhere, I am not proud of the fact that my son has to be there. As I tell people -- when necessary -- the boy is with relatives, I should not like to be embarrassed by gossip that he is in a Home. I do so hope that you or anyone else there will not feel hurt or insulted that I ask this."

In spite of the conditions in which Charles' mother lived, she wrote in 1946, asking permission for Charles to come East to visit her. When she was told that it would be necessary for a case worker to call at her home and send a report to Uhlich, Charles' mother sent a very emphatic letter. She said "I cannot tell you too emphatically that I want nothing whatever to do with the interference of a social worker in my personal affairs. When the time comes that I can manage to have my son with me permanently, the Juvenile Court can investigate me to their hearts content. Until that time -- definitely no."

There is little more can be added about Charlie's real history. It contains all of the inadequacies that accompany alcoholic parents and the subsequent neglect that resulted from it. Yet, in the environment of an institution for children he has developed into a wholesome, sensitive boy, alert to the social physical, and psychic needs that are

the requirements of all well adjusted children.

The experiences which Charlie has had have not in any way embittered him toward society in general. Instead it seems that he has matured considerably with the result that he was able to project, with little difficulty, to the time when he shall establish a family of his own. His deprivation of intimate family life throughout his own childhood has strengthened his desire to create a family which will afford much more than the one that he had known. Of great importance to Charlie was the fact that he would do everything possible to prevent alcoholism from entering his home. This conviction is understandable since Charlie experienced so much because of the drinking done by his mother and father.

Charlie also spoke of the necessity of giving his children the kind of love and care which he had wanted so badly. His efforts, he said, would be devoted to providing his youngsters with every reasonable comfort in order that they might feel completely secure in their family life.

Welding the family together and giving meaning to all the rest was to be the presence of a religious experience. Charlie said that without religion he did not feel that it would be possible to accomplish any of the goals he had set.

Because of his long stay in the institution, Charlie

said that he definitely felt that most of his understanding of what a good family might offer had come because of his experience in the agency. While the institution cannot provide a family setting, Charlie pointed to the fact that, had he not been taken from his family and placed in the institution he might never have recognized the advantages of living on a better social, moral, and economic plane than the one that his own family had provided.

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Like Marilyn, Jane is a very mature young lady. Despite the fact that she is just fourteen years of age, she has acquired enough wisdom and has constructed enough dreams to be able to put into words the feelings which she has concerning her conception of the model family. During her interview, Jane spoke with a great deal of confidence and poise, indicating clearly that she had given much thought to the attitudes she was expressing.

Jane and her one brother were born in Chicago and lived in a reasonably normal family setting until the home was broken by the death of the father, an unfortunate occurrence which took place when Jane was just seven and a half years of age. Prior to his death, the little family of

four had lived in comfortable surroundings which could probably be classified as lower middle class. The father was a truck driver and, though he provided well enough for the little family, Jane remembered ruefully that he was crabby almost every night when he returned from work. She excused his lack of pleasantness by explaining that the job he had involved being in a lot of dust and dirt with the result that he almost always wore a patch over one eye or the other which had been injured. However, she did not try to defend him when she explained that he frequently argued with his wife, that he granted very little of his time or attention to the children, and that he spent many of his nights away from the family, playing cards with his friends. Although Jane was only seven and a half when her father died, as has been pointed out, it was quite clear that she has wished many times since his death that she had been given more of an opportunity for knowing her father and for sharing with him many of the intimacies which normally are the good fortune of a father and his young daughter.

In Jane's description of her home, however, it was obvious that her mother tried very hard to fill the void left by a disinterested father. During the many evenings the father was away, the mother spent her time exclusively with

the children, playing with them, helping them with their lessons, reading them to sleep, and tucking them in with the love of one who is striving desperately to fill the role of both parents. Although the father provided a comfortable home and sufficient food and clothing, Jane explained that the mother also worked in order that they might enjoy some of the small luxuries which can almost be considered necessities. "A lady" took care of the children while the mother was away, but the evenings were given exclusively to the association with the mother which Jane still remembers vividly and upon which she still reflects with a sincere feeling of warmth and appreciation. However, the supervision given the children by "the lady" who took care of them during the day was not sufficient to control the two youngsters nor was it giving the children the amount of training which the mother wished for them. A year after the father's death the mother decided that the children should be placed in an institution and made application for them at a Children's Home in a suburb West of Chicago. The children remained there for a year when Jane's mother felt they should be moved to an agency in Chicago so that visiting might be more convenient for her. When Jane was almost ten, she and her brother entered Uhlich.

During the four years that Jane has stayed at Uhlich she has become more and more aware of the fact that she will probably remain here until she finishes High School and enters college or some form of employment. This understanding is based on the fact that her mother has become almost blind and, since she was always quite deaf, will have a very difficult time in the future supporting herself without accepting the additional burden of supporting and giving direct care to her two children. But her physical handicaps have had one very positive effect upon Jane -- she appreciates the contributions of her mother now more than ever before. Jane spoke very wistfully of the fact that her mother always thought of the two children first; that she has continued to give loving and patient understanding to the children; and that these contributions are becoming more and more difficult to make.

After becoming acquainted with the stories of so many children from broken homes, the one which Jane had to tell seemed almost completely devoid of the drama which characterized the others. Although she was a half-orphan and as a result was forced to live away from her family, she did not experience the domestic turmoil which is the lot of so many youngsters who have been subjected to broken homes.

But Jane's contribution to this study was the very mature manner in which she projected her thinking and expressed for the interviewer her conception of what a good family should offer. She stated, with an air of amusement, that she was not contemplating marriage in the near future, but, she added soberly, she had thought a great deal about the subject with the result that many of her ideas had become reasonably well crystallized.

She said that first of all her family of the future would have to have, and she actually used the words, security and understanding. When asked to elaborate on what she meant, Jane said that, although her father offered little understanding, her mother patiently listened to all of her childish likes and dislikes and treated each of them as being important enough to merit consideration. She said that she could remember, too, the warmth which came from having enough of everything and from the genuine feeling of being wanted. Important, also, was the fact that her mother always trusted her and permitted as much freedom as possible without sacrificing supervision. Jane said that she felt that Uhlich was providing the same opportunities and assurances and, since they were so important to her, she wanted to be sure that they would be available to the members

of her future family. For Jane, much of the understanding and security stems from the personality of the people involved in the family and she stated that she would look very carefully for those qualities in choosing a mate.

Second in importance for Jane in the planning involved in her future family was that there should be children and that they should receive the best personal care that she and her future husband could offer. Jane admitted that her concern in this matter resulted from the disappointments she experienced as a child when, particularly after the death of her father, it was her lot to receive the majority of her care from friends of her mother or from people who were employed to take care of her. She did not, in any sense, blame her mother for these circumstances, but she did feel definitely that a child should be permitted the full attention of both parents. And as for having children at all -- Jane spoke intelligently as to the place of children in the family and stated emphatically that it was her opinion that the rearing of children was the chief purpose and joy of married life. It was inconceivable to Jane that a childless couple could be a really happy family. She very definitely wants children and wants the chance to give them all the love and care that she had wanted for

herself.

Her third and last goal for her future family is that both she and her husband actively participate in the religious program of the same church. Again she showed real maturity in pointing to the multitude of difficulties which arise when the parents are indifferent to religion or when their inclinations lead them to different churches. In her home, Jane remembers that her father rarely went to church at all and she has always felt that it left something of a void in the relationship between her parents and the children. On the basis of that experience Jane knows that it will be important for her to avoid making the same error when she establishes her own family. She has also been able to observe through experience the difficulties involved when the parents attend different churches. During her stay at Uhlich she has seen the confusion that is created in the minds of the children and how, rather than exposing them to two faiths, it really provides the children with no faith at all. Since she feels that religion is a vital part of good family living and is important to each of its members, Jane is already preparing in her mind to make a wholesome religious experience possible for every member of her family.

In summarizing her plans for the future, and by way of offering an explanation for the maturity which she displayed, Jane said that some of her thoughts grew from her experiences in her own home but that certainly living at Uhlich had originated some and had strengthened and crystallized others. Jane made this statement in a refreshingly frank manner and there is no reason to feel that the comment was made with any attempt to please the interviewer. Jane, fortunately, has the happy faculty of being able to take the good from every experience and assimilate it into her own wholesome plan for the future.

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During her almost sixteen years of life, Grace has experienced very little sense of security from her own family. Almost since the time they were married, Grace's parents have had frequent separations and since Grace's young sister was born, Grace was then six years of age, the parents have been separated permanently. In addition to this young sister, Grace also has a brother who is also younger than she. The brother is in Parental School as a result of his truanting and his alleged incorrigability.

In telling her story, Grace said that her earliest

recollection of family life was one of trouble. Her father drank excessively, and on one occasion became roaring drunk for an entire week. During these periods of drinking the father became very abusive to every member of the family and frequently gave vent to his emotions by throwing household articles out of the window. Grace recalled the many times that she had gone downstairs from their second floor flat to retrieve the cushions from the chairs that her father had thrown and she thought, at the time, that it was great fun. As she looked back upon the incident now, she was aware of the fact that it was an indication of real instability on the part of her father. During these early years of her life, Grace remembered that her father often failed to provide for his family and that it was only through the kindness of her maternal grandmother that the family managed to pay the rent and secure enough food and clothing.

When Grace was about six years of age the family turmoil became such that she was moved to the home of her maternal grandmother with her brother and little sister. Even here the pattern of drinking followed her, for her grandfather drank excessively and his misbehavior had a decided effect on the home-like atmosphere which might otherwise have existed. But Grace's memories of her grandmother,

fortunately, are pleasant. She spoke warmly of how her grandmother played games with the children and how she was always assured that she was welcome to stay just as long as she pleased.

During this period which Grace spent with the grandmother, her mother continued to maintain her own home and to support herself by working. Grace recalled the many times that her mother came to visit her and, according to Grace, all of these visits were pleasant ones. Grace is very protective toward her mother and assured the interviewer that she had done everything possible to take care of the children.

Sometime after moving to the home of her grandmother, Grace was taken to the hospital with scarlet fever. Because of complications which arose, it was necessary for Grace to remain in the hospital for almost two months at the end of which time she was returned to the home of her mother. But again her mother's home failed to provide for Grace the security and the interest that she craved. She did not blame her mother for her own actions during this period, but she did admit that she truanted from school quite often and that she felt lonely because she had no one with whom to share confidences. It was during this time that she learned

that her father had joined the Army Air Force and was sent overseas. Grace apparently was quite proud of the fact that her father had attained the rank of Sergeant but shook her knowingly when she admitted that he had subsequently lost his stripes for going AWOL while based overseas during the war.

It was in 1947 that Grace again went to live with her grandmother, this time because the grandmother's youngest daughter was taken to the hospital and she was lonely. Grace spoke very frankly of the fact that she did not enjoy this constant shifting of homes, but apparently there was little she could do about it. During this stay with her grandmother, drink again played a very important role for it was during this period that Grace's grandmother and grandfather separated because of his heavy and continual drinking. Grace told of the incident which led to the separation. She said her grandfather came home drunk, as usual, but on this occasion he tried to beat his wife with the high heel of her shoe. While Grace ran into the hall, appealing to the neighbors for help, the grandmother armed herself with a skillet and frightened her husband so effectively that when the neighbors arrived the grandfather was under the bed while the grandmother was on her hands and knees, beating him on the head with the frying pan. Grace smiled while she told of

this incident, indicating that she had seen so much of the difficulties which occur as the result of excessive drinking that, rather than being shocked by their existence, she was able to see some humor in the situation.

In retrospect, Grace said that her feelings toward her father were very negative. She couldn't ever remember seeing him more than twice a year and on those occasions found it difficult to find something to say. Her feeling while with him was "strange" and she was always relieved when the visit was over. She did say that she wished her brother might have had the interest and discipline of a good father, for had he received this attention when he was young, Grace did not feel he would have gotten into the trouble which resulted in his being placed in Parental School. She said that her brother "needed someone to get after him" but, because of drinking on the part of her father and grandfather, that "someone" was never there.

Her feelings toward her mother are kindly, though Grace does regret that she wasn't able to have more fun and more close associations with her. Grace hurriedly explained that her mother had always suffered from nervousness and, as a result, was never able to play with the children when she returned from work. Instead the children knew that their

mother's return from work heralded a daily period of quiet which was observed so that the mother would receive sufficient rest to permit her to return to the business of supporting the family on the following day. Strangely enough, Grace did not feel that the absence of a father figure in her life had made any difference. She felt that her mother and grandmother had provided her with everything she could have desired and that no one except her brother suffered from the lack of stability which a man might have contributed to the family circle.

The year that Grace has spent at Uhlich with her sister has gone very quickly for her, and she said that it represented the happiest period of her life. She is particularly happy about the close associations which she enjoys with several of the other high school girls and feels very comfortable with her housemother too, and is sure that the housemother is interested only in making her as happy as possible. Grace did not feel that way when she entered the agency, for she felt her entrance at that time was a gross injustice. It is true, she confessed, that her brother truanted too regularly, but she maintained that she was old enough to take care of her little sister during the time her mother spent at work. But all of that is over now and Grace

has found happiness in the stable and secure environment of the Children's Home. Yet, Grace admitted that she thinks often of the day in the future when her mother will be successful in getting better housing so that the two may return to their own home.

In speaking of her plans for her own future family, Grace showed the same maturity exhibited by some of the other high school girls. As was true of them, some of the feelings expressed by Grace were the result of her unfortunate childhood experiences, while others were the gleanings of wholesome attitudes which she had acquired in the home of her grandmother and at the institution. To begin with, Grace said that she would not marry until she was at least twenty-one years of age. She said that her mother was only eighteen when she married, and Grace did not want a repetition of the life her mother had experienced. Grace felt that there was a decided correlation between early marriage and unsuccessful family life for she did not feel that the parties to the marriage could appreciate the seriousness of family living at that early age. She said too, in a very definite manner, that she would never marry a man who drank. She enlarged upon that statement by saying that she was aware of the fact that some people drank socially and that

such moderate drinking never represented a real threat to marital harmony. But she was so determined not to have her family wrecked by drink, as the marriage of her mother and grandmother had been, that she would not consider marrying anyone who drank at all.

Grace's eyes shone when she spoke of the kind of housing she hoped her family might be able to enjoy. She said emphatically that she wanted no part of apartment dwelling, for it seemed to her that such housing encouraged the mobility which plagued her all her life. Instead she hoped that she might have a little "cottage" of her own, nothing too pretentious, just enough so that her family might be comfortable and put down their roots in the life of the community. She spoke of the children too, and said, with more maturity than that which is found in many married couples, that she felt the entire life of the well-integrated family must be built around the rearing of the children. Out of her past experiences she added, also, that she would flatly refuse to work, but would remain at home instead and give her children the personal attention and love that she felt was due all youngsters.

The last point which she emphasized for her family of the future was that there must be a religious atmosphere

which was shared by each of the members. She said that her mother had been a non-practicing Roman Catholic and that her father was a Protestant who never attended church. The result was that none of the children attended worship until they entered Uhlich. After coming to Uhlich, Grace became so interested in religion that, at the age of fifteen which is older than average, she attended confirmation instruction which resulted in her being confirmed on Palm Sunday, 1949. She said that she had gained so much from the experience of her own confirmation that she wanted the same experience for every member of her family.

The story that Grace told concerning her family was not entirely accurate. It is true that her parents separated frequently, eliminating any opportunity for real family living on the part of the children, but the record indicates that the fault of the failures experienced by the family was not entirely that of the father. The report made by the Juvenile Court, for example, states that although Grace's mother had originally been neat and ambitious, she is "now slovenly, crabby, and nervous, and does not seem to care for the children." The record also implies that Grace's mother may have contributed to the family discord because of promiscuous relationships with other men. However, there is

no proof offered to substantiate this implication. Even the relatives of Grace's father spoke bitterly of both parents, saying that neither one had assumed any reasonable responsibility concerning the rearing of the children and that only the best interests of the children should be considered.

In telling her story Grace also failed to mention the filthy conditions which she left in her mother's home when coming to Uhlich. Grace's hair, which was very long when she entered the agency, was so filled with lice and nits that it had to be cut very short and it was only because of the efforts on the part of the nurse that Grace was able to avoid having her hair clipped. Her younger sister, when entering the Home, did have her hair clipped since it was impossible to remove the multitude of nits and lice in any other way. Obviously, the physical condition of the girls was a decided condemnation of the type of care which Grace's mother had provided, but in her protectiveness, she failed to mention it.

It is reasonably safe to assume that Grace's protective attitude toward her mother stems from the fact that her relationship with her mother remained fairly close after her father deserted. This attitude has become so developed through the years that even though Grace has achieved maturity in so many ways, she is still incapable of

intelligently discriminating against those undesirable characteristics which are all too obvious in the make-up of her mother. Instead her mother still looms as the one figure in her life who can afford Grace the family tie which she is so desperately seeking.

* * * * *

The account which Delores had to tell of her relationship with the other members of her family is a very unsatisfactory one from her point of view. She consented to speak of her family on the day after her confirmation. Delores, who is fifteen years of age, had looked forward to the day of her confirmation for many months and, although her mother had failed to visit her during the four preceding months, had every hope that her mother would share her happiness over her confirmation and attend the service. Delores' hopes were not well-founded, though, and once again her mother disappointed her. For Delores, this was the most bitter disappointment she had suffered at the hands of her mother to date.

Throughout her entire life, Delores has experienced the disadvantages of both instability and mobility. She was born in Southern Illinois but said that she had lived in a

great many towns before she reached the age of twelve. Apparently her father, who was an irresponsible person, went from one job to another and with each change that was made moved closer and closer to Chicago. Delores couldn't remember much about her father, or at least volunteered little information. She did recall that the only time her father had ever tried to make things pleasant for the family was the one occasion when he took his family to a neighborhood carnival. But it isn't surprising that Delores remembers so little about her father for during the many moves her family made in its trek toward north Illinois, her father deserted the family, which consisted of three girls and one boy, and has contributed nothing to their support since.

Delores can remember a little of the difficulties her family experienced after her father left. She remembers the shortage of food and the lack of clothing that was felt by her brothers and sisters and it wasn't until they moved to a suburb of Chicago that they found a semblance of security. There what remained of the family moved in with the maternal grandmother and an aunt. Delores' mother tried to obtain support from her husband through the courts, but when this failed she had him sentenced to a jail term. In order that the children might be supported, the mother went to work in a

factory where the aunt was employed, but, as Delores ruefully confessed, the grandmother "really supported us."

A few months after this arrangement was begun, the aunt was married and brought her new husband to the same house to live. Delores' mother, because of the crowded conditions, moved into Chicago and found employment, but the children remained with the aunt, her husband, and the grandmother. Delores remembered this part of her life as being a very pleasant experience. She felt completely at home in this setting, thrived under the loving care provided by the aunt and her new uncle, and looked forward with happy anticipation to the visits of her mother. These visits occurred once or twice a month and were always pleasant since the mother spent all of her visiting time playing with her four children. But transportation, according to Delores, was both trying and expensive so the visits became more and more infrequent. The interviewer supposed that reduction in the number of visits by the mother would cause the children to grow more and more attached to the aunt, but Delores hurriedly stated that this was not true. In spite of the affection all the children felt for the aunt, their mother was still the most important person in their lives.

All too soon, this pleasant arrangement came to an

end. Delores said that their new uncle lost his job and it was impossible for him to support the four children. Since the mother did not have the facilities available for providing good care it was necessary for all four of the children to be placed in an institution. Consequently admission was secured at a Children's Home on the South Side of Chicago where they remained until Delores was fourteen years of age. Because of the age limitations of that agency, the three girls were admitted to Uhlich and the boy was placed in the Glenwood School for Boys.

Delores recounted one interesting incident which occurred prior to her stay at the other Children's Home. She said that someone brought a paper to her aunt for signing, stating that if the aunt agreed to state that the mother had deserted her family that the aunt would be free to legally adopt the four children. The aunt, however, refused to sign the paper, and Delores said that her aunt's refusal made her very happy for, and she said it with real feeling, her mother had not deserted the children but was limited by circumstances in the amount of good she could do for them.

As a result of the constant instability which she had experienced, Delores is quite a nervous child. When asked what she preferred as her place of residence if able to have

any wish she might express, she said that her first choice would be to return to the home of her aunt where she had received such affectionate care. Delores said that she was sure she loved her aunt just as much as she did her mother and that her aunt also offered stability and dependability that her mother apparently could not provide. Unfortunately for Delores, though, her aunt now has five children of her own so it is impossible for Delores and her brother and sisters to return there. Her second choice would be to live with her mother, but Delores said that if such an arrangement were made it would be on a trial basis only and that she would sever relationships if her mother failed to measure up to what should be expected as she has during the past few years. Delores stated this attitude very emphatically, indicating that dependability had come to mean more to her than blood relationship. Her third choice was Uhlich, and spoke warmly of the agency as having offered her everything that was necessary to make her comfortable except the intimate contacts which are available only in normal family living.

In looking back Delores felt that she had missed many of the advantages which should have been hers and which are the heritage of most boys and girls. She felt that her father was very much at fault for failing to provide for his

family and then for deserting completely. She felt that her mother was at fault too, for failing to make available the interest and the love which characterizes good mothers. But where Delores nurtured no hopes for the future improvement of her father, she did maintain that her mother could be dependable if she tried. She was unable to offer an explanation, though, for why the mother failed to make the efforts which might put her in a more desirable light.

Delores said that she had done very little thinking about her own family of the future but that she was sure that her children would receive constant affection and care. She said that she would want to stay at home and give all of her time to the proper rearing of her family and to meeting as many of their wants as is possible. Obviously, this part of her family of the future which looms so important is a reflection of the disappointments she has experienced over such a long period of time.

In spite of the fact that Delores tried to defend her mother as much as possible, the records show that her mother was far less desirable than Delores would admit. The Court record characterizes her, on one occasion, as being "an irresponsible sort of person." The record also contains a statement that Delores' mother was expected to pay for the

children's support during the time that they spent with the aunt, but payments were never made. Shortly before the children were moved to the first Children's Home in which they stayed, the mother tried to get the children away from the aunt through the courts, but she was "alleged unfit, irresponsible, and unreliable." The three older children were placed in the institution as a compromise measure while the youngest child, a girl, was placed in a foster home. The foster parents became so interested in the girl that they requested permission to adopt her, but the mother changed her mind so frequently and created so much disturbance when she was drinking, that the plans for adoption were abandoned for fear her interference would make the plan fail. The youngest girl was then sent to the first Children's Home and ultimately to Uhlich.

In additional information which the court furnished concerning Delores' mother, the court worker stated that she had little pity for "this woman who had been such a continuous source of trouble." She said that Delores' mother had worked in every available place in Chicago Heights and had shown such instability that no one would now give her employment. Because of her lack of steady employment she has gravitated to one of the worst tenement sections of the city.

There seems to be very little reason to think that Delores will ever have an adequate home provided for her and the rest of the children through the efforts of her mother. She is almost resigned to remaining in an institutional setting and feels that the absence of normal family life is almost compensated for by the warmth of the friendships she has established and the comfort and security she has come to know.

CHAPTER V

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL THE CHILDREN INTERVIEWED

It is regrettable that not all of the stories told by the children can be included in this study, for they all revealed backgrounds, observations, and hopes which were filled with earnestness, poignancy and, frequently, with an observable appreciation for the opportunity of putting their feelings into words. However, as has been stated earlier, the limitations of space plus the fact that many of the stories developed a familiar pattern would make the presentation of each story impractical. In order that the substance of the material might be offered, though, it has been summarized in table form. The information included in the following tables covers that gained from all forty children, including the ten whose stories were told in narrative form in the preceding chapter.

Before dealing directly with the hopes which the children have concerning their own families of the future, it is important to consider briefly several other factors which form a basis for these observations. First in importance is an indication of the length of stay which these children have

experienced in their present agency and in any form of foster care prior to their present placement. A detailed summary of this information follows.

TABLE XI. LENGTH OF STAY IN PRESENT AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS BY THE CHILDREN STUDIED

	Present Agency			Other Agencies		
	40 Total	25 Boys	15 Girls	40 Total	25 Boys	15 Girls
None	0	0	0	23	13	10
Less than 1 year	3	1	2	1	1	0
1 to 2 years	3	0	3	3	2	1
2 to 3 years	4	4	0	3	2	1
3 to 4 years	7	4	3	3	2	1
4 to 5 years	7	3	4	3	1	2
5 to 6 years	1	1	0	0	0	0
6 to 7 years	4	4	0	3	3	0
7 to 8 years	2	1	1	1	1	0
8 to 9 years	2	2	0	0	0	0
9 to 10 years	3	3	0	0	0	0
10 or more years	4	2	2	0	0	0

A breakdown of the figures given in this table shows that the median stay at the agencies for each of the forty children is 3.9 years. For the boys it is 5.0 years while the girls have been in their present placement 3.3 years. Great variation is shown in the lengths of stay, ranging from three children who have been in their present placement for less than a year to four children who have spent ten or more years in the institution in which they reside.

Over half of the forty children, twenty-three, had never lived under any other foster care. This was true of 52% of the boys and 66% of the girls. However, of those who did, the median length of stay was 3.0 years. This figure was exactly the same for both the boys and the girls. Certainly the amount of time spent in institutions which is revealed by this table qualify the children, at least on the basis of actual experience, for speaking on the subjects which were presented to them through the medium of this study.

The children were also given an opportunity to evaluate their present placement. Again they were assured that their opinions would be kept confidential to the extent that no statements could be traced to their source, and, as before, the children cooperated by speaking quite frankly. This table, too, was rather difficult to develop for tables fail to provide the possibility for showing the many subtle variations which invariably creep into the stories. However, for the purpose of simplifying the summary of the information, the categories listed below were used. They are at least indicative of the attitudes of the children toward their present placement.

TABLE XII. ATTITUDES OF CHILDREN TOWARD PRESENT PLACEMENT

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	40	25	15
Happy	24	18	6
Satisfied	14	5	9
Unhappy	1	1	0
Hostile	1	1	0

These statements given by the children show that 60% of the youngsters, a very large number, were completely happy in their present setting. The boys were by far the most happy with their placement for 72% indicated that this was true while only 40% of the girls could agree.

In addition to this 60% who were quite happy, another 35% were satisfied. These children explained by saying that they were reasonably happy, that they understood the necessity for their placement, that they were conscious of some of the advantages of living where they were, but that they felt somethings could be changed which would lend a general improvement to their lot. Twenty percent of the boys were of this opinion, while the same feeling was expressed by 60% of the girls.

Only two boys, five percent of the total, were unhappy. While that is enough for the respective agencies to feel

compelled to re-examine their placement and to try to correct the condition that contributes to the unhappiness, it is a far smaller percentage than is generally believed to be unhappy while in an institution. One of these two boys was extremely homesick while the other was hostile to all adults and to the exercise of control in general.

No attempt will be made to interpret the reasons for happiness or lack of it here, for a summary of the expressions of the children on these subjects is given in succeeding tables.

When the children were invited to list the characteristics of institutional living which they found to be desirable, a conscious effort was made by the interviewer to minimize the statements. Each child was assured that his honest opinion was desired and that the child was not to say what he thought the interviewer might want to hear. Only those attitudes toward institutional living which the children insisted were meant whole-heartedly were included in the information given in the table. The table grew far longer than would have been desirable, but the enthusiasm with which the children presented their feelings seemed to justify the use of the additional lines.

**TABLE XIII. INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOUND DESIRABLE
BY THE CHILDREN**

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	136	80	56
Ample food, comfort	28	16	12
Others of own age	21	13	8
Sports	20	20	0
Freedom, fair rules	12	7	5
Good staff, understanding	12	7	5
Care of young children	11	3	8
Religious experience	10	2	8
Security	9	6	3
Regularity of school	4	1	3
Good training	2	1	1
Experience in living together	2	1	1
Decency of environment	1	0	1
None	2	2	0

It should be of some encouragement to institutional personnel to know that the forty children interviewed gave expression to a total of 136 characteristics which they found to be desirable. Since two boys, the ones listed in Table XII as extremely homesick and hostile, found nothing desirable about their placement, the remaining thirty-eight expressed an average of 3.6 desirable characteristics each.

First in importance for children of both sexes was that of comfort, ample food, and the other characteristics which contributed toward adequate living. Eighty percent of the girls acknowledged this advantage while the same was true

for 40% of the boys.

Over half of the children, 52.5%, listed as second in importance the fact that there were other children of their own age with whom they could associate. The importance of this characteristic of institutional life was almost identical with members of each sex for it was mentioned by 52.0% of the boys and by 53.3% of the girls. This is one of the many advantages of institutional life for adolescents which has frequently been expressed by personnel engaged in institutional programs, and it is interesting to note that their opinion is borne out by so many children now living in such a setting. It is conceivable that this advantage would have been acknowledged by more children had it been suggested as a possibility, but no coaching was ever given a child who was asked for a statement.

The overwhelming appreciation for sports placed that characteristic in third position among all the qualities which were found desirable in institutional life. Every expression for this phase of institutional life was made by a boy, 80.0% of the boys interviewed, but not one girl mentioned it as one of the valid arguments in favor of institutional life.

Based upon the frequent criticisms which are heard of

institutional life, perhaps most surprising of the expressings concerning desirable characteristics are the two which dealt with freedom and fair rules, and that which rated the staff as being understanding. In both instances, 30.0% of the children interviewed suggested these categories as desirable. Again it must be stated that it is possible that more might have included it had the suggestion been made. However, it is sufficiently satisfying to note that such a large percentage offered this comment of their own accord.

About a quarter of the children also mentioned the desirability of their experience in dealing with younger children and the advantage of participating in a program which included religion.

It appears that these comments made by the children indicate at least reasonable success on the part of the institutions in which the children reside. Not only is it encouraging that the youngsters enumerated so many characteristics which they felt to be desirable but, of even greater importance, the fact cannot be overlooked that such expressions implies sufficiently good adjustment to permit these additional observations.

Not all of the elements of institutional life, of

course, were found to be desirable. In fact, some characteristics found to be desirable by some children, such as freedom from unnecessary restrictions, were found to be just the opposite with others. Again the children were encouraged to speak frankly with the result that forty-seven expressions were offered concerning characteristics which were not desirable.

TABLE XIV. INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOUND UNDESIRABLE BY THE CHILDREN

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	47	26	21
None	16	10	6
Separation from home	8	4	4
Lack of freedom	7	4	3
Lack of understanding	3	1	2
Lack of social life	3	0	3
Too much religion	3	2	1
Early curfew	3	3	0
Abuse by other children	1	1	0
Profanity	1	1	0
Excessive work	1	1	0
Excessive rules	1	0	1

Of the sixteen who did not offer a criticism of the care which they were receiving, twelve did recognize that there were features about the program which could have been improved, but they felt they were so minor when compared with the strengths of the programs that they refused to mention

them. The other four children in this group apparently had no criticism to offer.

The most frequently mentioned criticism was that of separation from home. Eight children mentioned it, four boys and four girls. Certainly it is a criticism which is accepted with understanding, for separation is a serious problem for any child who must experience it.

The second most frequently mentioned criticism is that of lack of freedom. It is not surprising that this should represent such an important criticism for, though most institutions make an earnest effort to reduce rules and regulations to a minimum, it is an established fact that many staff persons dealing directly with the children manufacture rules of their own for expediting their own responsibilities. The rules devised by these staff members frequently ensnare the children with a maze of red tape which involves many of the activities which might be of interest to the youngsters. Careful administration is necessary to keep these staff-made rules to a minimum in order that the agency can remain as child-centered as possible. It is interesting to note that only seven children mentioned lack of freedom as one of the undesirable qualities of institutional life, while in the preceding table a total of twelve boys and girls found

the presence of freedom and fair rules one of the desirable characteristics of their present form of life.

The other criticisms covered the many areas indicated in the table. All of them were offered earnestly by the children and might well serve as a guide to administrators in re-evaluating the practices involved in their own programs.

The next table includes material which was presented with more enthusiasm, by far, than that offered during any part of the interviews. While thirteen of the children, twelve boys and one girl, refrained from giving any expression concerning their future families, the rest became starry-eyed when they were offered the opportunity to day dream about the qualities of a family which they planned to create. Undoubtedly, the children who spoke had given some serious thought to their planning, for they spoke with confidence and assurance.

The table indicates that 77.7% of the boys and girls had given sufficient thought to their future families to enable them to give expression to their desires. This alone is a significant fact, for none of the children were past sixteen years of age and some of them four or five years younger. Yet, despite their youth and their reasonably long

stay in an institution, they were able to articulate in a very intelligent manner. These were the qualities which the children hoped to incorporate into their future families.

TABLE XV. CHILDREN'S EXPRESSIONS CONCERNING THEIR DESIRES FOR QUALITIES IN FUTURE FAMILY LIFE

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	114	57	57
Child-centered homes	21	8	13
Religious atmosphere	21	9	12
Mutual understanding, trust	15	7	8
Sobriety	13	7	6
Comfort	11	4	7
Stability	7	5	2
Recreation with children	4	3	1
Cleanliness	3	1	2
Freedom	2	0	2
Privacy	2	0	2
Educational opportunities	1	0	1
No mobility	1	1	0
None expressed	13	12	1

Most important to both boys and girls was that their homes would be child-centered and that they would benefit by the presence of a religious atmosphere. Both qualities are those which we can accept with much gratification, particularly since they were listed, not with emotion or with a sense of needing to express what the interviewer wanted to hear, but with a calm logic which obviously indicated that

the suggestions came as a result of much thought. Sixty-nine and two-tenths percent of the boys and 85.7% of the girls felt that religion was essential to stable family life.

Mutual understanding and trust were important, too, and reflected the lack which they had felt personally while living with their own families. Having tasted the bitterness of that void, they had determined that their own families and their own children would not suffer in that manner.

Sobriety obviously reflected their own experiences. Nearly half of each group listed this quality as necessary for their families. Of the boys, 53.9% said sobriety would be essential to stable family life. To have the privilege of listening to these children as they accurately and enthusiastically delineated the necessary qualities of good family life was a most refreshing experience. While it is obvious that institutions must continually strive to improve their programs and to give children more and more opportunities for finding the answers which they seek, it is apparent that we can anticipate the future with a degree of confidence because of the overwhelming optimism and stability of the children themselves.

In the last part of the interview, the children were asked what qualities or desires they had listed for their future families could be traced to their experience in the institution. It would be foolish to suppose that all of the qualities expressed had entered the youngster's consciousness only after assuming residence in the institution, but since some of them may have started at that point, the children were encouraged to list them. A surprisingly high seventy-one of the characteristics had originated, or been crystallized, after the children came to the institution to live.

TABLE XVI. APPRECIATION OF FAMILY QUALITIES TRACEABLE TO THE INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCE

	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	71	43	28
Religion	18	9	9
Child-centered	12	6	6
Mutual understanding, trust	11	7	4
Comfort	8	5	3
Security	7	4	3
Sobriety	4	4	0
Sports	3	3	0
Domestic arts	4	1	3
None	4	4	0

This last table shows us that twenty-seven of the forty children interviewed had given some careful thought to

the planning of their future family. Of these twenty-seven, twenty-three, nine boys and fourteen girls, could trace some of their constructive thinking to their entrance into the institution.

Eighteen of the children stated that their appreciation of religion could be traced directly to their present placement. Perhaps this is not surprising since so few had experienced religion prior to their entrance, but it is gratifying to see so many of them who recognize the importance of this element in their life. Nine boys and nine girls traced their religious appreciation to the institution and each expressed his gratitude for this contribution.

Twelve children, again divided evenly between the boys and the girls, said that they traced their appreciation of a child-centered atmosphere to the institution. Many of these twelve stated that they had received no such experience in their own homes, and that they had deeply appreciated the efforts which were expended for their individual comfort and pleasure since coming to live at their respective Homes. It was because of their experience in the institution and their appreciation of what it meant to their own childhood that prompted them to desire the same privilege for their children of the future.

Mutual understanding and trust was the next most frequently mentioned quality whose origin could be traced to the institution. As was true in some of the other categories, a negative attitude may have been developed while the children were living with their own families, but it was not until the children entered the institution that they were sure that some better attitude could be taken. Many of the children said that they had never felt that they were understood or trusted while living with their parents and, since they had blossomed under the atmosphere of understanding at the institution, they were hopeful of carrying that same attitude into their own families in order that their children might benefit from it as they did after entering the agency.

Because of the sordidness of their own poor homes, the comfort found in the institutions seemed important enough to continue into their future families. Before the critics of institutions begin to howl let me hastily add that everyone recognizes the fact that there are few, if any, institutions which are in any sense luxurious. But to the many deprived children who are placed in institutions, the modest comforts which an institution can provide seem wonderful, indeed. Cleanliness, lack of rodents, regul-

arity, balanced meals prepared from good food -- these and many others were unknown to the children before entering an institution. To the children, these comforts were real and represented far more than they had ever experienced before. There was no question as to their sincerity when they said, eight of them, that their desire for comfort could be traced directly to their institutional experience.

Hand in hand with this expression that their desires for comfort could be traced to the institution were the qualities of security and sobriety. Many of them had never felt security at home, and thrived on the new experience. Sobriety, as has been pointed out earlier, was another quality lacking from an alarming number of homes. While it is true that the revulsion on the part of the children toward alcoholism may well have had its origin before the children entered the institution, two boys flatly stated that had they remained at home, living with parents and in a neighborhood where alcoholism was practiced regularly and accepted as the way of life, they might never have known that there was a better standard to follow. These two boys, as well as the other two who traced their appreciation for sobriety to an institution, felt that the institution had elevated their sights and had conclusively proved that alcoholism could be

avoided without undue effort.

Three boys said that their appreciation of sports could be traced to the institution. When questioned about this statement, since it seemed reasonable to assume that they would have learned an appreciation of sports wherever they had lived, they said that they had started their lives in neighborhoods where the activities of the majority of the boys were restricted to delinquencies and, had they continued to live there, they too would probably have found their entertainment in that direction. They said that early in their stay at the institutions they found some difficulty in getting enough pleasure out of organized sports to compensate for their desire for thrills, but each spoke warmly of the tolerant understanding they had received while going through their periods of adjustment and now knew that through sports such as baseball, football, and basketball they could find all of the thrills and competition they wanted.

The last ones to give expression to qualities which could be traced to their life at the institutions were four children, one boy and three girls, who felt that their appreciation for domestic arts could be so traced. Domestic arts, to them, meant not only an ability to keep house or to cook, but included as well an ability to care for children

and to give to those younger than themselves the love and the care that they needed. It is interesting to note that not one of these four children were living in the one institution visited which provided the children with an educational plant on the campus. It is apparent, then, that the four who did trace their appreciation of domestic arts to the institution were not referring to a class room experience, but rather to the experience they had in their daily living.

As was stated at the beginning of this chapter it is regrettable that not all of the stories of the children could be given in full, but the significance of their stories, even in tabulated form, is readily apparent. That most of the children have an appreciation of good family life is as encouraging as it is obvious. Our problem, then, is to discover and exploit every means possible to assist them in reaching their goals.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Anyone casually observing the countless difficulties to which the children in this study have been subjected would have every reason to think that the youngsters might well have turned from the idea of family living with disgust and would have committed themselves to the thesis that one's sole responsibility in the world was to achieve all that was comfortable and advantageous for themselves. Certainly the families of these children have been largely of the variety that any proud society would like to forget, for they represent blots upon the stable type of social picture we would like to think exists. Even the amount of time that these children from broken homes have spent under the supervision of child caring agencies would seem to militate against their appreciation and understanding of well-integrated family life.

Here, then, is the story of the typical child who has found his way to an institution for care. Since all of the children interviewed were picked at random, the only selectivity exercised being that concerning age, there is

every reason to believe that even this small sample represents the profile of most institutional children. If a composite of the findings indicated the average child, it would provide us with a youngster who came from a family of about four children, whose family was without a religious affiliation, who had moved about four times before reaching his tenth birthday but whose family had never succeeded in achieving more than a fair type of housing, who had only thirteen chances out of eighty of having even one parent who could be considered good in any sense but would instead have had almost a fifty-fifth chance of having an alcoholic father. Certainly it is a frightening picture, one which makes us think of thousands of children who accompany their parents as they stumble on their way through countless phases of social decay until the family disintegrates entirely and the children are forced to accept care from strangers. Crowded into their few years is more heartache, more fear, deprivation, and more loneliness than many of us have experienced in an entire lifetime. We might, indeed, expect that children who have suffered in such a manner would either be crushed by their experience or would defiantly rebel against the family, society in general, and anything else which they might think had contributed to

their difficulties.

But children seem to be basically optimistic and have that almost inherent ability to shrug off, with a bit of help, that which has been distasteful and to cling to and develop that which they find to be good. They are even forgiving, in most instances, of those who contributed to the troubled times through which they have come. Perhaps it is because of their optimism and their resiliency of spirit that they were able to salvage something even from their bitter experiences, accept the newly-found advantages which were offered to them, and, between the two, project their thinking into something which is stable and fine.

In the beginning of this study we said that a simplified standard for evaluating families might be based on just five points. A quick review of these five points will indicate how well the children interviewed measured up to these standards in their observations and in their plans for the future.

The first point stated that the family should be a socializing agency, should place an emphasis upon the economic, social, religious, and educational phases of life, and that it should prepare each member to participate fully in the social structure in which he lives. We needn't repeat

how miserably the families of the children failed, yet the stories which the children told and the hopes which they expressed for the future spoke eloquently of their desire to create something better than they had known. It is important to note that each of the elements of good family life listed in this first point was mentioned and emphasized in the stories which the children told. It is important, too, to remember that for many of the children, an appreciation of these values can definitely be traced to their experience in the institution.

The second point was that the family should provide emotional security for each of its members. It should provide permanence and freedom from anxieties. Certainly, through their own experience, the children came to understand the need for this quality which was missing from the lives of most of them. But as many of them said, it was not until they found security in an institution that they fully comprehended the important part that it played in their lives. Their stories speak for themselves in assuring us that they are determined to include the element of security and permanence when creating their families of the future.

Next in importance for the family was the offering of a sense of acceptance, a comfortable sense of belonging.

Again many of the children found the satisfaction for that need in an institution and were so appreciative of its importance that that quality, too, was included in their planning for the future.

The fourth point which was mentioned was that the family should offer freedom for experience, expressed initially through play and later through an expression of opinions and attitudes. There was a difference of opinion on whether the institution provided the youngsters with this freedom for expression. Some said that the routine was too strict to permit it, more said that it was possible and the fact was that they did enjoy a sense of freedom. Perhaps of even greater importance than this difference of opinion, though, was the fact that the children on both sides of the question recognized that it was essential and acknowledged that it was a privilege which they hoped their youngsters would be able to enjoy.

The last characteristic mentioned in the early pages of this study was that a family should exercise social control, that it should teach the qualities of thrift, idealism, cleanliness, regularity, respect for authority, consideration for others, and care of property. In almost every instance in the forty children interviewed it remained

for the institutions to provide an understanding of these qualities for the depraved families from which many of the children came either didn't take the time to offer assistance in this direction or simply were not capable of doing so.

There is no question that the children measured up extremely well in their thinking about the family on each of these five points. Since that is true it seems that three general conclusions concerning the children themselves may be drawn from this study.

First, and of great importance, is the fact that in the majority of the cases studied the damaging experience which the children had with inadequate families did not in any sense destroy their appreciation for the necessity of establishing for themselves families which embody the basic principles inherent in all well-integrated families. As a matter of fact, in many instances it was found that the unfortunate experience actually sharpened the desire of the children to create for their own youngsters of the future a family which would offer many of the satisfactions which they had failed to receive. The importance of this fact cannot be over-emphasized. So many general statements have been made saying that this is almost an impossibility. That defeatist attitude has limited, in many instances, the

efforts which might have been made on behalf of the youngsters. But here is adequate proof that the overwhelming majority of the children interviewed were in no sense committed against the principles of good family living but rather, on the contrary, were already planning for the day when they could create for themselves and for their children a family which would provide the satisfying experience for which they all longed. With that assurance replacing the too-frequently quoted defeatism, we are encouraged to renew our efforts to assist these children to achieve their goals.

The second general conclusion concerning the children themselves is that they have not found that their placement in an institution has precluded the possibility for their experiencing the qualities of good family living, but, instead have found in many instances, that the institution is helping to point out and emphasize the importance of these basic characteristics. In many cases, for example, it was in the institution that the children received an understanding of the importance of religion in good family living, and it was through this understanding that they were able to determine a proper purpose for life and to learn how to discriminate against the intrusion into their thinking concerning future family life of any quality which would

militate against their newly-found appreciation of security. To have heard children express their gratitude to institutions for helping them to understand family life is a far cry from what might have been expected had our thinking been based solely upon the critical statements quoted in Chapter II, statements made by those who felt that institutions had nothing to offer children who had suffered a damaging experience.

The third general conclusion concerning the children is that, despite their background and their youth, they have already matured sufficiently to project their thinking to the time when they will establish families of their own. Obviously, this fact indicates that they provide us with a great deal upon which we may base our efforts to help prepare them for these homes and families of which they dream. With the maturity of the observations which they expressed and with the enthusiasm which they clearly demonstrated during that part of their interview, there is no reason to feel that they will be less prepared to establish a good family than any other youngster who is maturing during this unstable era in the history of family life.

With these general conclusions concerning the youngsters themselves, the additional conclusions concerning

our responsibilities to them become increasingly clear. It is not the purpose of this final chapter to list all of the needs, to propose an all-inclusive program for the solution of the needs, or to exhaust the long list of agencies at work in the field of the family. However, it is important to at least touch upon these areas with the hope that by doing so the problems and the opportunities may become a bit more crystallized.

It would be presumptuous to approach a family problem of such magnitude without at least alluding to the significant contribution made to our understanding of the family by the great scholar, Carle C. Zimmerman. In his comprehensive study Family and Civilization he makes many comments which have a direct bearing on the problem being faced by this study, and which help to point the direction in which our thoughts must travel.¹ In his chapter on the future of family and civilization, Zimmerman refers to the thinking of two contemporary writers in the field of the family. The most prevalent idea, he says, is that the family has merely to achieve the freeing of the individual to arrive at its ideal contribution to society. The family must

¹Zimmerman, Carle C., Family and Civilization, Harper & Brothers, 1947, pages 793-810.

be retained, but somehow this goal must be achieved without interfering with the pronouncements of the advocates of free love.

Westermarck in his two works History of Human Marriage and Future of Marriage points to the increasing unhappiness which exists in marital relations. Sexual maladjustment, adultery, jealousy, friction between husband and wife, and conflicts between parents and children all lead him to think that there shall be an increasingly accelerated trend away from marriage and the institutional family. His findings have led him to believe that divorce is not the enemy of marriage, but is its saviour since it provides a remedy for misfortune. He believes that some form of marriage will last, but he does not know what kind nor does he hazard making a prediction. Actually all he is able to say is that some people will continue to live together in the same household, more or less permanently, and some of these couples will have children; but that is a long way from predicting the survival of institutional familism.

Sorokin, too, predicts a further and further breakdown of the family until the relations between husband and wife and between parents and children will become incidental and chaotic. He states very definitely that the culture

which has dominated western society for the past five centuries is breaking down. He believes that divorces will increase and that children will be separated from their parents at an increasingly younger age. The family, according to Sorokin, will become a mere incidental co-habitation of male and female and the home will deteriorate to an over-night parking place mainly for the purpose of sex relationships.

Zimmerman acknowledges, rather ruefully, that these two sociologists have the facts to support their pessimistic predictions. It is true that all forms of behavior associated with familism have declined. However, rather than sit on the sidelines with the cultural determinists who maintain that the trend cannot be stopped or slowed down, Zimmerman prefers to analyze what has happened to the family as an institution and attempt to salvage at least what is possible from the impending wreckage. He points out that "the garden variety of thinker, by his emphasis upon cultural determinism and his fatalism, seems to favor the cataclysm. He is more dangerous than a thousand Spenglers because it is his cynicism, his avoidance of the real issues, his willingness to be popular rather than scholarly, which makes it difficult for others to face the real issue.

He wants to teach a family sociology composed entirely of invalid and unexamined cliches. 'Divorce is but an escape from an already broken marriage.' 'The family is getting better and better every day.' 'If your boy friend cries at the cinema, he will make a good husband.' 'Don't scold your wife at the breakfast table.' It is this type of thinker who rushes hotly to the defense of Freud. He is the modern Plutarch." Zimmerman concludes that we do have the intelligence, and powerful enough educational and propoganda agencies, to bring about a revision and the more or less permanent reinstatement of familism. There is, however, a greater disparity between the actual, documented, historical truth and the theories taught in most of the family sociology courses, than exists in any other scientific field. When the answer to this great social problem is finally discovered, it will be found to lie in the making of familism and child-bearing the primary social duties of the citizen.

On the basis of the fervent hope and the hesitant optimism expressed by Zimmerman, we can see somewhat more clearly the necessity for equipping these children from broken homes with an understanding and an appreciation of the importance of well-integrated family living, not alone for what it will mean to each of the children personally when

his home is established, but because of the part such a family will play in the salvaging of the essential elements of our culture. We can be certain that the family will never remain static, it shall either progress or retrogress. It is imperative that all of the positive forces be rallied and supported to the limit of our ability.

What, then, can be offered by way of a program in order that these youngsters from broken homes might be equipped for the establishment of their own families? What can be done to prevent recidivism among those familial lines where broken homes have become a part? Certainly there are no easy or exhaustive suggestions which can be made. However, efforts in the direction of making well-integrated homes possible should include at least the following minimum considerations.

First of all we must recognize the fact that institutions and all other types of foster care exist, almost completely, because of the failure of families to properly meet the responsibilities which are rightfully theirs. While no apologies need be made for good institutional care, there is no question concerning the fact that it would be far more desirable for children to be able to live with their own parents and in their own homes, if their parents and homes

are adequate to meet their needs. Acknowledging this, greater and greater efforts must be made by institutions for children to carefully analyze the applications which are made for placement and to sift out those where there is a possibility of rehabilitating the family, if given intelligent help, even while the child remains at home. More and more institutions are accepting this responsibility for they recognize that their primary obligation is to the child and that in many instances they can best serve him in his own home if that home provides a foundation upon which to build. Obviously this departure from what had been considered standard institutional procedure has required a substantial increase in expenditures, but many institutions are courageously working in that direction, pointing the way for others to follow. One of the institutions which participated in this study is currently caring for seventy children who are living in their own homes. Case work service is made available to the parents in order that the families of these children might be salvaged for them.

Second in importance is the need for all institutions and foster homes which are providing care for children to continue to emphasize the psycho-social characteristics of well-integrated family life, particularly those elements

which can be demonstrated apart from the primal family setting. Well conducted institutional programs in as home-like an atmosphere possible, for example, can continually emphasize the importance of security, freedom for expression, the importance of religion, and the rest of the desirable qualities even though it is acknowledged from the very beginning that the best institution cannot hope to approximate a real home environment. Through this method children from broken homes who are receiving care can be assisted in the crystallization and the clarification of their thinking concerning their future family life.

That many of the children are, indeed, developing an appreciation of some of the essential characteristics of family life while living in an institution is quite apparent from the material presented in this study. However, it must be acknowledged that not one of the institutions participating in the study had a conscious program for exploiting these advantages in a way that would lead the youngsters directly to an appreciation of well-integrated family living as such. There is a great trend in institutional care at the present time toward providing the physical facilities which would make an approximation of family living much more possible than before. The cottage plan is being adopted by

many progressive institutions and many others, who are not in a position to abandon buildings which are still usable are adapting them to apartment plans which provide the children with privacy and with much more comfort than they had experienced in institutions in the past. In addition to these physical improvements, higher calibre personnel are being attracted to staff the institutions and to direct the programs which the children experience. With these tremendous and significant strides being made for improving institutional care, there is every opportunity for employing these facilities and these improved staffs in directing the thinking of the children toward developing concrete plans for good family life. It can be safely said that never before in the history of our country has it been so important to advance the cause of good families. We are in an era of confusion and uncertainty when no one dares predict what lies ahead for this younger generation of ours. We wish that we could assure our youngsters that there would be no devastating wars to be fought, no depressions to be weathered, no great social upheavals to be survived. In good faith we cannot guarantee these things, but what we can do, and it is perhaps the most effective safeguard of all, is to see to it that our children live as well and as happily

as possible so that they will be buttressed against the vicissitudes of the future. For one of the things we have learned in these past twenty-five years is that healthy, happy, alert children develop into strong and responsible adults who are able to take a great quantity of buffetting around without too much damage to body or mind or spirit.

Third, children's institutions must become increasingly aware of the need for providing family case work for the parents of the children who have entered the agency for care. Although institutional personnel have long regretted the necessity of returning children who have received care to approximately the same environment from which they came, all too little has been done about improving the situation. Most institutions have tried valiantly to serve the parents with the limited case work time at the disposal of the agency, but more than this is necessary. In the contemporary field of child care the obvious losses of time, effort and service, together with the tragedy of having a child return to an environment which was considered sufficiently bad to justify separating him from his parents is so overwhelming that this additional service can no longer be delayed. Since many of the youngsters are placed voluntarily by the parents who reserve the right to remove the child at any time, and since

many of the parents accepted the idea of placement because they recognized their inadequacy in failing to provide the child with the home he deserved, the institutions must provide the additional service to the parent in order that the contribution made to the child need not be dissipated when the youngster leaves the agency's care. Every effort must be made to strengthen both the child and the parent in order that they might both benefit from having been associated with the agency. It is hoped that the work of the family service agencies could be so closely correlated with the efforts made in the field of child care that the two types of agencies could pool their resources and work together on the common problem but, unfortunately, most family services are so besieged with requests for assistance which originates with families who have no relationship with any other agency that they find it impossible to accept the additional responsibility of serving the parents of children who live in institutions. Until such a correlation of service is possible, the child caring institutions must make this extra service available in order that children from broken homes may be helped completely in their attempt to further appreciate and plan for good families of their own.

The last conclusion to be drawn from this study is to

emphasize the continued need for children's institutions to draw from resources in the community, wherever these services are available, for assistance in aiding both parents and children to a fuller understanding and a deeper appreciation of good family life. Fortunately there are such facilities in many areas which are solely concerned with service to families who have encountered domestic difficulties and who need expert guidance for the solution of their problems. When it is possible to employ the services of such agencies, the potential contribution to the institution's program cannot be exaggerated. Typical of these agencies is the Family Service Bureau of the United Charities of Chicago. The concern of this agency for the families of Chicago dates back to 1857 when a charter was granted to the fledgling "Chicago Relief and Aid Society." Through the years they have served the people of Chicago who have suffered because of panic, plague, fire, war, and depression, as well as those who have found the ordinary demands of life too great for them to meet alone.

This agency points with pride to a great volume of service given each year. During the year just past the Family Service Bureau has given service to 11,407 families in the various departments. During this period a case load of 2,048

families were served each month during the year. The areas of service offered by the agency fall roughly into three fields. The agency assists individuals and families through skilled casework service, in the solution of difficulties which they feel they cannot handle alone. They provide legal aid to individuals whose civil rights may be in jeopardy and who cannot pay for legal counsel. And they plan and work with other social agencies and community groups for the improvement and expansion of health and welfare services. All of these services are available for assistance to children from broken homes.

Other agencies are also concerned with the family in the preventive field. In this area agencies are at work for the sole purpose of counselling families and potential family members in order that many of the difficulties which contribute to family disorganization may be avoided. Such an organization is the Association for Family Living which was organized in 1925, and incorporated in 1930, as a non-profit organization under the laws of the State of Illinois. Prior to its organization a growing interest in child study and parent education had resulted in a number of independent study groups being formed in the Chicago metropolitan area. The organization had its inception in a child study

conference in 1925. Members of the various independent study groups sponsored the conference. They secured the cooperation of thirty agencies and civic groups in making it a success. Some 2,500 people from Chicago and from adjoining states attended the conference, and its proceedings were published by the University of Chicago Press. The interest generated by this conference led to the union of the autonomous child study groups in an association called "The Chicago Association for Child Study and Parent Education."

For several years the activity of the association was confined to the sponsorship of an annual conference, but in 1929 a qualified professional lecturer and group leader was employed and additional study groups of Association members were formed. In the early 1930's requests began to come without solicitation requesting leadership for mothers' clubs and parent groups. In 1934 regular staff meetings were established for the purpose of developing coordinated educational policies. Shortly after the policy was adopted whereby staff members, after a period of apprenticeship and in-service training with the Association, were placed on a regular salary.

Requests for services now began to come from orphanages, children's hospitals, settlement houses, schools,

recreational workers, social workers, parent-teacher associations, and nurses. They wished further information concerning family living, particularly with reference to a better understanding of normal family relationships. Marital adjustments, pre-marriage education, boy-girl relationships, and professional materials for other specialized workers began to be popular. In 1937, with the approval of the Council of Social Agencies of Chicago, now known as the Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago, a plan was devised whereby group workers were made available for individual counseling through the Association. In 1939 two specially trained part-time staff members were employed to do family and marital counseling.

In 1951 the Association carries a record of twenty-six years of service. Today its services are being widely demanded and used by a great variety of agencies. Its pamphlet service is used nation-wide and even by workers in foreign countries. A fair statement would seem to be this: that during the period from 1925 to 1930 the Association was struggling to find its place in the Chicago community; from 1930 to 1940 it was experimenting with the most acceptable techniques and building its relationships with other groups; while from 1940 to the present it has been expanding to

accept leadership in the area in which it has established itself.

This organization points with justifiable pride to the volume of work they have contributed to the field of the family during the past year. A brief review of the available statistics shows that service was given to about 1,700 parents groups during the past year and that, through this medium alone, approximately 25,000 parents were benefited. In addition to these meetings, youth groups, consisting of 8,315 young people were counselled concerning successful family living. Advice was given to professional workers dealing with the family, over 10,000 requests for literature were filled, and 1,000 individuals were privately counselled concerning marital difficulties and pre-marital adjustments. This impressive volume of work being done in the field of preventing families from disorganizing is available to all child caring agencies and is anxious to be of assistance in guiding children from broken homes toward the creation of more stable family experiences in the future.

While it is true that none of these services are operating at the maximum efficiency which is hoped to be achieved in the future, it is comforting to know that standards of service and techniques are constantly being

observed and improved. In the field of children's institutions, as is true in related fields, countless checks are made through the state departments of public welfare as well as through supervisory social agencies organized for that purpose.

In the Social Work Year Book of 1949 an article on Family Social Work written by Frank J. Hertel indicates the thoughtful study which family service agencies are giving their own programs. "In order to define its function in this general area the Family Service Association of America appointed a national Committee on Family Life Education which was instructed to (a) define the nature and place of family life education in the program of family service agencies; (b) examine the content and objectives of current projects in family service agencies; (c) consider the relationship of such activities in the family field to those in allied fields; (d) suggest what skills are required to carry on a program of family life education in a family service agency; and (e) suggest to family agencies certain guides and principles essential to development of a sound program of family life education.²

²Social Work Year Book 1949, Russell Sage Foundation, page 195

There can be no doubt as to the tremendous challenge facing all institutions serving children regarding the contribution they can make directly or through other agencies toward the creation of stable families, both now and in the future. The need for service is almost overwhelming, the contribution already being made by children's institutions is indisputably significant, but the opportunities for helping children and parents in the future is so exciting and so encouraging that institutions may face the future confident that their enthusiasm is grounded in a realistic hope.

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